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EXTENSIVE L2 READING AND SPEAKING AS FOUNDATIONS FOR BOOSTING SELF-ESTEEM WHEN PRODUCING LITERATURE-BASED WRITTEN TEXTS

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**EXTENSIVE L2 READING AND SPEAKING AS
FOUNDATIONS FOR BOOSTING SELF-ESTEEM
WHEN PRODUCING LITERATURE-BASED WRITTEN
TEXTS**



**UNIVERSIDAD DE PIURA
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN
MAGISTER EN EDUCACIÓN**

con mención en enseñanza del idioma inglés
como lengua extranjera

APPROVAL

The thesis entitled, “Extensive L2 Reading and Speaking as Foundations for Boosting Self-Esteem When Producing Literature-Based Written Texts”, presented by Maria Eugenia Zevallos Valdivia, in accomplishment to the requirements to obtain the title of Magister in Education with a mention in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language, has been approved by the thesis director: Ms Maria Esther Linares, and defended before a jury with the following members:

President

Secretary

Informant

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since I was a student preparing for taking the FCE examination, I had wondered what it would be like to choose the literature question as writing option for Paper 2, Composition. I made lots of assumptions in my mind regarding the content of the question: would it be too demanding for me to write about a specific part of the plot, or describe one of its characters? And how difficult would it be to describe the setting or summarise the chapters? With all these doubts in mind, I did not dare to choose such question on the day of the exam, of course. I remember I “played safe” and opted for story writing, that is to say: option n° 2!

Not happy with having chosen the “easiest” option in Paper 2 at that time, once I became an FCE instructor, I used to believe that question 5 in Part 2, Paper 2 (FCE Writing) was intended only for those candidates whose general knowledge was prominent; those whose literature background could provide them with sound foundations for a well-based review of the elements of the story required in the exam. I would even think that the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) could choose any title available in the market: classical or contemporary literature for the candidates to write about them on the exam’s date. I was totally, and shamefully wrong. What worried me most was that in an indirect and unintentional way, I would

transmit such wrong belief to my students making them feel afraid of such option, and what is worse, preventing them from choosing that option in the FCE writing paper!

However, once I got to know more about the FCE requirements for candidates: assessment bands, statistics for passing and non-passing candidates, and more specifically, the rationale behind the literature question, I began fostering graded reading among my students. I was then convinced of the huge benefits it would have over them in terms of comprehension, vocabulary, and above all, of boosting their self-esteem when dealing with the literature question in the actual FCE examination.

Now, I realise how wrong my old assumptions used to be. Now, I firmly believe that writing about a novel's plot, characters or its setting cannot be a scary experience, on the contrary, it could be such a personal and engaging adventure for a language learner or FCE candidate provided that he / she has really interpreted the features explained in the book in a critical way. This is the belief that encouraged me to start this investigation, and thus I transmitted it to every group of students in the preparatory courses that came to me ever since, and more specifically, to the group of learners who accepted to take part in this project work.

Before I met the group of students who took part in the project, I would encourage extensive reading based on graded readers, to every single group that I met, even at lower levels such as pre-intermediate learners, and even elementary ones. This was undoubtedly good for all of them, but I felt it was not enough to encourage literature question writing on the FCE exam day. Therefore, I started thinking of purposeful classroom tasks that could accompany that extensive reading, tasks that could involve the reader in the plot and characters of each story, and which could exploit their strongest skill as language learner: their speaking skills! It would prepare the path towards my ultimate objective: make students choose willingly to write about the *neglected* and *scary* literature question in the FCE examination.

With this thought in mind, I decided to try out in the real world, the extent to which it could actually work i.e. devise some oral tasks, similar in purpose to the ones candidates find in the real Paper 2 – fifth question,

and make the selected group of learners perform those oral activities. For example, if the writing exam task asked students to “write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet, and the questions that you would ask that character.” the oral task devised would be a role play in which the students had to “imagine you are in front of your favourite character of the book you have read: what questions would you ask him or her?”

My intention was also to make the students feel more confident, so I thought that the best way was to push them and be more critical, make them feel that their own opinions and judgements had a high value for me. In the above example, I would ask the students to explain why in the first place they chose such character, what features: physical or from personality attracted most of him / her; their points of view though short and simple, would be heard and respected by the rest of the class and me, of course. The task would therefore involve critical thinking from their part because they had to think carefully of what to ask based on their previous understanding of the text: explicit and implicit information, prepare the questions on the basis of what they would feel towards that character: positive or negative feelings, and freely choose an answer for every question pretending to be the character of the story. This practice would undoubtedly boost their self esteem towards understanding, critically interpreting, and expressing their own feelings, something they had not been used to doing so far.

Eventually, in class time, students were required to develop the corresponding writing question under exam conditions; the results were really rewarding: much more self-assurance, willingness to do the proposed written tasks, something they would have never imagined they could do, and most surprisingly: excellent performance in the content of their compositions, well-informed and critically analysed texts. Needless to say, I took advantage of the results and repeated the procedure several times using the graded readers that the University of Cambridge yearly sets, not only with the selected group of students for this project, but with other FCE preparatory groups – the results were always rewarding both for the learners and for me.

In this research project, you will find how the core idea was organised: the problem analysis in Chapter One, rationale and theoretical framework in Chapter Two, the actual application of the activities in Chapter Three, and the evaluation of such application in Chapter Four. I also include a series of recommendations or suggestions for future use of the activities described in this study, especially variations and adaptations for different levels.

As a final word, I would like to express my hope that the procedures described in this piece of work could help those colleagues who are looking for ways to engage their students in the development of reading and speaking skills. As far as FCE writing, the transformation of oral tasks into exam-like questions could also be a way to develop the writing skill *per se*, and thus boost your students' esteem and *like* for this neglected, sometimes undervalued language ability, not only at the intermediate level as I experienced with my group, but at other higher or lower levels as well.

CHAPTER I

INVESTIGATION OUTLINE

1.1. FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

The idea to develop this project stems from the concern to help upper-intermediate learners leading to take international language proficiency examinations, improve their confidence in producing written texts.

According to my experience as an EFL instructor in Lima, Peru, students who reach an adequate level of English language proficiency so as to take an UCLES First Certificate in English test, lack the standard skills to cope with Paper 5: Writing, and more specifically, with the fifth option of this paper: the literature question, which asks them to write a composition based upon one of the graded readers the University of Cambridge yearly sets for overseas candidates. This question is primarily an opinion question on either the story's characters, or its plot.

Due to the fact that students find a marked reluctance to do extensive reading, a way to play safe in the examination is for them to choose any other writing option but the literature one despite their awareness that the more exposure to reading input they have, the better production they will show in terms of vocabulary and writing styles.

After preparing groups of students to take FCE for over 15 years either at language schools or privately, and without much success in making them read and write with a purpose, I thought the time had come up for me to outline a plan and ask a specific FCE Prep group of learners at ACPB (Asociación Cultural Peruano - Británica) in Lima, to take part in the project. Fortunately for me - and for them, they gladly accepted, and we began to work together in one of ACPB's branches, the one in the town of San Borja, with an initial number of ten participants.

Once the core problem was identified, I decided to start the research work by giving a title to it: "*Extensive L2 Reading and Speaking as Foundations for Boosting Self-Esteem When Producing Literature-Based Written Texts*". This title would reflect the courses of action I was later going to take.

What came next would be the formulation of some general and specific hypotheses, the elaboration and application of tasks to the chosen subjects, and finally, the evaluation of their effectiveness.

1.2. HYPOTHESIS

1.2.1. GENERAL HYPOTHESIS

This research work tested the hypothesis that confidence in writing opinion-based texts would be improved by taking into consideration the relationships between motivational predictors and learners' amount/frequency of reading, along with the amount/ quality of their oral output.

1.2.2. SPECIFIC HYPOTHESES

1° After a certain amount of literature-based reading input and oral output, the selected group of learners would be able to produce a written essay on either the plot or characters of the set story.

2° This particular group of learners would feel a like for reading literature in English, by establishing relationship connections between the characters and themselves.

1.3. DELIMITATION OF THE OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this research work was to aim at the following:

To provide learners with sufficient input and motivation in reading graded readers in an extensive way so that they can feel confident enough and willing to compose an opinion-based text for Paper 5 in the FCE examination.

Consequently, the approach underpinning this research work would have to be of the deductive kind for it had to prove or disprove a hypothesis. See 3.4 for detailed specifications of the hypothesis.

1.3.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

As subsidiary goals, I wished my students were able:

- To overcome their fears towards literature by making them discover the pleasure of doing extensive reading through graded readers.
- To engage learners in oral communication tasks to understand and analyse the content of stories.
- To boost their self-esteem in order to make them feel capable of dealing with basic reading comprehension matters in a critical way.
- To produce well-informed and supported opinions on the characters, setting and plot of the stories in the graded readers.
- To overcome their fears related to dealing with Paper 2, Part 2: 5th writing options, by making them see how valuable their prior analysis and interpretation of the story is in order to have a solid basis and purpose for writing.
- To cope with the eventual requirement of the FCE writing task: submit an informed written opinion on the character(s), setting or plot of the assigned graded reader.
- To appreciate the value of respecting other peers' opinion and sharing theirs with them as well.
- To work collaboratively in teams, especially for the preparation and eventual presentation of oral tasks.

1.4. JUSTIFICATION OF THE INVESTIGATION

I wanted to rely on my students' prior training in L2 which had been based primarily on the communicative approach to language learning, to perform the devised oral tasks.

I was sure they were going to feel confident to express opinions orally first, and eventually on the paper, as they had developed more strategies when speaking rather than writing. It would undoubtedly be an asset for them, so they could feel more confident and assured when it came to expressing a view on something.

Boosting students' self-esteem then had to be a starting point in order to set solid foundations for the forthcoming classroom activities.

1.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The main difficulty I observed in this study was the unsteady number of students every month in the courses. It prevented me from keeping track of everyone's progress in a systematic and continuous way, but most importantly, to maintain group cohesion.

Courses at ACPB (Británico) last one month, three weeks and a half exactly, and during the process students fail, pass or stop studying; that is why we constantly welcome new-comers during the six months in which students receive their training to take the FCE examination.

With regards to learners, a limitation for them was the fact that at certain points of the process, they were unable to obtain sufficient number of copies from the books they were due to read. Self-access centres at Británico have a maximum of 8 copies per title. A sound solution though, was to accelerate the time allotted to students to complete their reading: three days instead of one week. With this measure, everyone managed to finish reading by the deadline agreed – though it did not guarantee full comprehension. On one occasion, the library staff offered to bring additional copies from other branches, but the administrative process lasted too long.

A final constraint I found is the little time my students and I had in the classroom to perform the oral and written tasks programmed in the schedule for this project. FCE Prep classes at Británico are mainly

focused on complying with a tight coursebook syllabus, so there is barely any time left to do supplementary activities such as exam practice or any other one devised by the trainer which could help students improve their language or skills.

1.6. ANTECEDENTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

Some previous studies that have been done which keep certain relationship with this investigation are the following:

The purpose of the first study was to add insight into the text debate: “Incorporating reading into EAP writing courses”¹ so as to deepen one’s understanding of how reading can be more effectively linked to writing in the EAP setting. The second research, alternatively, deals with issues of power and difference which lead to the political and cultural domination of language-minority students in the field of L2 product and analysis of process writing approaches.

The first case was a quantitative and qualitative study of 40 first-year university undergraduate students enrolled in an academic writing course for non-native speakers of English at an American university. The course focused on elements such as summarising, paraphrasing, synthesising material from source texts. For each of the writing assignments in the research, the students were asked to read one or more source texts (literary and non-literary), and then incorporate them into their writing. When asked, students indicated the value they found in dealing with both literary and non-literary texts. However, due to the small number of participants in the study, no firm conclusions could be drawn. On the other hand, the results contribute to the knowledge of how EAP learners feel about different kinds of reading and writing situations. The researcher ends up wondering what sort of texts trainers should use in EAP, and how they can enrich the reading dimension of such courses based upon the choice of texts, and of writing assignments in response to them.

¹ From “Incorporating Reading into EAP Writing Courses” by Alan Hirvela in *Research Perspectives on English for Academic Purposes*. Flowerdew, J. & Peacock, M. CUP, 2001: 330-346.

In this sense, my research has a strict connection with the author's wonders on further explorations of reading and writing settings as it answers, in a way, the extent to which students' motivation for doing extensive reading has a positive effect on their writing output.

Suresh Canagarajah² refers to a case study of a student's research writing to illustrate the ways in which issues of power and difference may be negotiated in L2 writing. She states that much of the teaching of academic or any other discourse has taken place in a product oriented manner. What the author points out from her study is that it is more important to teach students what to do with the discourses rather than using them mechanically and uncritically. She suggests teachers should situate writing strategies in the ideological and social context: Which strategies are students comfortable with? Which strategies work well for negotiating discursive conflicts? To what extent do students have a critical awareness of the discursive strategies they use? Likewise, the author argues that process oriented approaches to writing lack the social element as much as product oriented ones lack contextualised skills. Consequently, she states that when educators understand the challenges confronting EFL students in the total social context, they will adopt a critical attitude towards univocal discourses, and use them creatively and meaningfully in authentic communication.

The relationship of the study described above and this research work falls on the social aspect applied prior to the elaboration of the writing production itself. My students had the opportunity to freely choose the orientation of their written discourse. In that sense, the oral tasks they would select, gave them sound grounding for what they were going to produce on the paper later on. Choosing the tasks and performing them in class, contributed to the "democratic" spirit of the class making my students feel more at ease and socially aware of their relevance of team work for every single oral activity. Likewise, their writing performance proved to be equally benefited.

² From "Addressing Issues of Power and Difference in ESL Academic Writing" by Suresh Canagarajah in *Research Perspectives on English for Academic Purposes*. Flowerdew, J. & Peacock, M. CUP, 2001: 117-131.

CHAPTER II THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF BACKGROUND READING: ITS APPLICATION TO THE RESEARCH STUDY

In order to provide a theoretical context for the investigation and justify the selected research topic, I have considered that the following areas are the ones that constitute the foundations for the practical side of this project work. Likewise, I have tried to give a personal view and account of how this theory linked to what actually happened in the classroom, students' feelings and orientation before and after the realization of the oral tasks, and most importantly, when they were involved in written production.

2.1.1. FACTORS INFLUENCING L2 READING, SPEAKING AND WRITING

2.1.1.1. Metacognition

L2 learners tend to rely on their L1 metacognitive knowledge, that is, their linguistic ability or conscious knowledge of their mother tongue's language structures (or Cumming's "underlying proficiency threshold" - 1981), to transfer the interactive mental factors occurring when reading and writing, and apply them in L2.

In his contrast with cognitive skills, Schraw (1998) argues that metacognitive skills help one understand, regulate and evaluate the performance on a task, whereas cognitive skills just help the person to perform it. In other words, metacognition can help learners decide for example, the extent to which a task may be relevant or not to their purpose for doing it. In cognitive skills, in contrast, the learner applies previous knowledge in the realization of a task. For example, students apply cognition when in an early elementary lesson, they have to match famous names and their nationalities.

My students applied their metacognitive knowledge when they decided to engage in this project. They understood the relevance of their commitment, and most importantly, the positive implications of such attitude in their learning process. Likewise, cognitive skills were present every time they were involved in the realization of either oral or written tasks.

In a broader perspective, Brown (1988) exemplifies the concepts arguing that an activity such as reading for gist, i.e. looking for the main idea when reading a text, can be classed as both: cognitive, e.g. when answering general comprehension questions, and also metacognitive, when it is used to consciously self-evaluate reading comprehension.

In their attempt to prove that both cognitive and metacognitive strategies to reading can be transferred from L1 to L2, Knight et al (1985), identified 13 reading strategies used by two groups of readers: native speakers of English and non-native ones – see Appendix 2. When asked, the group of learners who took part in this project selected all the reading strategies they wanted to adopt in this project except for numbers 2, 9, 11 and 13. They thought they could take them as tools to improve comprehension before, while and after reading the stories.

Particularly, I think that just the fact of providing the students with the right to vote, and choose what they were more inclined to put into practice, gives them a great sense of responsibility, and above all awareness of their role as L2 learners. Linking this idea with Schraw's conception of metacognitive skills, I am sure that my students developed the skills of regulating and evaluating the performance on their own

tasks, something they might not have done if they had not been given the opportunity to take greater responsibility for their own learning. On this latter issue, section 2.1.3 develops more concepts and provides a wider scope of learners' attitudes.

2.1.1.2. Culture

Among others, Richards, J. (1997), observes the following groups into which the areas of L2 reading most influenced by cultural orientation fall:

A. Cultural orientation and attitudes towards text and purpose for reading.

According to Richards, "cultural orientation shapes attitudes toward a text". Over the last decade, Peruvian people, especially young adults, have been significantly influenced by the use of the latest information technology. This fact has made them develop a sense of curiosity for discovering or in some cases "re-discovering" new channels to interact with the rest of the world. With this positive perspective in mind, the subjects involved in the project were encouraged to establish an innovative approach in order to satisfy their curiosity and desire for communication through the creation of "bonds" between them and the content of the books. These bonds were expressed in the form of *internal dialogues* in which several questions were posed and eventually answered as the student kept on reading. This technique proved to be extremely beneficial, not only to set up a clear purpose for reading and writing (Rivers and Temperly 1978), but also to maintain students' attention and interest every time they had to face the plot of a new story.

B. Cultural orientation and beliefs about the reading process.

With the technique described above, reading was no longer a boring and purposeless activity for this group of learners. On the contrary, it proved to be fun, personalized and in a way unique in the sense that there was a secret connection between the reader and the author, specifically when he/she would get involved in predicting, confirming or rejecting the assumptions that came up to his/her mind while reading the plot. Unfortunately, this innovative approach to teach how to develop reading skills is not fostered in current L1 reading

curricula at Peruvian schools yet, so it took my students some time to get used to applying the technique with the graded readers assigned.

C. Cultural orientation and background knowledge.

The knowledge of the world that the learners bring to the foreign language classroom is of crucial importance, even more when it can act as a tool to foster the development of both their reading skills, and the content of their writing production. The activation of schemata – i.e. the mental scripts we all possess for previously lived situations stored in our short or long-term memories – is something that teachers should not neglect. In the language classroom it is tremendously important to recall learners' schemata and associate it with a purpose e.g. a task, because it has been proved that learners are much more likely to accurately perceive and decode input that is expected, relevant or useful for their own purpose(s) than one which is not. In our project, this activation occurred in the lead-in and warm-up stages within the pre-reading section every time students were about to read a new story. However, though not measured, it was continuously present in the reading process itself when students applied the *internal dialogue* technique described above.

2.1.1.3. Motivation

According to Wikipedia³, “Motivation is the set of reasons that determines one to engage in a particular behaviour.” Based upon this statement, I deduced the inference that the factors that kept my students engaged in the project had, without a shadow of a doubt, a motivational foundation. An increasing positive attitude among them can be explained in terms of:

A. Types of motivation

Both were observed: *Instrumental* (Gardner and Lambert 1959), i.e. learners' desire to acquire the language as an instrument for achieving a goal, in this case, for passing an international examination, get a better job or apply for post graduate university studies, and also, *Intrinsic*, i.e. when the learner experiences a feeling of security and achievement as a

result of successful performance. Research has found that intrinsic motivation is usually associated with high educational achievement and enjoyment by students. Fritz Heider's³ attribution theory, Bandura's⁴ work on self-efficacy, and Ryan and Deci's⁵ cognitive evaluation theory state that students are likely to be intrinsically motivated if they:

1. attribute their educational results to internal factors that they can control (e.g. the amount of effort they put in)
2. believe they can be effective agents in reaching desired goals (i.e. the results are not determined by luck)
3. are interested in mastering a topic, rather than just rote-learning to achieve good grades.

My students proved to be intrinsically motivated for several reasons. Firstly, they were convinced that the more amounts of effort and dedication they put in the different stages of the project, the better results they could have in terms of vocabulary, comprehension, fluency and above all, task focus (i.e. producing written texts having a full awareness of the content of the story). Secondly, this particular group of learners believed that they would be able to reach the desired goal of passing the writing component in the FCE examination, a feeling that got stronger every time they had to perform an oral task. They gained enough confidence and self assurance that they could be as successful in the examination as in any other section of the test. Finally, their ultimate wish was to experience the feeling of satisfaction after knowing about literature issues, specifically, classical English literature,

3 Heider (February 18, 1896 – January 2, 1988) was an Austrian psychologist whose work was related to the Gestalt school. In 1958 he published *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*, which systematized and expanded upon his creation of balance theory and attribution theory.

4 Bandura's theory is based on the belief that those with high self-efficacy expectancies - the belief that one can achieve what one sets out to do - are healthier, more effective, and generally more successful than those with low self-efficacy expectancies.

5 Deci & Ryan (2002) described Perceived Locus of Causality (PLOC) and Perception of Competence as the two primary cognitive aspects of contextual events that affect intrinsic motivation.

something that they never imagined they could reach; their general knowledge of the world got expanded by the end of the project.

B. Methodology / Techniques

In her article “Developing Communicative Competence”, Mary Finocchiaro (English Teaching Forum Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 2–7) argues that “*methodology must be suited to the aptitude and **interests of the learner** and to the personality and preparation of **the teacher***”. Highlighted are the key factors for (un)successful learning / teaching. Among others in a list of 30, Bartley (1969:) includes these two factors in a scale called The Foreign Language Attitude Scale. She measured the correlation between aptitude and attitude and demonstrated that less positive attitudes when learning a foreign language resulted in lower aptitude scores. The techniques applied in this project clearly proved that the more appealing the tasks were (by tasks I refer not only to the reading itself, but also to the post-reading ones: speaking and writing activities), the more involvement/commitment students showed, and thus, the better results they had when producing well-informed pieces of written work.

The teacher’s job in the planning stage then becomes of prior importance and decisive to obtain the desired levels of interest. In this particular case, the oral tasks were carefully designed to match not only the requirements of the writing topics of the exam, but also the learners’ likes. I decided to give them the opportunity to, apart from reading and writing, explore other areas such as their creative side, and apply them to the development of more personalised activities, for example the creation of posters, pictograms, games, web designs etc. This is something that fascinated the students and obviously made feel comfortable and highly motivated to do the whole set of devised tasks.

C. A Psychological approach to motivation: Need Achievement Theory

McClelland et al (1953) suggested that different levels of the need to achieve are the result of previous learning experiences. “Achievers” are those people who, on the basis of previous learning experiences, perceive new learning situations (innovative ones like in the case of this project) as challenging, whereas low achievers perceive them as discouraging due to unsuccessful experiences. According to McClelland, achievers avoid low-risks situations for easily gained success is not a genuine achievement for them. What was observed all along the duration of this project is that my students proved to belong to the group of high Need Achievers. Although Gardner and Lambert (1972: 131) stated that correlations between the Need Achievement construct and language learning were not high, I consider that in this particular case, the positive outcomes and successful results show the opposite. In any case, the correlation issue is something I would like to deepen in future studies through more sophisticated research instruments.

D. Cooperative learning

One of the reasons why my students found the learning experience unique and motivating was the sense of cooperation and collaboration when they were involved in the development of the tasks in the post-reading stage. Richard-Amato (1988: 193) points out that “*in cooperative learning there is an interdependence established among students in each group as they strive for the achievement of group or individual objectives. This technique draws from behaviourism and humanism.*” As I see it, this interdependence gives positive results in the learning process in terms of students’ involvement and motivation as they enjoy interacting with their peers and aim at target goals together, with no differences whatsoever. In addition, the environment results less threatening, especially for those who need to gain more confidence, not only when speaking, but also when writing. In this respect, it is necessary to point out

that I used a horizontal approach so as to boost my students' self esteem: I made them select the post-reading tasks that suited them most by themselves. The kind of tasks were not imposed vertically by the teacher, instead, they had to reach a consensus as a group, so everyone's opinion had equal importance and every member of the group had the "moral" responsibility to do their best for the group's well-being. This was undoubtedly a commitment they assumed from the very beginning and got reflected every time they performed an oral activity.

2.1.2. AUTHENTICITY AND TEXT CHOICE

Choosing a text was out of question as UCLES is the one that yearly sets the books candidates have to read. However, among the five due titles for that year, I tentatively chose an order of priority for my students to read based on what I presumed would appeal to them most. The idea behind was to make them discover the pleasure for reading by producing an interaction between both parts: reader and text, and with the first title, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, I got it. Students got engaged with its plot and characters from the very beginning.

Widdowson (1990) calls this relationship "authenticity". He argues that regardless its genuineness, a text is supposed to produce an authentic or real life-like response on the reader. For him, a genuine text i.e. not adapted for language purposes, is not necessarily better than a modified one; what matters is that it can make the reader *react*, and that a relationship between both parts: reader and text can emerge.

Before reading Widdowson, I classed a text as authentic to the one that can be found in the real world, e.g. a piece of news in the newspaper, whereas non-authentic to that one adapted for language purposes; now, my students and me are aware of the difference. They read graded readers – i.e. adapted versions of the original ones – but what mattered for them was the content of what they kept on discovering, and how connected they were with that content; that is something they enjoyed and eventually valued and thanked.

To sum up this section, I would like to mention Krashen, S. (1985:5) who points out the positive pedagogical effects of reading for pleasure in his hedonistic philosophy to language acquisition⁶. The positive effects mentioned by Krashen were experienced by my students when they were exposed to the very first story; there was an engagement of both parts: reader and text, and the results were reflected not only in their written output, but also in the attitude towards the act of reading itself. They felt like reading more stories after this first successful experience, which was positive, rewarding, and encouraging for me as a teacher.

2.1.3. LEARNER AUTONOMY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Until before the beginning of this work, students had been too dependent on what the teacher had to offer or do for their learning. They used to be passive receptacles of anything the teacher considered to be good for their education. They were used to behaving in that way basically because they would transfer such attitudes from L1 learning. Unfortunately, in the Peruvian educational system, learner's autonomy is not fostered, so primary / secondary school teaching, especially in state schools, still have a long way to research in this field.

A challenge for me as an educator was to create in the group of students who took part of the project, a sense of autonomy to manage their own learning. This issue is of particular importance as it proved to be a key element in the development of the project. Therefore, I decided to take the following steps:

The first stage in this process of change was thus to *raise awareness*. Scharle and Szabo (2000:9) argue that in this phase the learner should be presented with new view points and experiences so as to "... bring the inner process of their learning to the conscious level of their thinking" i.e. bring them to discoveries and make them feel puzzled by those discoveries; it is like showing a child the world and see him enjoy discovering it by himself. My students experienced these new sensations as soon as they started reading the first book.

⁶ There is impressive evidence that FRVR (Free Voluntary Reading) has a powerful effect on the development of literacy.

In the second phase called **changing attitudes**, Scharle and Szabo state that students should be encouraged to get rid of old patterns of behaviour in the classroom i.e. passive, receptive ones, and adopt little by little more participative risk-taking roles. As mentioned above, in the post-reading stage my students were prompted to choose oral activities by themselves; for them it was shocking at first as they were used to be told what to do (and not to do), but with the time, they saw it as a normal course of action and I could notice how initiative and responsibility from their part increased as time went by.

The last phase Scharle and Szabo consider in the process of developing learner responsibility is that of **transferring roles**. Though it may seem more demanding for the teacher in terms of classroom management, passing her role to the learner signifies allotting him more freedom for accomplishing and selecting tasks, an innovative attitude which at least in our case, resulted in actual awareness of all the potential students had as language learners, something that undoubtedly helped them overcome problems of low self-esteem in the English language.

2.1.4. TRANSACTIONAL AND INTERACTIONAL FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE

These two functions were observed all over the duration of the project. The first one refers to the transfer of information whereas the second to the maintenance of social relationships (Brown and Yule 1983).

There was plenty of information students had to transmit to each other while they discussed the content of the graded readers and prepared the oral tasks in groups. For instance, every time they finished reading a book, they had to form groups and start negotiating the selection of the oral activities which they were later going to perform. By negotiation of meaning we have to refer to “... *the skill of making sure the person you are speaking to has correctly understood you, and that you have correctly understood them*” (Nunan, 1989). Then, once selected the tasks, they were engaged in their preparation. In this stage, students benefited not only from the transfer of information, but also from genuine communicative interaction; they had a social or personal reason to speak.

Consequently, the results of communication were several e.g. information gaps were filled, problems were solved, decisions were reached and most importantly social contacts were made; in short, speech acts were naturally activated.

Finally, when it came to acting out or presenting what they had prepared, these students showed a new ability: extemporize on a developed script to the whole class and teacher. Inhere they made use of their motor-perceptive skills i.e. the correct use of sounds and grammatical structures of the language.

Despite the fact that we now know these skills *per se* are not going to make the learner interact communicatively and genuinely as in the real world, raising awareness of their importance on academic grounds, is something the students in this project really valued as it had a direct link with their purpose for studying English: passing an international language test which involved proficiency in both skills and language.

2.1.5. PRODUCT, PROCESS & GENRE APPROACHES TO WRITING

2.1.5.1. PRODUCT APPROACH

The product approach to writing goes along with the audio-lingual ideology. In addition, under this perspective, the learner is expected to imitate copy and transform models provided by teachers or textbooks. Accordingly, the final product in which the writer's language knowledge is reflected becomes highly valued. The teacher's role is that of a model provider and examiner.

The main criticism to the product approach to writing is to attach too much importance to the final production than to the process skills themselves. What students bring from outside the classroom as social individuals is as important as obtaining a piece of writing. If we only evaluate the products based on preconceived and fixed notions about good writing, we are undervaluing students' skills and knowledge.

2.1.5.2. PROCESS APPROACH

The process approach to writing comes as a reaction against the product approach and is based on the recognition of the writing process as cyclical. In other words, it lays particular stress on a cycle of writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data towards a finished text. Consequently, the teacher's role is now a facilitator who helps in a typical four-stage process:

- Pre-writing: The brainstorming and generation of ideas prior to writing.
- Composing/drafting: The act of writing itself, but in an "informal" way; amendments are permitted.
- Revising: Going back as many times as it is necessary so as to look for better forms to express ideas clearer.
- Editing: Correcting mistakes of meaning and form to obtain the best result.

One salient characteristic in process writing is that it is linguistic skills, not knowledge that are primarily valued. Furthermore, writing as a social and collaborative act is acknowledged. In collaborative writing, writers' interaction with the other members of their surroundings is fostered. This is the reason why high priority is allotted to the audience – i.e. who the written text is for – and purpose – i.e. why the text is written, the main reason for communicating the written word. Lastly, two skills have been detected to be crucial in the process approach to writing: critical thinking and problem-solving skills. They both provide writing with the power of self-discovery – an element that plays a motivational part in learners – and also cognitive development, which has to do with the benefits supplied by metacognition. Undoubtedly, these skills should also be developed in light of our students' future writing needs on the grounds of their personal and professional life.

What particularly attracted my attention as a drawback to this approach is what Horowitz⁷ argues about the process-oriented view. He

⁷ Horowitz, D. 1986: 445-462.

states that it fails to prepare students for 'at least one essential type of academic writing': the essay examination writing.

It is widely known that nowadays our students are bombarded with the huge offer of EFL, EAP or ESL examinations, and thus are offered to take preparatory courses in order to pass them. Most of these learners take the courses so as to comply with instrumental or intrinsic inclinations. However, here is when the process approach clashes with the requirement of these examinations: the need to produce a piece of written work under time constraints, and most severely the lack of choice from the part of the student to freely write about a topic of their own. Contrastively, the process approach encourages students to choose topics most appealing to them, and most importantly, the process itself is one in which the writer is expected to write and revise the drafts over and over again, something that cannot be achieved under exam conditions. In this sense, the approach in question might not be suitable for the "process writer". On the contrary "good" model texts – final products – may be ideal as a way for familiarizing with what is expected from them. Many writing teachers find it hard to apply this approach in all settings. Consequently, in order to produce essays in the form of a narration, argumentation, description, etc, it is suggested that the product approach be applied, whereas a process one be considered for more open contexts such as personal or professional.

2.1.5.3. THE GENRE APPROACH

According to Bamforth (1993 cited in Nunan, 2003):

Genre theory grounds writing in particular social context, and stresses the convention-bound nature of much discourse. Writing, therefore, involves conformity to certain established patterns, and the teacher's role is to induce learners into particular discourse communities and their respective text types (p. 94).

The genre process approach sees writing as a series of stages starting from a particular situation, purpose, to process writing and then finally to the final text. The theory perceives texts as attempts to communicate with readers. Hence communicative purposes determine the social contexts in which writing is used, and the text types that characterized by both the grammatical items and the overall shape or

structure of the discourse. Writing instruction in this perspective may have three stages:

- modeling the target genre
- analyzing the genre through teacher-student negotiation
- constructing a final text (Hyland, 2002, p. 21)

By acknowledging that writing takes place in social situations, the genre approach provides a link between private act and social recognition. It attaches equal importance to both the constraints of the writing situation and the writer's mental processes, a dimension that is missing in the process approach.

Finally, it also understands that learning happens through imitation and analysis. A genre approach is extremely helpful to learners studying English for Academic Purposes (EAP) entails training students, usually in a Higher Education setting, to use language appropriately for study. It therefore is a challenging and multi-faceted area within the wider field of English language learning and teaching (ELT).

Criticisms of the genre approach come similar to the product approach. First, in this approach, writing skills are also undervalued with more focus on forms and styles. Secondly, learners in this approach are largely passive since model presentation and analysis make up most of the teaching activities.

2.1.6. ASSESSMENT IN EFL COMPOSITION

Initially, I thought of considering the following criteria for assessing my students' written production:

CRITERIA FOR PARAGRAPH ASSESSMENT:

<u>Paragraph Organization:</u>		/4 marks
T.S.	0.5 m.	
S.Ss.	3 m (6 sentences: 3 supporting and 3 examples/ explanations/ consequences etc.	
R.S.	0.5 m	
<u>Content:</u>		/2.5 marks
Did you really answer the question?		
<u>Grammar & Vocabulary:</u>		/2 marks
Did you make an appropriate use of tenses, structures, and specific vocabulary?		
<u>Mechanics:</u>		/0.5 mark
Use of <i>Periods</i> and CAPITAL LETTERS		
<u>Spelling:</u>		/0.5 mark
<u>Legible handwriting:</u>		/0.5 mark
		<hr/>
TOTAL:		/10 marks

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

1° LAYOUT

INTRODUCTION: Present both views
2 lines

Topic Sentence
Supporting Sentences

ARGUMENTS FOR THE TOPIC

8/10 lines

Topic Sentence
Supporting Sentences

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE TOPIC

8/10 lines

YOUR OPINION
2/3 lines

TOTAL: 20/25 lines = 200/250 words

2° CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

OUTLINE	1	pt
PARAGRAPH 1	1	pt
PARAGRAPH 2	2.5	pts
PARAGRAPH 3	2.5	pts
PARAGRAPH 4	1	pt
LANGUAGE	1	pt
LAY-OUT	0.5	pt
LEGIBLE HANDWRITING	0.5	pt
TOTAL: 10 pts		

Content and connectors are considered in paragraph assessment.
LANGUAGE includes correct grammar & appropriate vocabulary.

However, after returning to my general and specific objectives for developing the project, I opted for a more open, tolerant and up to a point more holistic approach to use with this particular group of learners. The most weight when assessing should fall on quality feedback in opposition to quantitative scores. These ones could remain only to cater for administrative and institutional policies.

The decision was also taken after reading the literature containing in the article: “*Decision Making While Rating ESL / EFL Writing Tasks: A Descriptive Framework*”⁸. In this article, the authors⁹ state that holistic schemes for writing can, with extensive training and monitoring, produce reliable consistent assessments.

In short, the article describes the decisions that experienced writing assessors make when evaluating ESL/EFL written compositions, in this case when assessing the writing component in the TOEFL exam. In one

⁸ The Modern Language Journal, 86, i, (2002) 0026- 7902 / 02 / pp. 67-96.

⁹ Alister Cumming, Robert Kantor, Donald E. Powers.

of the studies done, researchers refined the pre-established framework by analyzing think-aloud protocols from 7 of the same ESL/EFL raters who had rated compositions from 6 ESL students on 5 different writing tasks involving writing in response to reading or listening material – the same input given in my investigation. In addition to documenting and analyzing in detail the thinking processes of these raters, they found that both groups of raters used similar decision-making behaviors, in similar proportions of frequency, while assessing both the TOEFL essays and the new writing tasks, thus verifying the appropriateness of their descriptive framework. In conclusion, raters attended more extensively to rhetoric and ideas in compositions they scored high than in compositions they scored low. In contrast, the ESL/EFL raters attended more extensively to language than to rhetoric and ideas overall, whereas the EMT (English as Mother Tongue) raters balanced more evenly their attention to these main features of the written compositions.

Despite the conventions established by the institution I used to work for at the time this project work was done, I adopted the view of the “holistic” raters mentioned above. They went for assigning more marks to the clarity in the expression of ideas, rather than to sound linguistic competence. The main support for taking this decision in my case was the idea of boosting my students’ self-esteem and not discouraging them with corrections of mechanics, or structures for example.

My main objective in this study was as the general title says: *EXTENSIVE L2 READING AND SPEAKING AS FOUNDATIONS FOR BOOSTING SELF-ESTEEM WHEN PRODUCING LITERATURE-BASED WRITTEN TEXTS*. Consequently, I had to be consistent and go for a scheme of correcting in which I could help these students to feel more confident, and to a point to praise them for their effort awarding a motivating mark.

In all cases, the score to use was out of 10, being 7 a satisfactory “passing” mark. Specifications on students’ grades over the months in which the study was carried out can be seen in 4.1.3: “Findings regarding the written performance sheets”.

2.2. DEFINITIONS TO CONSIDER IN AN EFL CONTEXT AND THE CURRENT STUDY

- literature question:

Writing task in the First Certificate Examination in which candidates are asked to compose a text based on a specific aspect of a set book e.g. its plot, characters or setting.

- graded reader:

A book, whose language and lexis have been adapted by levels of proficiency, so as to be understood by non-native speakers of the target language.

- extensive reading:

It refers to the reading of long texts for pleasure, usually done off the language classroom, and on a voluntary basis, e.g. the reading of a novel or a graded reader.

- communicative competence:

Being competent *communicatively* speaking, in contrast to being *linguistically* competent, refers to showing the skills to put meanings across confidently and appropriately in terms of when, where and to whom they are applied, regardless of whether they are grammatically correct or not.

- communicative approach:

The approach applied by the language teacher in which the ultimate purpose is to provide the learner with the tools to make him/her exchange real-life like information with a peer. Simulation or role-play tasks are typical examples of this approach.

- reading for gist:

Looking for the main idea when reading a text.

- purpose for reading:

In EFL, the task assigned to the learner before reading so that he/she has a concrete reason for facing the input.

- background knowledge:

The knowledge the learner brings with him/her to the language classroom on a specific issue.

- schemata:

The knowledge of the world framed into the experiences the learner has lived and stored in his/her mind in the form of scenarios i.e. mental scripts we all possess for previously lived situations stored in our short or long-term memories.

- input:

What comes into the person through the senses e.g. a piece of music, some food. In EFL, any piece of language presented to the learner in the form of a listening or written text which the learner “takes in”.

- lead-in stage:

The early stage in a lesson plan in which the teacher leads the learner into the topic of the lesson through a kind of stimuli, e.g. watching a video and asking him/her questions containing (part of) the target language to be presented and practiced later on.

- warm-up stage:

The stage of the lesson in which the learner is exposed to the target language more overtly, also by some kind of stimuli, and where he/ she may attempt to show some immediate production of such language: *deep-end approach*.

- pre-reading stage:

The learner is given a task which he/she should perform previous to the first exposure with the text e.g. predict the content of the text by only looking at pictures.

- while-reading stage:

The idea in this stage is to have a specific purpose in mind while reading, i.e. the learner is involved in the performance of certain comprehension or interpretation tasks during the first or nth

contact with the reading passage. Tasks may be oriented to get the gist of the text or to look for some specific information.

- post-reading stage:

Like in real life, in the language classroom this stage refers to what people normally do after reading a text e.g. talk about it if the text is a piece of news, or write a letter to the editor expressing one's views on a given article.

- real life-like response:

A reaction similar to the one a native speaker may have on the basis to a certain stimuli prepared by the teacher in advance e.g. a role play in which the learner simulates being the customer in a restaurant and responds to the waiter's questions to take his order.

- authentic:

Real, taken from the real world. However, in EFL and according to S. Krashen¹⁰, it can be any input the learner can receive – taken from the real world or created for language purposes – so as to make him produce a real life-like response.

- FRVR:

Free voluntary reading. See the explanation for “extensive reading” on page 25.

- speech acts:

A speech act refers to the basic unit of language used to express meaning; it can be for example, an utterance that expresses an intention.

- deductive research:

Research concerned with the control of factors – especially the ones that may interfere with cause and effect relationships. The researcher's starting point is the hypothesis which he/she then develops testing its feasibility.

¹⁰ Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning. Prentice-Hall, 1982. Chapter 8

- internal / external validity:

A study that readily allows its findings to generalise to the population at large has high external validity whereas the degree that we are successful in eliminating confounding variables within the study itself is referred to as internal validity.

- syntax:

Arrangement of words in sentences, clauses, and phrases, and the study of the formation of sentences and the relationship of their component parts.

- qualitative data:

It refers to the kind of information to be gathered by the researcher which involves for example: recorded interviews, field notes, journal and diary entries, photos or videos.

- process approach to writing:

A process involving steps such as brainstorming ideas, planning, drafting, seeking feedback from peers or the instructor, revising reconsidering organization at the paragraph or sentence level, proofreading, and finally presenting the last product.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. TYPE OF RESEARCH: ORIGIN

This research is based upon a deductive orientation for it attempts to demonstrate a clear relationship of cause and effect (co-occurrence of “phenomena” according to John Stuart Mill in “A System of Logic”(1843) between the variables. The idea was to test the feasibility of the proposed hypothesis (See 3.4), i.e. confirm or reject it.

Deductive research is then concerned with the control of factors – especially the ones that may interfere with cause and effect relationships – as well as with internal and external validity.

In order to be consequent with the type of research to be done the following issues had to be born in mind:

3.1.1. CONCRETION LEVEL

According to the concretion level, the hypothesis in this research work can be regarded as *operative*. Hypothesis of the operative kind indicate the operations or necessary activities that the researcher will have to observe, to measure or to manipulate. The hypothesis is strictly linked to the specific hypothesis or hypotheses.

3.1.2. MAGNITUDE

According to the magnitude, the hypothesis in the case of this research study is: General and Specific.

General hypothesis responds to the outlined problem.

Specific hypothesis deals with more concrete aspects derived from the general outline.

3.1.3. USED METHODOLOGY

According to the used methodology, this project work falls into the *empiric-analytic* orientation, or better known as *positivist quantitative* investigation. Moreover, it can be regarded as non experimental or post facto because what I did was simply to take notes of the measurements without modifying the phenomenon. However, I did select values to estimate relationships among variables.

It is also worthwhile mentioning that the investigation has a *descriptive* foundation. The investigator in this kind of study describes the occurrences which have taken place along the period of time. It is regarded as the first level of scientific knowledge. The outcomes provide us with valuable pieces of information for future more developed investigation.

3.2. ASSUMPTIONS

- Ever since I started preparing upper intermediate learners to take international examinations, I had been interested in knowing the reason(s) why they remained reluctant to read the set books they were required to read, and thus to choose the literature question in the FCE writing paper.
- I had also observed a constant imbalance between the quality and quantity of students' oral output versus their written production. Communicative oral skills for FCE preparatory groups used to remain at the level i.e. upper intermediate, whereas their ability to produce written work in terms of style, content and language kept at a lower level.

3.3. QUESTIONS

Having formulated the above assumptions in a general sense, the following questions arose:

- What is it that makes learners refuse to read literature in English?
- Why isn't the literature question in the FCE writing paper an option for learners?
- Would learners' oral communicative competence help them cope with the demands required by UCLES to succeed in composition?

3.4. HYPOTHESIS

This research work tested the hypothesis that **confidence in writing opinion-based texts would be improved by taking into consideration the relationships between motivational predictors and learners' amount/frequency of reading, along with the amount/quality of their oral output.**

3.4.1. INDEPENDENT VARIABLES:

Also called the "predictor" is the factor or phenomenon which the investigator manipulates in order to see what effect any changes will have: X_1, X_2, \dots

3.4.2. DEPENDENT VARIABLE:

It is the means by which any changes are measured; it is called the "predicted" factor. In other words, it is the variable about which, predictions are made: "Y".

What I tried to test in this research work was the extent to which *variations in motivation* (X), would predict *improvement in producing pieces of written work* (Y) - literature based - as measured by changes in:

1. *the students' amount and frequency of reading upper-intermediate graded readers.*
2. *the amount and quality of their oral production based upon pre-devised tasks.*

Independent variable: variations in motivation

- Dependent variables:**
1. the students' amount and frequency of reading upper-intermediate graded readers.
 2. the amount and quality of their oral production based upon pre-devised tasks.

3.5. SAMPLE AND IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS

3.5.1. THE SUBJECTS

Population: EFL upper-intermediate students from Asociación Cultural Peruano - Británica): ACPB, (Lima, Peru) doing a preparatory course to take the UCLES FCE examination.

Sample: One classroom from the ACPB San Borja branch in Lima, starting the fourth month (out of six) of the FCE Prep course with an initial size of ten participants. If we talk on quantitative grounds, this figure represents 0.1 per cent of the whole population of students that ACPB currently has.

A course of any kind at ACPB lasts effectively, 3 weeks. Courses start every month; this allows students to move from one schedule to another according to their needs. In other words, not the same individuals who start an FCE Prep 1 course in this case, finish together after month number six. For this reason, the participant selection process remained open during the three months that the study lasted, letting additional participants join in at any point. This kind of sampling is called: *iteration*.

There were 15 students in total: ten in the first month, and five more in the second and third – see names in 3.5.1.2 – most of which were young adults doing university studies, three middle-aged male students, one of them who belonged to the Peruvian navy.

3.5.2. THE LEARNING SCENARIO

At the beginning of the project, this group of subjects was half the way through a course called Advanced; they were doing the fourth out of six FCE Preparatory courses at Asociación Cultural Peruano-Británica (ACPB) in the San Borja branch in Lima-Peru. As all FCE students at ACPB, these ones were using the book called “Expert”: Bell, J., Gower,

R. (2003) Pearson Education Ltd. in their preparation, and had already covered the first half of it, i.e. the first six units; they were about to start Unit 7, and had only 3 months ahead before they took the FCE examination in December. By that time, they had hardly read any graded readers or attempted to borrow any of the ones suggested by UCLES as a way to supplement their training despite the fact that they had them at their disposal in the school's library called SAC: Self Access Centre.

The emphasis made in the coursebook used, *Expert*, is upon the development of productive skills, being speaking the strongest. Writing follows a more product approach as learners base their production on given models of different kinds: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, as well as formal and informal letters. However, I could notice that no models or procedures are taught to encourage learners to deal with the literature question, the fifth option in Paper 2, Part 2.

As far as receptive skills are concerned, reading and listening, students are exposed to exam like texts – in terms of content and question types - in which they are trained through strategies, to cope with the ones in Paper 1 in the FCE exam. Once again, as for reading, no emphasis is given to set books so that students can get more acquainted with them, and more importantly, with the types of questions they are expected to encounter in the writing section: literature question.

3.5.3. THE INSTITUTION

ACPB, Asociación Cultural Peruano - Británica, or “*Britanico*” is a non-profit language and cultural centre whose main purpose is to establish educational bonds between Peru and the United Kingdom. It has 72 years' presence in Peru and receives the support of the British Council for most of its activities. There are nine language centres in Lima, Peru, offering general English courses at all levels: elementary, intermediate and advanced and for all age range groups: infants, pre-kids, kids, juniors, and adults. Advanced courses are only given to adults and they mainly consist of preparatory courses to take the University of Cambridge examinations: FCE, CAE, and CPE.

In the case of FCE Prep courses, students receive training for a period of six months, after which they are ready to take the examination

in March, June or December. Classes are offered on a daily basis, for 1.5 hours, in a total of 18 sessions a month, i.e. 27 contact hours a month, or 162 during the whole six-month course. Openings to begin new courses are given on a monthly basis, so students have the opportunity to stop the preparation at any point, joining another group when they decide to return.

FCE Prep courses are called Advanced 1, 2 ... 6. The coursebook used for these courses is First Certificate Expert: Pearson Education Limited 2003, Jan Bell and Roger Gower. Every Advanced course covers two modules; each one of those modules consists of two units, so four units a month which, as mentioned above, are done in 27 hours, actually 23 discounting two tests: mid and final, and the last day's session: test feedback or remedial class. Every module deals with a different topic e.g. lifestyles, careers, the arts, etc. and there are supplementary grammar and vocabulary practice per module.

FCE students have hardly any time for further activities within the established class period, as the syllabus is quite tight, and also because the profile of the learner at this particular level is a college student who takes classes during the academic semester of his/her university, so extra learning activities at ACPB are not priority. Normally, students attend classes and leave; very few stay in the premises to do further work: reading, listening, or grammar practice.

However, the ACPB as an educational institution offers learners and the general public facilities such as library, resource centre – for students and teachers, gallery and auditorium where innumerable cultural and artistic activities are programmed every month; some of these activities are offered in the English language, and performed by professional artists or amateurs such as the students themselves.

3.5.4. IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE GROUP

The subjects involved shared characteristics similar to the population as a whole such as:

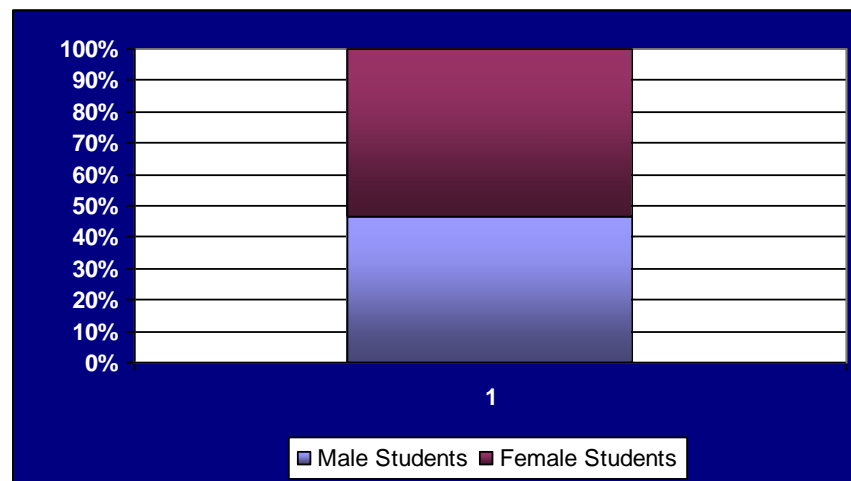
3.5.4.1. Ethnography

In his book *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, Z. Dornyei cites Harklau (2005) pointing out that *culture is not limited to ethnic groups but can be related to any “bounded units” such as organizations, programmes, and even distinct communities. Thus, we can talk about the ethnography of the language classroom, or the ethnographic analysis of specific schools, or other language learning contexts.*

In this respect, the participants to this study all came from the same “organizational culture”. Most of them had done elementary to intermediate EFL studies at ACPB, and had spent 2 years studying English prior to the beginning of this project. “Acculturation” was thus, in this case, unnecessary for we all belonged to the same context. Last but not least, they all shared the same mother tongue: Spanish.

3.5.4.2. Age and Gender

The graph below shows the percentage of boys and girls in the classroom:



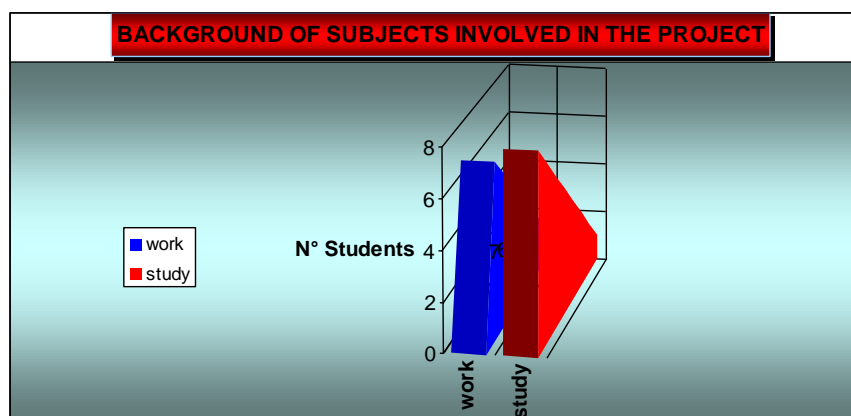
Out of fifteen students in class, seven were boys: 47%, and eight were girls: 53%.

SUBJECT N°	NAME	AGE	GENDER	JOINED
1	Almeyda, Danny	17	masculine	1 st month
2	Bazan, Walter	16	masculine	1 st month
3	Cardenas, Jesus	48	masculine	1 st month
4	Carranza, Lorena	19	feminine	1 st month
5	Cubas, Kelly	20	feminine	1 st month
6	Molina, Maria Elvira	28	feminine	1 st month
7	Muro, Richard	24	masculine	1 st month
8	Olaechea, Guilma	26	feminine	1 st month
9	Palacios, Annabel	22	feminine	1 st month
10	Quispe, Carlos	38	masculine	1 st month
11	Castillo, Rafael	21	masculine	2 nd month
12	Dulanto, Rosa	34	feminine	2 nd month
13	Excebio, Claudia	23	feminine	2 nd month
14	Huamani, David	23	masculine	2 nd month
15	Ortega, Rosa	26	feminine	2 nd month

3.5.4.3. Educational and L2 Learning Background

SUBJECT N°	EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND	L2 LEARNING BACKGROUND	PRIOR EXPOSURE TO L2
1	High school student	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB.	27 months
2	High school student	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB.	27 months
3	Navy officer	ESP knowledge, took a placement exam which placed him in a basic course.	18 months
4	University student	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB.	27 months
5	Between jobs	Had studied intermediate courses at ACPB, and the basic ones at another language school.	30 months
6	Secretary	took a placement exam	11 months
7	Medical student	Took a placement test and had been studying for over a year	12 months

8	Pre-school teacher	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB.	27 months
9	Musical student	Had studied at a bilingual school, so took a placement exam	10 months
10	Post graduate university student	Had studied intermediate courses at ACPB, not the basic ones as he comes from a bilingual school.	15 months
11	Between jobs	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB.	27 months
12	Housewife	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB.	10 months
13	University student	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB.	27 months
14	Medical student	Had studied the basic and intermediate courses at ACPB on a super intensive basis.	15 months
15	Civil servant at SUNAT	Had studied at a bilingual school, so took a placement exam and was placed in an intermediate course.	9 months



3.6. DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUMENT(S)

The following research instruments were used in this study:

3.6.1. INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

It aimed at finding out what writing option (out of five) in FCE Paper 5 - Part 2, students would choose if they were in real examination

conditions, and secondly, which of those options they would never choose and why – see Appendix 1.

3.6.2. QUESTION TYPES

The task was to make a list of the most common writing question types for this part of the FCE exam taking samples from UCLES exam handbooks and course preparatory books – see Appendix 3.

3.6.3. ORAL TASKS BASED ON FCE QUESTION TYPES

The writing questions were turned into oral communication activities to be performed by students in the post-reading stage of each set book – see Appendix 4.

These activities were divided into four groups according to their nature:

- A. Role-plays (writing task oriented)
- B. Speeches (writing task oriented)
- C. Board displays (creativity oriented)
- D. Debates (oriented to boost confidence and self-esteem)

3.6.4. WRITTEN TASKS OR COMPOSITIONS

Students were given a written question based on the oral task they represented from groups A or B, and had to answer it on a sheet of paper in the classroom under exam conditions. Samples of students' production can be seen in Appendix 5.

3.6.5. FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Apply an opinion survey so as to gather students' views and experiences in the project, and most importantly to know whether they would dare to deal with this writing option in the real FCE exam or not. Samples of students' opinions can be seen in Appendix 6.

3.7. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

3.7.1. RELIABILITY:

In general, **reliability** is the ability of a person or system to perform and maintain its functions in routine circumstances, as well as hostile or unexpected circumstances. (Wikipedia)

3.7.2. VALIDITY:

3.7.2.1. Internal Validity: the degree that we are successful in eliminating confounding variables within the study itself is referred to as internal validity.

3.7.2.2. External Validity: A study that readily allows its findings to generalise to the population at large has high external validity.

3.8. PROCEDURE

First, I will show the plan I outlined for the duration of the project, and then, I will go on to explain by month, what happened in detail in each week.

3.8.1. RESEARCH DESIGN:

STEPS	C O U R S E S O F A C T I O N	WEEK N°
1 2 3 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Apply initial questionnaire survey – see Appendix 1, and analyse the results.◆ On the above basis, make a list of the most common question types for Paper 2, Part 2 option n°5 in the FCE examination based on UCLES examination booklets and FCE coursebooks – see Appendix 2◆ Turn these question types into oral communication activities. Then divide them into four groups according to their nature – see Appendix 3 Group A: Role-Plays Group C: Board Activities Group B: Speeches Group D: Debates◆ Ask students if they are willing to be part of a project leading to improve several aspects of their English, basically reading and writing. Explain to them how this project is planned to be carried out over the period of the following three months. With all the students' agreement, the following steps are carried out:	1
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Assign the first graded reader “<i>The Prisoner of Zenda</i>” to subjects so as to be read during the period of one week.	2
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ After having read the first book, group students into two: five students per group and let them choose two oral tasks from the list explained in Step 3: one from groups A or B, and the other	3

	from C or D. Ask them to prepare those activities with their peers for the following week.	
7 8 9 10 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Students perform the two tasks in class. ◆ At the end of their presentation, they are given the list in Step 2. They are asked to match the oral tasks just performed from either group A or B with the ones in the writing questions. Eventually they opt for only one writing task, the one they feel more confident with. ◆ Students write their compositions in class under exam conditions, i.e. 45 mins. ◆ Compositions are assessed and marks are recorded. ◆ Personal feedback is provided on the last session of the course: Advanced 4. 	4
END OF MONTH ONE		
12	◆ Assign the second graded reader “ <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> ” to subjects so as to be read during the period of one week.	5
13	◆ Group students into three: five students per group and let them choose two oral tasks from the list explained in Step 3: one from groups A or B, and the other from C or D. Ask them to prepare those activities with their peers for the following week.	6
14 15 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Each group performs the two tasks in class. ◆ At the end of their presentation, students are given the list in Step 2 to match the oral tasks just performed from either group A or B with the ones in the writing questions. Eventually they opt for only one writing task, the one they feel more confident with. ◆ Students write their compositions in class under exam conditions, i.e. 45 mins. 	7
17 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Compositions are evaluated and marks are recorded. ◆ Personal feedback is provided on the last session of the course: Advanced 5. 	8
END OF MONTH TWO		
19	◆ Assign the third graded reader “ <i>Deadlock</i> ” to subjects so as to be read during the period of one week.	9
20	◆ Same as Step 13	10

21 to 23	♦ Same as Steps 14 to 16	11
24 25	♦ Same as Step 17 ♦ Personal feedback is provided on the last session of the course: Advanced 6.	12
END OF MONTH THREE		
26	♦ Final questionnaire survey	13
27	♦ Data analysis	14
28	♦ Research findings	15
29	♦ Conclusions	16
END OF MONTH FOUR		
30	♦ Report writing	17 to 20
END OF MONTH FIVE		

3.8.2. DEVELOPMENT OF ACTIVITIES

3.8.2.1. MONTH N° 1:

Immediately after the students had agreed to take part in the project, a survey was applied – see Appendix 1. This survey consisted of two basic questions:

1° *What option from the question paper below would you choose if you were in the real FCE examination? Why?*

2° *Which option would you never choose? Why?*

The results clearly showed that learners would choose any other writing option, but the literature question – see 4.1.1.1 for further explanation.

Taking those results as basis, my students were assigned the first graded reader “*The Prisoner of Zenda*” so as to be read during the period of one week.

The following lesson plan was followed:

MONTHLY LESSON PLAN N° 1

INTEGRATING SKILLS: READING, SPEAKING & WRITING

OBJECTIVES : By the end of this month, all students should have:

- ❖ read the graded reader “*The Prisoner of Zenda*” by Anthony Hope – Penguin. (See Appendix 7 for plot)
- ❖ done the selected oral tasks described in the post-reading stage.
- ❖ written their first composition based on the oral tasks performed in class.
- ❖ gained confidence in both communicating orally and writing a composition about an FCE - like literature-based question.

PRE-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Show Sts the front cover of the book and have them describe the picture. Elicit information about colours, their feelings, etc.
- ❖ Ask Sts to anticipate the content of the story: n° of characters, relationships, plot, etc. Write their predictions on the board.

WHILE-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Ask Sts to read the book “*The Prisoner of Zenda*”. They will have one week to do so.
- ❖ While they read the story, they will have to confirm and / or reject the anticipations made by them in the previous stage.
- ❖ Advise Sts not to use their dictionaries unless it is absolutely necessary; instead they should apply the guessing strategies already practised in class.

POST-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Divide the class into 2 groups of five students each and let them choose two oral tasks from the list given: one from groups A or B, and the other from C or D:

Group A: Role-Plays
Group B: Speeches
Group C: Board Activities
Group D: Debates

- ❖ Ask Sts to prepare and practise those activities with their peers for the following week in order to be performed in class.
- ❖ After a week, students perform the activities chosen in groups.

FOLLOW-UP STAGE:

- ❖ At the end of their presentation, Sts will be given the list entitled Question Five Samples in which nine FCE – like literature questions are shown. They are asked to match the oral tasks just performed from either group A or B with the ones in the writing questions.
 Individually they opt for only one writing task, the one they feel more confident with.
- ❖ Students write their first composition based on the oral tasks performed in class under examination conditions, i.e. 45 minutes.

FEEDBACK STAGE:

- ❖ Each student is given personal feedback on their written work under a process approach perspective.

The following chart shows the activities chosen by the groups 1 and 2:

Activity Groups	A	B	C	D
GROUP 1	3		1	1
GROUP 2		4	7	1

Within the oral tasks oriented to familiarise the learners with the prototype writing question in Paper 2, Part 2 in the FCE examination, the ones selected were the following:

- A3: Act out the most interesting chapter for the class. (Role Play)
- B4: Which part of the book do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome? Why? (Speech)

The tasks aimed at fostering students' creativity, and motivation were the following:

- C1: "Before and After":

Students elaborate a new front cover for the book they have read, and contrast it with the original one. They should support the reason(s) why they have made those changes, and say in what ways the new cover is going to make readers want to read the book.

- C7: Pictogram Summary (Board Display)

The selected task that would help learners boost their self-esteem was the following:

- D1: Two groups will defend their views towards the characters in the story they have read: those who think that the bad characters in a story are always the most interesting, and those who think that the good characters are the most interesting.
(Debate)

Immediately after their performance, students were given the list of writing tasks called: Question Five Samples so as to match their oral tasks just acted out with the ones on the paper. The results of the matching were:

- A3 with letter “e”:
“This is such a marvellous book that you will want to read it again”. Write an article for your college magazine, saying whether you think the statement is true of the book or one of the short stories you have read.
- B4 with letter “f”:
Which part of the book you have read do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome? Write a composition briefly describing the part you have chosen, and explaining why you think it is the most important.
- C1 with letter “f”:
- *Which part of the book you have read do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome? Write a composition briefly describing the part you have chosen, and explaining why you think it is the most important.*

In A3, students were to act out the most interesting chapter of *The Prisoner of Zenda* for the class. They chose the last chapter in which the main character, Rudolph Rassendyll has to say goodbye to his beloved

one, Princess Flavia, and part. The performance was full of passion and realism as a proof the students had followed the plot and lived each moment as if they were the characters themselves. It was obvious then that they had enjoyed reading the book and that they had studied their lines and rehearsed as a group seriously. In my opinion, the choice of this graded reader was perfect for a start.

In B4, students had to agree on which part of the book they thought was the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome, and their conclusion was, in this case, the outcome as it was the part in which the main characters had to make the most important decision of their lives. Their views were very well supported based on several fragments of the story.

The day following the performance, and after the matching with the Question Five Sample tasks (A3-e & B4-f), the students were encouraged to prepare an outline in note form of the key ideas they were going to include in the composition. They were asked to work collaboratively in group, and were given a time limit of approximately 5 minutes, which was not complied as it took them ten minutes to discuss and reach a consensus. They were also told to separate the ideas discussed in three parts, being the central part the one containing the most ideas as it should carry the answer to the question. Then, on an individual basis, they were encouraged to write the composition taking the remaining 30 minutes.

Samples of this task can be seen in Appendix 5.

On the last day of classes of that month, students were given oral feedback of their written production. The main aim of this session was to motivate learners to continue reading, by providing positive comments on the content rather than on the form or language issues such as grammar or specific vocabulary. All students were praised for their good work during that month, for the enthusiasm to do the oral tasks, and above all for dealing with the FCE literature question in Paper 2, Part 2 in such an extraordinary way. They were all congratulated on the achievement obtained so far, especially because the marks obtained in that first writing were satisfactory. A rewarding thing for me was that they asked me for permission to borrow another set book from the Self Access Centre (SAC) and read it during the inter cycle days.

Unfortunately, on that occasion it was not going to be possible due to the fact that SAC is involved in inventory issues on those days. That happens every single month after the end of classes. Anyway, I comforted them by promising to bring the next book to class on the first day of the following month, and to give them a direct loan. They all accepted and waited patiently till the beginning of the following course.

3.8.2.2. MONTH N° 2:

MONTHLY LESSON PLAN N° 2

INTEGRATING SKILLS: READING, SPEAKING & WRITING

OBJECTIVES : By the end of this month, all students should have:

- ❖ read the graded reader "*Pride and Prejudice*" by Jane Austin – Penguin. (See Appendix 7 for plot)
- ❖ done the selected oral tasks described in the post-reading stage.
- ❖ written their second composition based on the oral tasks performed in class.
- ❖ gained confidence in both communicating orally and writing a composition about an FCE - like literature-based question.

PRE-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Give out slips of paper containing the chapter titles of the story *Pride and Prejudice*.
- ❖ Ask Sts to put the titles in the order they think the story occurs. Write their orders on the board.

WHILE-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Ask Sts to read the book "*Pride and Prejudice*". They will have one week to do so.
- ❖ While they read the story, they will have to confirm and / or reject the order anticipated by them in the previous stage.
- ❖ Advise Sts not to use their dictionaries unless it is absolutely necessary; instead, they should apply the guessing strategies already practised in class.

POST-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Divide the class into 3 groups of five students each and let them choose two oral tasks from the list given: one from groups A or B, and the other from C or D:

Group A: Role-Plays
Group B: Speeches
Group C: Board Activities
Group D: Debates

Each group should choose different tasks; none of them should be repeated.

- ❖ Ask them to prepare and practise those activities with their peers for the following week in order to be performed in class.

FOLLOW-UP STAGE:

- ❖ Students perform the activities chosen in groups.
- ❖ The same as in the previous month, at the end of their presentation, Sts will be given the list entitled Question Five Samples in which nine FCE – like literature questions are shown. They are asked to match the oral tasks just performed from either group A or B with the sample writing questions. Individually they opt for only one writing task, the one they feel more confident with.
- ❖ Students write their second composition based on the oral tasks performed in class under examination conditions, i.e. 45 minutes.

FEEDBACK STAGE:

- ❖ Each student is given personal feedback on their written work under a process approach perspective.

The activities chosen by the groups 1, 2, and 3 were:

Activity Groups	A	B	C	D
GROUP 1	2		4	2
GROUP 2		1	2	2
GROUP 3		5	8	2

On this occasion, within the oral tasks oriented to familiarise the learners with the prototype writing question in Paper 2, Part 2 in the FCE examination, the ones selected were the following:

- A2: Imagine the events and situations in the book you have read have happened in Peru. Choose the part of the plot which you consider most relevant, adapt it to your context, and act it out. (Role Play)

- B1: Talk about the most interesting character in the book you have read: details of that person's character, and why you find him / her interesting. (Speech)
- B5: Which character in the book you have read would you most like to meet? What questions would you ask him / her? (Speech)

The tasks that aimed at fostering students' creativity and encourage motivation were the following:

- C2: Slogans. (Board Display)
- C4: Picture Galleries. (Board Display)
- C8: Board Game:
Students were free to "invent" their own game using the characters, plot, or any other element taken from the story.

The selected task that would help learners boost their self-esteem was the following:

- D2: All the characters from the book have been placed in the basket of a hot air balloon. The balloon has a small hole so air is slowly escaping causing the balloon to fall. One character must be ejected to keep the balloon aloft. Who would you choose to discard first / last? How popular / essential that character is to the plot? What would the story lose if that character were written out? What would the arguments in favour of the survival of that character be, or the arguments against the survival of the others? (Debate)

Like in the previous month and book, after their performance students were given the list of writing tasks: Question Five Samples so as to match the oral tasks just acted out with the ones on the paper. The results of the matching were:

- A2: letter "c":
You have read about several events and situations in the book which you have chosen. Do you think that any of those events and situations could happen in your country nowadays? Explain why or why not with reference of the book itself.
- B1: letter "a"
You have been invited to write a short article for your college magazine on the most interesting character in the book which

you have read. You should include details of that person's character and explain why you find him / her interesting.

- B5: letter "g"

Write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet, and the questions which you would ask the character.

A2 was a role play task in which students had to imagine that the events and situations in the book they had read had happened in Peru. The part of the plot they considered most relevant to be adapted to the Peruvian reality was a scene in which the Bennet parents talk about the possibility to marry Elizabeth, their daughter, to her cousin Mr Collins, a marriage of convenience, and the reluctance of Elizabeth to such indignant fact. Although these kinds of situations do not occur in Peru, they can take place in certain levels of the high class in the capital city due to financial or political reasons.

The group's performance was full of details that made us understand that sometimes personal interests or selfishness remain the same despite the passage of time.

For tasks B1 and B5 students chose Elizabeth Bennet as the most interesting character, or the character they would most like to meet. They agreed that her strongest trait is her keen sense of justice, and the final acceptance of her blindness towards the prejudice she felt towards Mr Darcy's false pride showed the human part of the character. They ended up loving this charming young lady.

After doing the new matching for the writing tasks: A2-c, B1-a, and B5-g, students were encouraged to prepare an outline in note form of the key ideas they were going to include in the composition. The time set was approximately 5 minutes; however, this time it took the group around seven minutes, more than expected, but less than the first time. It was due, as I see it, to the familiarization with the process and the awareness of the importance of shortening the time devoted in this stage. Once more, emphasis in the lay out was also pointed out: three separate paragraphs, being the central paragraph the one carrying the answer to the question in a supported form. On this occasion, they were given 35

minutes to write the composition for they had taken less time in the planning stage.

Samples of compositions can be seen in Appendix 5.

Oral feedback of their written production was given on the last day of classes of that month. As with book one, the main aim of this session was to motivate learners to continue reading, by providing positive comments on the content of their compositions rather than on grammar or vocabulary mistakes. Once more, all students were congratulated on the achievement obtained so far, especially because the grades obtained in the second composition were higher than the first.

3.8.2.3. MONTH N° 3:

MONTHLY LESSON PLAN N° 3

INTEGRATING SKILLS: READING, SPEAKING & WRITING

OBJECTIVES : By the end of this month, all students should have:

- ❖ read the graded reader “*Deadlock*” by Sara Paretsky – Oxford. (See Appendix 7 for plot)
- ❖ done the selected oral tasks described in the post-reading stage.
- ❖ written their third composition based on the oral tasks performed in class.
- ❖ gained confidence in both communicating orally and writing a composition about an FCE-like literature-based question.

PRE-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Show Sts pictures taken from the story *Deadlock*. Give out a set to each group.
- ❖ Ask them to put the pictures in the order they think the story occurs and predict its content.
- ❖ One spokesperson will go to the front to talk about the anticipated content.

WHILE-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Ask Sts to read the book “*Deadlock*”. They will have one week to do so. As they read, they can confirm or reject the picture order they anticipated in the previous stage.
- ❖ Advise Sts not to use their dictionaries unless it is absolutely necessary; instead, they should apply the guessing strategies practised in class.

POST-READING STAGE:

- ❖ Divide the class into 3 groups of five students each and let them choose two oral tasks from the list given: one from groups A or B, and the other from C or D:

Group A: Role-Plays

Group B: Speeches

Group C: Board Activities

Group D: Debates

Each group should choose different tasks; none of them should be repeated, even from the

previous performances – except for Group D, where there are just two activities.

- ❖ Ask them to prepare and practise those activities with their peers for the following week so as to be performed in class.

FOLLOW-UP STAGE:

- ❖ Students perform the activities chosen in groups.
- ❖ At the end of their presentation, Sts will match the Question Five Sample Questions with the oral tasks just performed. Individually they opt for only one writing task, the one they feel more confident with.
- ❖ Students write their third composition based on the oral tasks performed in class under examination conditions, i.e. 45 minutes.

FEEDBACK STAGE:

- ❖ Each student is given personal feedback on their written work under a process approach perspective.

These were the activities chosen by the groups A, B, and C in month n°3:

Activity Groups	A	B	C	D
GROUP 1	1		7	1
GROUP 2		7	3	1
GROUP 3		6	1	1

Following the familiarization with the writing question in Paper 2, Part 2 in the FCE examination process, the oral activities chosen by the three groups of students were:

- A1: Imagine you are in front of your favourite character of the book you have read. What questions would you ask him or her? (Role Play)
- B6: Describe the front cover of the book you have read. How does it relate to the story itself? Does it succeed in making the book look interesting to someone who has not yet read it? (Speech)
- B7: Do you think that the events and situations in the book you have read could happen in Peru nowadays? Why (not)? (Speech)

The tasks that aimed at fostering students' creativity and encourage motivation were the following:

- C1: Before and After
- C3: Mottos / Proverbs. (Board Display)
- C7: Represent one character in poster format. (Board Display)

The activity that would help learners boost their self-esteem was the following:

- D1: Two groups will defend their views towards the characters in the story they have read: those who think that the bad characters in a story are always the most interesting, and those who think that the good characters are the most interesting. (Debate)

The Question Five Samples in the list of writing tasks that matched with the oral activities just performed were:

- A1 with letter "g":
Write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet, and the questions that you would ask that character.
- B6 with letter "b":
Describe the front cover of the book that you have read, and explain how it relates to the book. Does it succeed in making the book look interesting to someone who has not yet read it?
- B7 with letter "c":
You have read about several events and situations in the book which you have chosen. Do you think that any of those events and

situations could happen in your country nowadays? Explain why or why not with reference of the book itself.

For A1, one student played the role of VIC, the “detective” in charge of finding out the murderer of her beloved cousin Boom-Boom. She answered a number of questions from the “journalists” who were eager to know the details of her investigation and the solution of the case. All questions were carefully thought of and once more, it only showed the students’ interest for the task, their responsibility, and the high level of commitment they had for improving as language learners.

In D1, Group 3 was divided in two so that they could adopt two different positions: those who thought that the bad characters in “Deadlock” were always the most interesting, and those who thought that the good characters were the most interesting. There were four students debating and the remaining one acted as moderator. The support of each argument and counter-argument had been carefully prepared, and once more, the whole group showed their enthusiasm and commitment to perform well.

Unlike the previous times, in this one the students in each group worked individually to outline the plan, and most of them managed to do it within the expected five minutes. Additionally, this time they were more aware of the importance of time deadlines within the whole process:

- Planning: 5 minutes
- Writing: 30 minutes
- Revising: 5 minutes

The remaining 5 minutes were agreed to leave them for issues such as reading the writing tasks, choosing the writing task, getting ready to start the writing process, and other minimal details that come up when one is involved in composition writing.

The final oral feedback session of composition n°3 aimed at pointing out the great work done during the project, and how they have improved along the months not only in terms of writing skills, but most importantly, in their degree of motivation and self-esteem, especially to

face the demands of Paper 2 in the FCE examination, something that they lacked before the beginning of this project work. As usual, samples of this last set of compositions have been included in Appendix 5.

3.8.2.4. MONTH N° 4:

On the first days of month four, all the participants received a set of five questions in which they were asked to express their feelings towards the participation in the project and their new view to the fifth option of the FCE Paper 2. They can be seen in Appendix 6.

3.9. DATA ANALYSIS

Basically, three were the instruments used to measure participants' performance along this project:

- ⇒ **3.9.1 Surveys**
- ⇒ **3.9.2 Oral Performance Sheets**
- ⇒ **3.9.3 Written Performance Sheets**

3.9.1. SURVEY

3.9.1.1. Initial Survey

As stated above, this survey aimed at finding out which of the five writing options in FCE Paper 5 - Part 2 students would choose if they were in the real examination (Question 1) and also, which one of the remaining options they would never choose as second task and why (Question 2). The results are detailed in the survey in the survey: 4.1.1.1

3.9.1.2. Final Survey

The final survey was applied on the first days of month n° 4, and it was run on an oral and written basis.

First, students were gathered and asked the following:

- 1° Did you like the books read in the last three months? Why (not)?
- 2° Were there any story lines you enjoyed more than the others?
- 3° How about the oral tasks? Were they relevant for the purpose of story reading?
- 4° Would task 5 in Paper 2 – Part 2 be an option for you? Would you consider it for the December FCE examination?
- 5° In general, did you find the experience worth living? Why?

Then, I asked them to sit down with the students who belonged to their groups so as to go over the answers to those questions. After discussing enthusiastically – and basically recalling experiences – we ran a sort of “**focus group**” in which each question was “launched” for any one to answer it. The results can be seen in the survey in 4.1.1.2

3.9.2. ORAL PERFORMANCE SHEETS

These sheets were devised to assess the learners’ output every month they had to read and perform the oral activities they had chosen. For a description of these oral tasks, do please refer to Appendix 4.

MONTH N° 1: *The Prisoner of Zenda*

GROUP 1

	A3	C1	D1
Almeyda, Danny	3	3	2.5
Bazan, Carlos	2.5	3	2
Cardenas, Jesus	2.5	3	2.5
Carranza, Lorena	3	3.5	3
Cubas, Kelly	4	4	3.5

GROUP 2

	B4	C7	D1
Molina, Maria Elvira	3	4	3
Muro, Richard	4	4	4
Olaechea, Guilma	2.5	3.5	3
Palacios, Annabel	3.5	4	4
Quispe, Carlos	2.5	3	2.5

MONTH N° 2: *Pride and Prejudice*

GROUP 1

	A2	C4	D2
Almeyda, Danny	3	3.5	2
Bazan, Carlos	3	3	2.5
Cardenas, Jesus	3	4	3
Carranza, Lorena	3.5	3.5	3
Cubas, Kelly	4	4	3

GROUP 2

	B1	C2	D2
Molina, Maria Elvira	4	3.5	3.5
Muro, Richard	4	4.5	3.5
Olaechea, Guilma	3	3.5	2.5
Palacios, Annabel	3.5	3.5	3
Quispe, Carlos	3	3	2.5

GROUP 3

	B5	C8	D2
Castillo, Rafael	2.5	4	3
Dulanto, Rosa	2.5	4	3
Excebio, Claudia	3	4	4
Huamani, David	3.5	4	4
Ortega, Rosa	4	4.5	4

MONTH N°3: *Deadlock***GROUP 1**

	A1	C7	D1
Almeyda, Danny	4	4	4
Bazan, Carlos	4	4	4
Cardenas, Jesus	4	4	4.5
Carranza, Lorena	4.5	4	5
Cubas, Kelly	5	4	5

GROUP 2

	B7	C3	D2
Molina, Maria Elvira	3.5	3	4
Muro, Richard	4	3.5	5
Olaechea, Guilma	3	3	3
Palacios, Annabel	4	3	3.5
Quispe, Carlos	3.5	2.5	3.5

GROUP 3

	B6	C1	D1
Castillo, Rafael	3.5	4	3
Dulanto, Rosa	4	3.5	3
Excebio, Claudia	4.5	4	4
Huamani, David	5	4.5	5
Ortega, Rosa	4.5	5	5

3.9.3. WRITTEN PERFORMANCE SHEETS

Remember that the matching of oral tasks and their correspondent writing equivalent applied for Groups A, and B only, not C since it dealt with the creative, kinaesthetic “hands-on” side of the learner. In group D, there were just two “debate” tasks: D1 and D2; D.1 was evaluated through the question: *“Sometimes the bad characters in a story are more interesting than the good ones”. Is this true of the book you have read? Write a composition explaining your views with reference to the book or one of the short stories you have read.* However, it was evaluated as a round-off task at the end of every month and on a group, not individual basis. Groups A and B on the other hand, were more analytical oriented, and in most cases obliged the learner to use their critical thinking when composing.

Lastly, marks were assigned on a scale of 1 to 10 following the specifications given at ACPB for the correction of written work. Seven is a passing mark, 8 and 9 are considered good and very good respectively and 10 is regarded as outstanding; half points were also considered. There is a sample in Appendix 7.

MONTH N° 1: *The Prisoner of Zenda*
GROUP 1

	A3 = e “This is such a marvellous book that you will want to read it again”. Write an article for your college magazine, saying whether you think the statement is true of the book or one of the short stories you have read.
Almeyda, Danny	6
Bazan, Carlos	7
Cardenas, Jesus	5.5
Carranza, Lorena	7.5
Cubas, Kelly	7

GROUP 2

	B4 = f Which part of the book you have read do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome? Write a composition briefly describing the part you have chosen, and explaining why you think it is the most important.
Molina, Maria Elvira	7.5
Muro, Richard	9
Olaechea, Guilma	8.5
Palacios, Annabel	6
Quispe, Carlos	6.5

MONTH N°2: *Pride and Prejudice*
GROUP 1

	A2 = c You have read about several events and situations in the book which you have chosen. Do you think that any of those events and situations could happen in your country nowadays? Explain why or why not with reference of the book itself.
Almeyda, Danny	7
Bazan, Carlos	7
Cardenas, Jesus	7
Carranza, Lorena	8
Cubas, Kelly	9

GROUP 2

	B1 = a You have been invited to write a short article for your college magazine on the most interesting character in the book which you have read. You should include details of that person's character and explain why you find him / her interesting.
Molina, Maria Elvira	7.5
Muro, Richard	8
Olaechea, Guilma	7.5
Palacios, Annabel	7
Quispe, Carlos	7.5

GROUP 3

	B5 = g Write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet, and the questions that you would ask that character.
Castillo, Rafael	7
Dulanto, Rosa	6
Excebio, Claudia	8
Huamani, David	8
Ortega, Rosa	8.5

MONTH N°3: Deadlock**GROUP 1**

	A1 = g Write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet, and the questions that you would ask that character.
Almeyda, Danny	7.5
Bazan, Carlos	8
Cardenas, Jesus	7.5
Carranza, Lorena	8
Cubas, Kelly	9

GROUP 2

	B7 = c You have read about several events and situations in the book which you have chosen. Do you think that any of those events and situations could happen in your country nowadays? Explain why or why not with reference of the book itself.
Molina, Maria Elvira	7.5
Muro, Richard	9
Olaechea, Guilma	7.5
Palacios, Annabel	7.5
Quispe, Carlos	8

GROUP 3

	B6 = b Describe the front cover of the book that you have read, and explain how it relates to the book. Does it succeed in making the book look interesting to someone who has not yet read it?
Castillo, Rafael	8
Dulanto, Rosa	7
Excebio, Claudia	9.5
Huamani, David	9
Ortega, Rosa	9.5

CHAPTER IV THE FINDINGS

4.1. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings in this research work deal with three different moments of the process:

- Surveys
- Oral activities
- Writing tasks

4.1.1. FINDINGS REGARDING THE SURVEY:

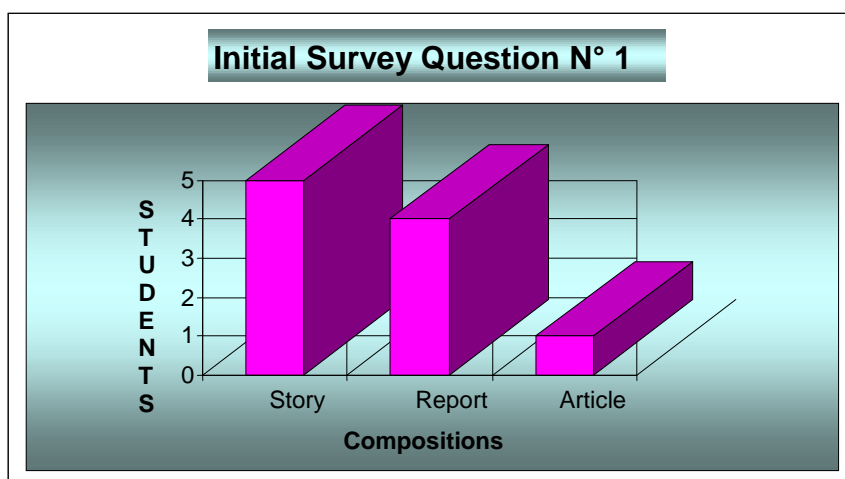
4.1.1.1. Initial Survey

For aims of this survey, do please refer to 3.6.1, and for its complete view, go to Appendix 1, please.

The results of this survey are the following:

For Question N° 1 (Universe: 10 students):

<i>If you were in the real exam, what question would you choose? Why?</i>



5 students (50%) chose task n° 3: Story Writing

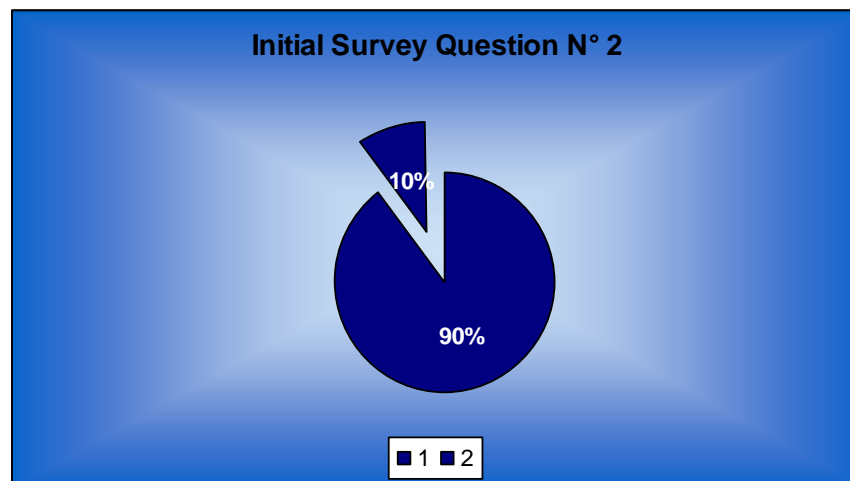
4 students (40%) chose task n° 4: Report (opinion-based)

1 (10%) student chose task n° 2: Article

The reasons were primarily because the questions were easy to answer since they were based on their own opinions and in the case of the story because they were free to create and rely on their imagination. In other words, students could simply cope with the demands of the question by inventing, improvising or simply having no extra back-ups that may have demanded them additional effort in order to fulfil with the requirements of the task.

For Question N° 2 (Universe: 10 students):

***If you were in the real exam, which option would you NEVER choose?
Why not?***



The graph shows that 90% (nine, out of the ten students) would never choose task n° 5 basically because they had never read those books, or found the task itself too difficult / boring for them.

One student (10%) chose task n° 4 stating that he would find it hard to compose a report.

The results confirmed the following:

1° my initial idea that the literature question was one of the most unpopular, “scary” options among students due to lack of exposure with graded readers.

2° the need to take action and convince the group to get rid of such assumptions by helping them first, discover the pleasure of literature reading and then, build confidence to succeed when facing the real writing task in the FCE exam.

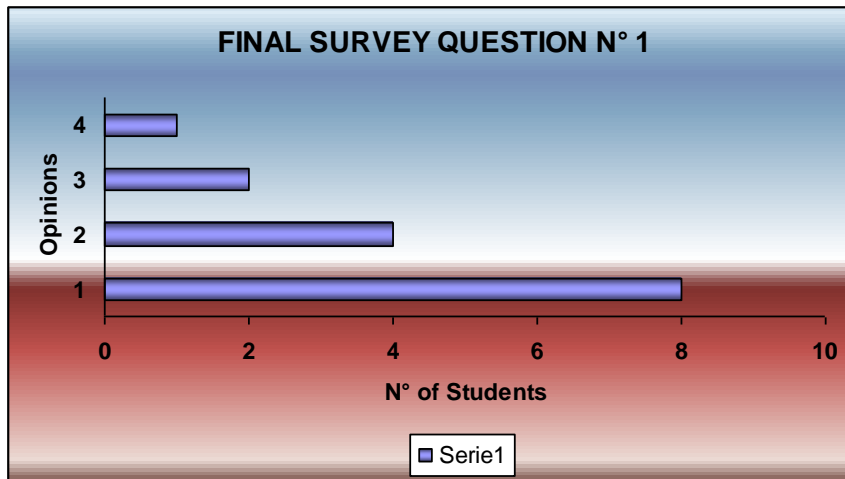
4.1.1.2. Final Survey

For an inner specification of questions posed in this survey, do please refer to 3.9.1.2

Question N° 1:

Did you like the books read in the last three months? Why (not)?

100% of the students responded “Yes” to this question because the books:



1.- caught their attention from start = 8 Students

2.- were easy to read, and “short” (in contrast to an initial assumption that they were “terribly long”) = 4 Students

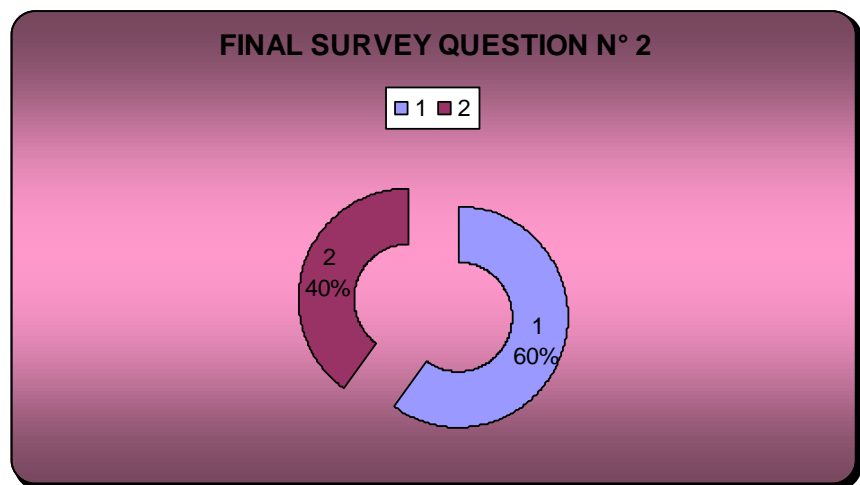
3.- coped with everyone’s likes: romantic, historical/social detective stories = 2 Students

4.- “transported us to far away places” = 1 Student.

Question N° 2:

Were there any story lines that you enjoyed more than others?

Inhere there were various answers, but most of them agreed that *The Prisoner of Zenda* was the most appealing and touching story for them.



As can be seen, 9 out of 15 students felt a particular like for Prisoner of Zenda. However, I must point out that, despite being a majority, the answers reflected the opinion of 10 out of the 15 students who were questioned because these ones happen to be the group of learners with whom we started the project. The group that joined the second month read stories 2 and 3 only.

Question N° 3:

How about the oral tasks? Were they relevant for the purpose of story reading?

100% of the students agreed that the oral tasks helped them to:

- get more acquainted with the plot, setting and characters.
- be more critical in the analysis of the characters' behaviour and way of thinking.
- become more confident when reading any book: get rid of fears and beliefs that they were not going to be able to cope with content – lexis – and general comprehension because they relied on their communicative strategies to transmit what they had understood.
- develop their speaking skills with another perspective: take the characters' position and defend his/her point of view (in *Deadlock*)
- become more mature as language learners.
- express inner/ hidden talents: acting, designing, organizing, etc.

Question N° 4:

Would task 5 in Paper 2 – Part 2 be an option for you? Would you consider it for the December FCE examination?

It was an absolute and definite “Yes” for all the students.

Question N° 5:

In general, did you find the experience worth living? Why?

100% stated that the experience of book reading had been “worth living” because it had made them:

Reason 1:

- get more general knowledge: they had hardly read novels before, even in their native language, so it expanded their horizons. (6 students)

Reason 2:

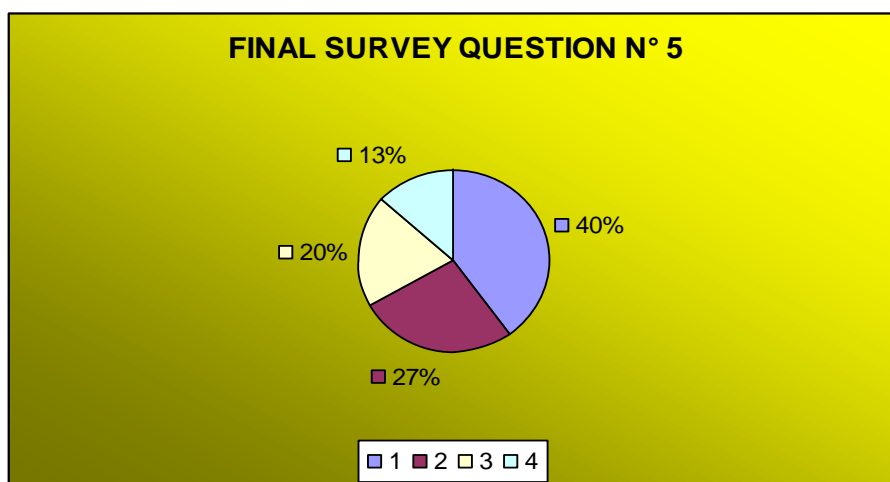
- feel important because they dealt with English literature: for most of them it had been their first contact. (4 students)

Reason 3:

- become more responsible for their own learning. (3 students)

Reason 4:

- be less dependant of the teacher: students felt they had become more autonomous to choose what they considered beneficial for their learning and for their lives. (2 students)



After a long and fruitful discussion, students were asked to write down in a very concise way the views they had expressed in the talk. Some of the opinions are shown in Appendix 6.

4.1.2. FINDINGS REGARDING THE ORAL PERFORMANCE SHEETS

As can be seen in 3.9.2, a subjective mark out of 5 points was given to every single student for each performance they made. The initial two groups had the opportunity to be assessed on three occasions, whereas the other one, in just two opportunities. This is because they joined the course in the second month.

In general, there was a rising trend for improvement in the execution of all oral activities. For instance, there were cases of students in the first month that began performing in a low way, due to shyness mainly, and then progressed substantially.

The following charts show the marks each group reached per task i.e. the addition of the mark obtained by every member of the group plus the final total of these three sub-totals:

1st Month:

GROUP 1	GROUP 2
A3 = 15	B4 = 15.5
C1 = 16.5	C7 = 18.5
D1 = 13.5	D1 = 16.5
TOTAL = 45	TOTAL = 50.5

2nd Month:

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
A2 = 16.5	B1 = 17.5	B5 = 15.5
C4 = 18	C2 = 18	C8 = 20.5
D2 = 13.5	D2 = 15	D2 = 18
TOTAL = 48	TOTAL = 50.5	TOTAL = 54

3rd Month:

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
A1 = 21.5	B7 = 18	B6 = 21.5
C6 = 20	C3 = 15	C1 = 21
D1 = 22.5	D2 = 19	D1 = 20
TOTAL = 64	TOTAL = 52	TOTAL = 62.5

Notice the trend to go up:

Group 1: **45 – 48 – 64**

Group 2: **50.5 – 50.5 – 52**

Group 3: **54 – 62.5**

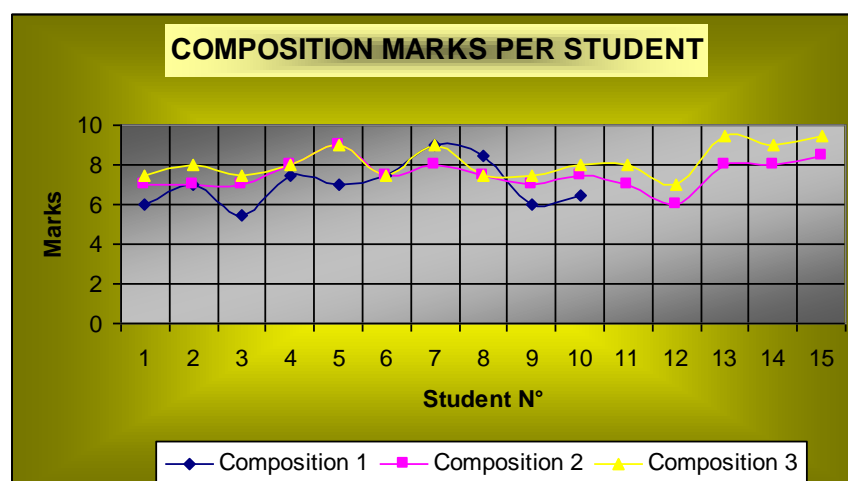
4.1.3. FINDINGS REGARDING THE WRITTEN PERFORMANCE SHEETS

The following chart shows the writing marks obtained by each participant within the period of time that the study lasted i.e. three months:

SUBJECT	NAME	COMPOSITION N°		
N°		1	2	3
1	Almeyda, Danny	6	7	7.5
2	Bazan, Carlos	7	7	8
3	Cardenas, Jesus	5.5	7	7.5
4	Carranza, Lorena	7.5	8	8
5	Cubas, Kelly	7	9	9
6	Molina, Maria Elvira	7.5	7.5	7.5
7	Muro, Richard	9	8	9
8	Olaechea, Guilma	8.5	7.5	7.5
9	Palacios, Annabel	6	7	7.5
10	Quispe, Carlos	6.5	7.5	8
11	Castillo, Rafael		7	8
12	Dulanto, Rosa		6	7
13	Excebio, Claudia		8	9.5
14	Huamani, David		8	9
15	Ortega, Rosa		8.5	9.5

The graph below shows how the line that represents Composition n° 3, the yellow one, remains above the blue and pink ones: Compositions 1 and 2 respectively. This means a clear improvement in students' performance of written work over time.

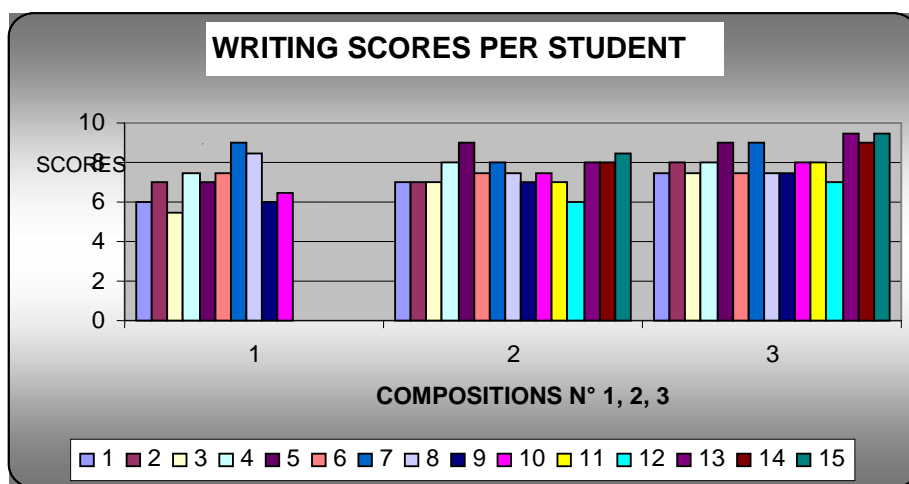
Likewise, the trend is to go up if we see each individual's marks: numbers 1 to 15: blue, pink, and yellow points, in that order, with the exception of student n° 8.



In the following graph, we can see how the marks obtained by the students in the three writings tend to increase. For example, student n° 1, the blue bar, has 6 points in Composition 1, 7 points in Composition 2, and 7.5 in Composition 3.

The last two compositions have a total of 15 students because there were 5 students who joined the group in month n° 2.

The trend to rise was observed in 95% of the cases, i.e. in 14 students out of a universe of 15 in months 2 and 3.



4.2. DISCUSSION

The results of this study clearly show the significant influence of reading input as a means to boost self-esteem when speaking and writing literature-based texts.

The pre-devised oral activities were successfully carried out by the group of students whose self-esteem at the level of perception and production proved to be very low at the beginning of the study. In addition, this project gave students the opportunity to improve not only their skimming and scanning reading skills, but also, their ability to go beyond and analyse, in a critical way, the character(s), the setting, and plot of every book they were asked to read, something they had not done before, at least not in L2. Consequently, little by little, they started to gain confidence when expressing an opinion; this new attitude laid sound foundations for what they were to do later on: write that opinion on a sheet of paper.

As can be seen in 4.1.2, there was a steady increase in the scores gained by each student and task, which means how much they cared about improvement with every book they read, and how important the oral tasks were for them. Inhere I would like to point out the commitment and positive attitude all the students showed as they were aware of the

need not only to read, speak and write, but also to become better language learners.

Likewise, and going beyond instructional grounds, I can say that the study has been beneficial for learners in the sense that it has allowed them to become better human beings. They have learnt the value of sharing and caring for their peers, which was clearly seen when they were involved in team work and worried about one another; if any member happened to “fail” there were the other members to support, help, and sympathise with the “weak” one. Their only desire was to show that they were able to do things well, so they started to develop strong bonds and a deep sense of team work from the very beginning. For me, as a teacher – not instructor – it proved to be extremely rewarding.

Finally, with regards to achieving the ultimate goal of writing about the literature question in Paper 2 – FCE examination, my students also showed a significant improvement and a surprising shift from rejecting the question completely at the start of the project, to adopting it as a choice in the exam. As can be seen in the chart in 4.1.3, 87% of the students reached improvement in their written production. Only one student did not manage to go beyond the initial score due to the fact that she used to focus on a specific detail of the question given, leaving others that were also crucial for a successful completion of the task. In the case of the other student, the problem lied on not putting across meanings clearly enough due to fossilisation in grammatical structures, which despite my efforts, she could not overcome in the course of the three months that the study lasted. However, the remaining 13 students benefited from the activities devised and applied, and now I can say that reading to express a view point is not scary for them any more. They are more self-confident because they aware that their opinion, whatever it may be, has a value and consideration in the recipient, even if this opinion has to be written for exam purposes.

4.2.1. IMPLICATIONS

The application of oral tasks over these months has given my students the opportunity to:

- Become more competent users of the English language.

- Become more self-confident when dealing with new situations and roles they have to assume as language learners.
- Get more acquainted with the material they have at their disposal such as graded readers or any other that can be useful in their learning process.
- Develop their reading skills by obtaining not only the gist of the input, but also the specific information.
- Become more analytical readers by forcing themselves to emit an opinion on the plot, the characters, or the setting of the story in question.
- Develop confidence in facing the demands of the FCE writing tasks by supporting arguments based on well-informed opinions.
- Develop a sense of cooperative work by doing the tasks in groups. They have learnt the value of working collaboratively for the sake of the team's success.
- Motivate them intrinsically, especially when they made the oral activities "theirs" and tried to perform better the following time.
- Discover their creative side, specifically when they had to deal with the creation of an original piece of work e.g. a new cover, a pictogram, slogans, role plays etc.
- Get rid of the old "scary" belief that Question 5, in the FCE Paper 2 could only be faced by "the good students", the ones who read books or possessed good writing skills. After all this time they have learnt that their opinion has also a position and an importance which can be appreciated by any recipient.

4.2.2. LIMITATIONS

I would really have liked to have more time to work with at least one more title: *Ghost Stories*, and see the extent to which my students were able to cope with another kind of narrative style: the short story, and with a totally different content: a thriller.

Another limitation I observed in the development of this project was the small number of graded readers the institution had for such increasing number of students at that level. What saved the situation during the last month was the fact that two students decided to buy the book from the local shop; however, the rest had to take turns to borrow a copy as there were just five books in total available in the self-access centre for a total number of 200 users doing the same course.

CONCLUSIONS

Going back to the initial motivation and purpose of this study, my intention was to test the hypothesis that my students' confidence in writing opinion-based texts (at FCE level) would be improved by taking into consideration variations in motivation in terms of:

1. the students' amount and frequency of reading upper-intermediate graded readers.
2. the amount and quality of their oral production based on pre-devised oral activities.

The impact this study has had on students and on me is of enormous significance. Therefore, the conclusions I can draw from this study fall into two perspectives:

1° The learners' perspective:

The findings of the study showed that both the amount and frequency of reading upper-intermediate graded readers had a positive impact on learners' attitude towards their production of written texts. Before the beginning of this study, it was a common practice to disregard the literature-based writing option in the First Certificate Exam, and opt for a more conventional type of question such as the formal letter, or the for and against composition. By the end of this project work, the fear students felt for this question faded away. This has been proved when

nearly a 90% of the subjects managed to obtain increasing scores in their compositions regardless of the topic or question given. The amount of novels was three, which may not be too many in terms of number, but for them it proved to be the right number to get rid of the prejudice against “the set books composition question”; “it was not that scary after all” – according to them, so they managed to overcome those psychological barriers that prevented them from at least considering this question as an option to develop in the examination.

In the second place, the present study demonstrates that 100% of readers felt more comfortable and relieved to rely on their communicative competence when performing the devised oral tasks. This provided them with enough confidence to express and support opinions in a relaxing, friendly environment. The exploitation of this skill in the classroom helped them not only to comment and interpret the content of the graded readers, but it was also a tool for them to express points of view based upon classical English literature, something they had not dared to try out before initiating the study. Consequently, the amount and quality of the students’ oral production based on the pre-devised oral activities, had a notorious positive impact on the production of compositions. If they had not been given the opportunity to express their views of the stories through debates, role-plays, and simulation activities, the output on the writing paper would not have presented the same quality in terms of content and richness of subjectivity; it was not to re-tell the story, but to assess its elements: plot, characters, and setting, and these learners managed to meet such objective.

Finally, as far as the role of the learner is concerned, the present study has helped them to raise awareness of the role they have to comply as language learners, a more active and participative one. This new facet has made them more responsible for their own learning process, and has changed the belief that they had to be passive receptacles to be filled in by the teacher. They have been exposed to new experiences, new ways of learning and strategies they had not applied before this project started. As Scharle and Szabo (2000:9) argue: learners should be presented with new view points and experiences so as to “... bring the inner process of their learning to the conscious level of their thinking” i.e. bring them to discoveries and make them feel puzzled by those discoveries. I am

completely sure that in future learning experiences, these students will apply such practices of collaboration, initiative, and team work to take advantage of the input in a conscious way. Last but not least important, they will be aware of respecting each other's point of view and contribution to the group in order to meet team objectives, something they had not put into practice before.

2° The educator's perspective:

As the ultimate purpose of this study was to motivate learners to write compositions based on literature, a relevant point I would like to mention concerns the position of writing approaches within this study and suggestions for further investigations.

Several experts advise adopting a combination of two or three of the following approaches: product, process and genre. They even suggest overlapping them with different levels of language proficiency. In my particular case, and based upon the experience of this project, I discovered it worked very well to focus on a *product view* to writing before the learners were about to initiate the composing act, as a guide for them to have a broad model of what was expected from them, and then a *process approach* while they were actually writing in the classroom. My recommendation for those colleagues who wish to apply the ideas in this work is to show finished samples of other learners' compositions during their first writing experiences, so that they feel more acquainted with what they are later going to produce. Once they are more settled down, they should try revising their drafts and improving them each time under the teacher's supervision. This practice ought to become common so that we can see results in the short run.

On wider grounds, the writing of the literature-based text under examination conditions, and on the exam day of course should be done with minimal elements taken from the process approach. This is because it is understood that students have already adopted their own "production style", and also because time constraints would not allow them to proceed otherwise. The more *process* training the learner is given before taking the examination, the more beneficial it would be for him/her to work faster under exam conditions without so much "process" in between: remember that "practice makes better". What is more, the

adoption of a personal style to writing will result in better communication of ideas, the message will be put across more clearly as the writer feels comfortable with what he / she wants to express, especially in this kind of writing production which characterizes itself for being so personalized and subjective. Needless to say, the foundations to reach this level are given by the amount of confidence students have had when trying out the oral activities in cooperation with their peers.

Therefore, I can confirm the initial hypothesis concerning a relationship between motivation, and skills. At the end of this study, I can assure – though not by scientific means – that there is a close relationship between motivation for doing something, in this case for writing a composition, and the quantity and quality of oral output based on previous input, in this case: the graded readers that the students had to read, analyse and interpret orally.

At this final point of the research process, I am completely sure that my students have reached the initial aims and goals we agreed to reach as a team becoming better EFL learners, and also, better human beings.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

For anyone wishing to apply the tasks described in this study to their learners, I would recommend the following:

OPERATIVE ISSUES

1° Film the students' oral performances.

This is because better assessment can be done, especially if a team of teachers would like to take part in the scoring process. Videos can be watched as many times as necessary so that a fairer mark can be assigned and most importantly, a personal "tracking" can be made.

2° Rely on Tech resources.

Students can use technological tools such as power point slides, coral draw or any other programme available to devise, and design materials, especially for the "hands-on" or creative part of the requested tasks: Part C. They may also use information on Internet for example to extract reviews of the books written by specialists, and take them as basis for comparing and contrasting their own point of view.

BROADENING PARTICIPATION

1° Peer moderating.

Teachers may be invited to moderate, monitor or even participate in the performance of the students' oral tasks, especially the first time they have to present them. Colleagues working on similar projects with their groups

of students can be a wonderful source of motivation and inspiration for other groups of learners. They may contribute with more strategies to help students express opinions and attend specific needs previous to their performance.

2° Talent Shows.

They may be held in conjunction with other classrooms that have also prepared plays based upon the graded readers previously worked in class. Students from different classrooms can even represent roles of the same story under their own or different perspective or perhaps applying the plot to their own living context.

REINFORCING PROCESSES

1° Workshops.

Organise open workshops for FCE students to consolidate writing issues such as essay outline and lay-out, cohesive devices, and primarily to check students' progress in a more personalised way: process approach to writing. These workshops could be held in a parallel way to the normal classes as it has been observed that time is a permanent constraint, especially if the project is incorporated within the FCE Prep course.

2° Opinion Circles.

Students need to be heard. Their opinions on either procedures or suggestions to improve their performance in and outside the classroom can be of invaluable help for teachers involved in projects of this kind.

STATISTICAL STUDIES

I have been exploring into the area of statistical analysis, specifically regression analysis, and I think it would be interesting to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in order to predict future tendencies.

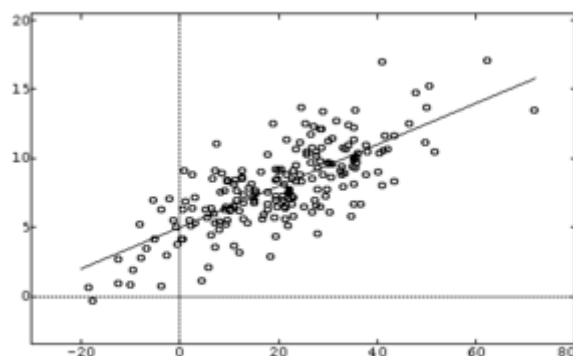
In this analysis, the dependent variables are modelled as a function of the independent variable, corresponding parameters and an error term. Parameters are estimated to give a best fit – evaluated using the least squares method – of the data (See pp. 75, 76) so that forecasts can be made on that basis. In this case, I would like to see the assignation of numerical values to the independent variable: motivation, for example

through an improved final survey in which informants can emit their opinion on a 0 to 5 scale¹¹, and not in a qualitative way, as I did in the present study.

Additionally, the dependent variables: amount and frequency of graded reading as well as the amount and quality of students' oral production should also be assigned numerical values so that a linear regression can take place:

$$Y = a + b_1 * X_1 + b_2 * X_2 + \dots + b_p * X_p$$

In this case, the data cannot be graphed like in simple linear regression:



because there are two independent variables. However, software like Minitab versions 14, 15 or 16 can analyze data with multiple independent variables, and the multiple regression equation can be easily obtained.

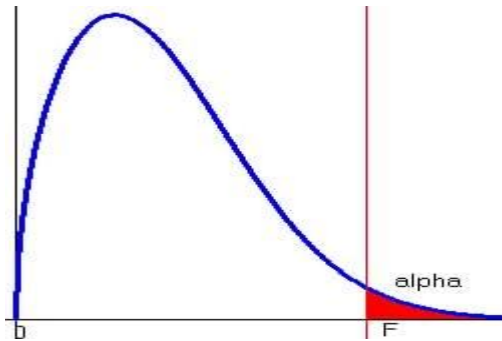
Once the regression is fitted, we need to know how well the model fits the data. Then, the significance of each independent variable should be tested. This is done through hypothesizing:

¹¹ Likert scale:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

- All independent variables are unimportant for predicting Y.
- At least one independent variable is useful for predicting Y.

So the type of test that should be used is called the Fischer distribution or “F-Statistic”. A sample graph with the F-Statistic distribution can be the following:



With Minitab software we can also calculate the p-value, which can be found in an F-Distribution Table. A small p-value rejects the null hypothesis that none of the independent variables are significant - at least one of the independent variables is significant. Then, it is necessary to test each independent variable separately and tell whether an independent variable is important for predicting the dependent variable.

In broad terms, with these improvements to the original study, generalizations of the type of for instance, the more motivated the learner feels to do extensive reading, the higher scores the learner will have in his/her written production, will definitely provide researchers with a wider perspective towards future deeper studies in the correlation of these variables, and thus reach interesting or surprising results.

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- ◆ **APPENDIX 2: Knight's 13 reading strategies for cognition and metacognition**
- ◆ **APPENDIX 3: Most Common FCE writing tasks / question types**
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APPENDIX 1: Initial Survey

FCE READING PROJECT

ENTRY SURVEY

NAME:

INSTRUCTIONS:

Overleaf you will find a typical FCE Paper 2 Writing sheet:

Part 1: Compulsory Letter
Part 2: Optional Composition

Now look at Part 2 and read the 5 options given.

Answer the following questions:

1. If you were in the real exam, what question would you choose? Why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. If you were in the real exam now, which option would you NEVER choose? Why not?

.....

.....

.....

.....

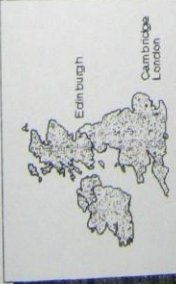
THANKS A LOT FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

2

Part 1

You must answer this question.

1 You are studying in Cambridge at present and two friends from your country are coming to visit you next month. During their visit they would especially like to spend a few days in Edinburgh and you are planning to go with them. A travel agency has given you the following information. Read it carefully. Then write a letter to your friends, giving them some information about the three different ways of travelling to Edinburgh. Suggest which you think is the best way and explain why.



Cambridge to Edinburgh - 540 km

CAR

Car hire: £40 a day plus petrol and insurance.

TRAIN

Cambridge dep.	Edinburgh arr.
07.00	12.15
07.56	13.38
09.00	14.12

Return fare: £90 (Friday and Saturday)
£75 (all other days)

30% off with a young person's rail card.

COACH

Cambridge dep.	Edinburgh arr.
08.00	13.00
11.00	06.35
22.30	12.25

Return fare: £60 (Friday and Saturday)
£45 (all other days)

30% off with a young person's coach card.

© 2005 WJEC

4

Part 2

Write an answer to one of the Questions 2 – 5 in this part. Write your answer in **120 – 180 words** in an appropriate style on the opposite page, putting the question number in the box.

2 You have just seen the following advertisement:

INTERNATIONAL TV WEEKLY

• What is your favourite programme on TV?
• Why do you like it?

We are looking for short articles answering these questions and we will publish some of the best articles next month.

Write your article for the International TV Weekly magazine.

3 You have been asked to write a story for a student magazine beginning with these words:
I wanted to give my best friend a surprise ...
Write your story.

4 You are going to start a short English course at a new language school. To help the school to put you in the most suitable class for you, you have been asked to write a report for the Director of Studies, describing what you find easy and what you find difficult about learning English.
Write your report.

5 **Background reading texts**
Answer one of the following two questions based on your reading of one of these set books:

Pygmalion - G.B. Shaw
A Passage to India - E.M. Forster
Rebecca - Daphne du Maurier
Crime Never Pays - Oxford Bookworm Collection

Brave New World - Aldous Huxley

Write (a) or (b) as well as the number 5 in the question box, and the title of the book next to the box.

Either (a) Which part of the book do you think is most important? Write a **composition** briefly describing the part you have chosen, and explaining why you think it is most important.

Or (b) Write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet and the questions which you would ask that character.

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FCE READING PROJECT

ENTRY SURVEY

NAME: Claudia Exebro Céspedes

INSTRUCTIONS:

Overleaf you will find a typical FCE Paper 2 Writing sheet:

Part 1: Compulsory Letter

Part 2: Optional Composition

Now look at Part 2 and read the 5 options given.

Answer the following questions:

1. If you were in the real exam, what question would you choose? Why?

Number 3, because I think it's the
easiest and also because I can
make up my own story.

2. If you were in the real exam now, which option would you NEVER choose?
Why not?

Number 5, because I've never
read any of those books.

THANKS A LOT FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

APPENDIX 2:

Knight's 13 reading strategies for cognition and metacognition

The reading strategies identified by readers in this project are the ones highlighted:

1. Re-reading
2. Selectively reading
3. Imaging (i.e. having a picture in mind)
4. Adjusting speed
5. Assimilating with personal experiences
6. Concentrating (i.e. thinking about the story and keeping it in mind)
7. Assimilating with passage events (thinking about some event that happened earlier in the story) or thinking about previous events.
8. Noting/ searching for salient details (i.e. remembering specific details, important details, or details that were different)
9. Summarising
10. Predicting outcomes (i.e. trying to guess what will happen next in the story)
11. Self-generating questions (i.e. questioning comment about the story)
12. Student perception of teacher expectations (i.e. reading in anticipation of questions the teachers might ask)
13. Rehearsal.

Source: Knight et al. (1985)

APPENDIX 3:

Most common FCE writing tasks / question types

These have been taken from FCE handbooks and preparatory books.

- a) You have been invited to write a short article for your college magazine on the most interesting character in the book which you have read. You should include details of that person's character and explain why you find him / her interesting.

FCE Sample Papers, 2nd Edition.

UCLES 1995, p. 32

- b) Describe the front cover of the book that you have read, and explain how it relates to the book. Does it succeed in making the book look interesting to someone who has not yet read it?

FCE Sample Papers, 2nd Edition.

UCLES 1995, p. 96

- c) You have read about several events and situations in the book which you have chosen. Do you think that any of those events and situations could happen in your country nowadays? Explain why or why not with reference of the book itself.

FCE Sample Papers, 2nd Edition.

UCLES 1995, p. 96

- d) "Sometimes the bad characters in a story are more interesting than the good ones". Is this true of the book you have read? Write a composition explaining your views with reference to the book or one of the short stories you have read.

FCE Handbook.

UCLES 2003, p. 21

- e) “This is such a marvellous book that you will want to read it again”. Write an article for your college magazine, saying whether you think the statement is true of the book or one of the short stories you have read.

FCE Handbook.

UCLES 2003, p. 21

- f) Which part of the book you have read do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome? Write a composition briefly describing the part you have chosen, and explaining why you think it is the most important.

FCE Handbook.

UCLES 2003, p.20

- g) Write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet, and the questions that you would ask that character.

FCE Handbook.

UCLES 2003, p. 20

- h) The Ministry of Education in your country is trying to make a list of ten books in English everyone should read. Based on the set book you have read, say why or why not it should be considered as part of the list. Write your report.

Think First Certificate Practice Exams.

Jon Naunton, Longman 1996, p. 44

- i) Based on the reading of your chosen set text, retell the most important events of the story from the point of view of one of its minor characters.

Think First Certificate Practice Exams.

Jon Naunton, Longman 1996, p. 60

APPENDIX 4:

Oral tasks based on FCE question types

A. ROLE PLAYS

1. Imagine you are in front of your favourite character of the book you have read. What questions would you ask him or her?
2. Imagine the events and situations in the book you have read have happened in Peru. Choose the part of the plot which you consider most relevant, adapt it to your context and act it out.
3. Act out the most interesting chapter for the class.

B. SPEECHES

In groups or individually talk about:

1. The most interesting character in the book you have read: details of that person's character, and why you find him or her interesting.
2. "Sometimes the bad characters in a story are more interesting than the good ones". Is this true of the book you have read?
3. End up your speech with this statement: "This is such a marvellous book that you will want to read it again".
4. Which part of the book do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome?
5. Which character from the book you have read would you most like to meet? What questions would you ask him or her?

6. Describe the front cover of the book that you have read, and explain how it relates to the book. Does it succeed in making the book look interesting to someone who has not yet read it?
7. Do you think that the events and situations in the book could happen in Peru nowadays? Why (not)?
8. Why should (not) the book you have read be considered as part of a list of 10 books in English everyone should read in Peru?
9. Imagine you are one of the minor characters in the book you have read. Retell the most important events in the story under your own perspective.

C. BOARD DISPLAYS

1. “Before and After”:
Students elaborate a new front cover for the book they have read, and contrast it with the original one. They should support the reason(s) why they have made those changes, and say in what ways the new cover is going to make readers want to read the book.
2. Slogans:
Students imagine that they are members of a team in charge of the marketing campaign to promote the publicity of the book they have read. They are to prepare a creative slogan to catch potential clients’ attention.
3. Proverbs:
The main message of the story should be represented in a proverb which the audience must interpret.
4. Photo Galleries:
Pictures taken from the graded reader itself or from the students’ own imagination will represent the main parts of the plot.

5. Comic / Tragic Strips:
The sequence of events in the story should be pictured on a strip with a comic or tragic tone and presented to the class.
6. Pictogram summaries:
Similar to n°5, but captions containing the content of the different events must be included. The audience should stand up, go around the class appreciating the “work of art” whose parts will be hung on the classroom’s walls.
7. Represent one character in poster format:
The character does not necessarily have to be the main one. Students should pin aspects of this person’s personality or physical appearance written on small pieces of paper.
8. Board Game:
Students were free to “invent” their own game using the characters, plot, or any other element taken from the story.

D. DEBATES

1. Two groups will defend their views towards the characters in the story they have read: those who think that the bad characters in a story are always the most interesting, and those who think that the good characters are the most interesting.
2. All the characters from the book you have read have been placed in the basket of a hot air balloon. The balloon has a small hole so air is slowly escaping causing the balloon to fall. One character must be ejected to keep the balloon aloft. Who would you choose to discard first / last? How popular / essential that character is to the plot? What would the story lose if that character were written out? What would the arguments in favour of the survival of that character be, or the arguments against the survival of the others?

APPENDIX 5:

Composition Samples

PRISONER OF ZENDA - B4:

Which part of the book you have read do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome? Write a composition briefly describing the part you have chosen, and explaining why you think it is the most important.

I read the book The Prisoner of Zenda and the author is Anthony Hope. The setting is Ruritania, a country invented by Hope.

For me the most important part is the last chapter. Rudolf was in a room, Johann had come in and started to talk. Then Fritz came and he said that the King had wanted to see him, so they went to the King's room. He was lying there in bed and he looked very awful. The King said that he had shown him how to be a King. Then Fritz took Rudolf to see Flavia. Rudolf and Flavia started to talk and he said he loved her with all his heart and soul. And she said "If love were all, I would follow you to the world's end." Then he said goodbye and left her. He came back to the Alps, but he left his heart in Ruritania.

I think that this is the most important part of the book because you don't know how it will finish, you don't know if Rudolf will stay in Ruritania to love Flavia. It was a sad history of love. If love were all, we could do many things.

PRISONER OF ZENDA - C1 (Oral Task – Optional Writing):

Describe the front cover of the book that you have read, and explain how it relates to the book. Does it succeed in making the book look interesting to someone who has not yet read it?

In this front cover ^{there} are some characters ^{mentioned} in the book. In the left side, there is a crown and inside it is the true king who ^{has} been ill-treated and sick. Besides, the crown is like a jail. One top of this crown, there are two men. One is a good who ^{try} to open the jail and the other one is a bad guy who ^{do} not let ^{open} the jail. In the right side there is the false king, with a thunder, looking at the people.

this front cover is trying to explain the general concept of this book. the cover can give the reader an idea of what he or she is going to read and it is related to ^{the} book because you can see in the cover two scenes of the chapters.

I think this cover looks interesting to ^{some}one who has not ^{read} the book yet. In my opinion it is new, attractive, eye catching and funny. ^{It} makes the reader want to know more about the book.

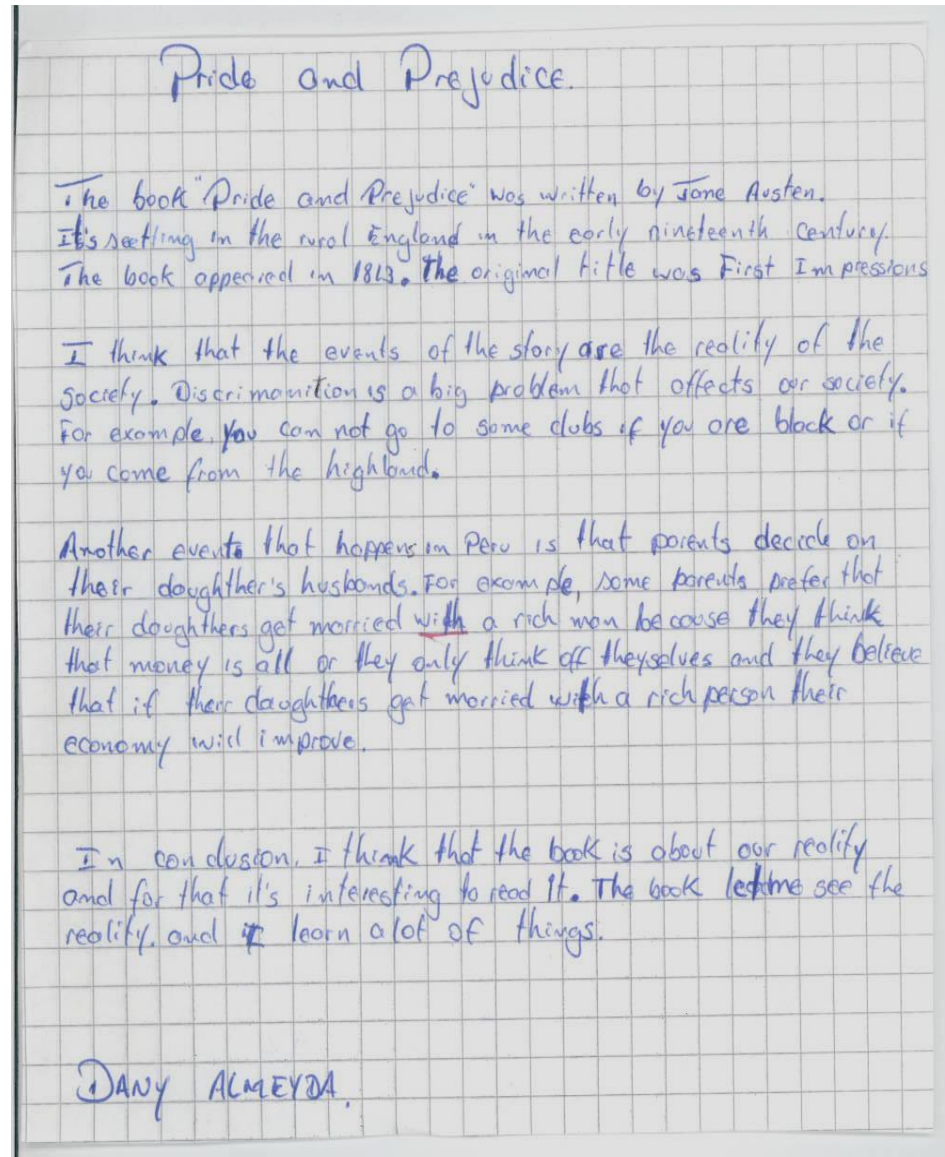
Good, but I think that the 1st parag. is too long to be the introduction. This one must be shorter than the central parag.
You haven't mentioned the name of the book or the characters !!!

Check your grammar, please.

Kelly Cabas
2011

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE - A2:

You have read about several events and situations in the book which you have chosen. Do you think that any of those events and situations could happen in your country nowadays? Explain why or why not with reference of the book itself.



Writing.

"Pride and Prejudice" was written by Jane Austen. It is an old story set in 18th century. This novel took place in "Hertfordshire", about 50 miles outside of London.

One of the most important task in this novel is the discrimination of the woman. In that time men used to have prejudice about things that women were able to do, thing that they had to do or had not to do. In that time woman can't say "no" or "yes", they only have to obey. Nowadays, women can do what they want, besides that still now in Perú even exist some people with that idea.

And other point that mention in the book is that parents decided on their daughter's husbands. The families used to make an arremgment before their child's born or grow up after 20 years (more less), they have to get married, even they want or not, even they don't fall in love. In this days in our country, you can choose the person you want to get married.

In my opinion, the idea "the man have to go to work and the woman have to stay at home cooking for her husband" is an old and wrong idea. In these days, it still exist people that have the same idea, but now women are different, we are not the same shine girl that used to do what the men wanted. We are stronger and independent and we don't need a man to survive.

DEADLOCK - A1:

Write a short article for your college magazine about the character in the book which you would most like to meet, and the questions that you would ask that character.

Original style

Sara Paretsky wrote Deadlock in 1995. It is a very interesting story because of the main character: Vic Warshawski. She is a private detective woman and as you know it is something very unusual. That's why I consider this book really original.

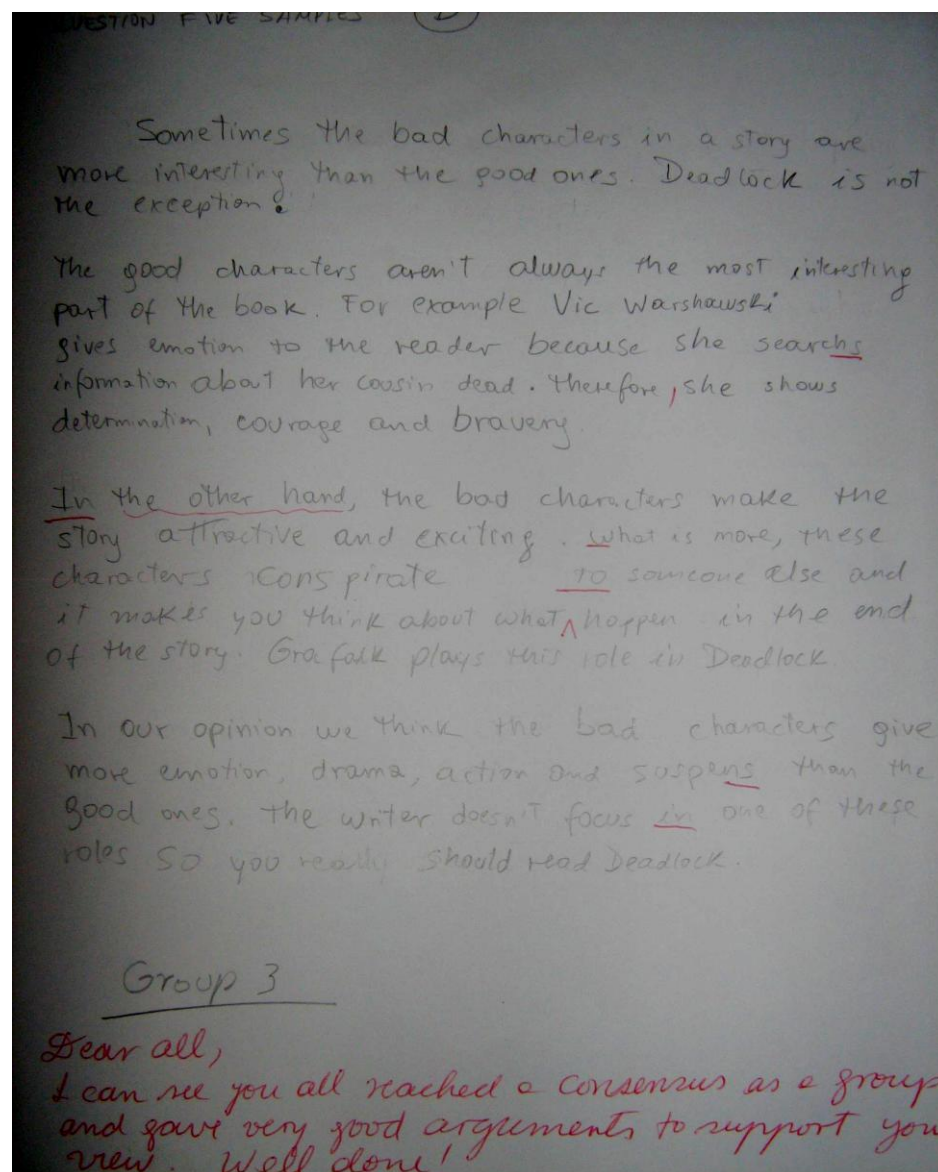
Vic Warshawski live in a flat in Chicago. She is in her early thirties and is very attractive. She doesn't care about get a husband and children. So she is alone and just ~~gets~~ gets on with her work.

I like her because of her behaviour. Since many years ago, the women have been making a silent revolution, trying to change theirs destined as inferior race. In this book, Vic show us how women's attitude have changed. For example, she works as a detective and years ago the women couldn't work, they ~~stayed~~ stayed at home and what is more, be a detective was a work only for men. Also, she doesn't show her afraid and spoke her mind.

You really should read it. If you like usual stories you'll love this book.

Lorena Lusiana
Carranza Flores.

D1: Group 3 was divided in two so that they could adopt two different positions: those who thought that the bad characters in "Deadlock" were always the most interesting, and those who thought that the good characters were the most interesting:






APPENDIX 6:



Final Feedback Session

On the last feedback session, I managed to collect students' feelings towards their participation in the project. The questions posed were the following:

- 1• Did you like the books read in the last three months? Why (not)?*
- 2• Were there any story lines you enjoyed more than the others?*
- 3• How about the oral tasks? Were they relevant for the purpose of story reading?*
- 4• Would task 5 in Paper 2 – Part 2 be an option for you? Would you consider it for the December FCE examination?*
- 5• In general, did you find the experience worth living? Why?*

Here are their reactions:

-  “At first we thought that reading books was boring, but after doing all these activities, we feel like reading more books, not only the five books set for the FCE preparation. We’ll go to the SAC (Self-Access Centre) more often.”
-  “We don’t read much, even in Spanish, so reading in English was a totally different adventure. We discovered that we managed to understand the story line very well without worrying much about the new words; it was like magic!”
-  Now we are not so afraid of writing. The oral activities have helped us to express our ideas more easily on the paper. We now think that question 5 can be one of our options in the FCE exam in December.”

-  **Reading books gives you more ideas to write compositions. It's like travelling: it broadens your mind, and for FCE, it helps you not only in writing, but in the interview too."**
-  **"We just let our imagination go. We recommend you to read these three books for FCE, and in general any other that you think you'll like, you won't regret it!"**

APPENDIX 7: **Graded readers' plots**

The Prisoner of Zenda by Anthony Hope

The narrator is twenty-nine year old the Hon. Rudolf Rassendyll, younger brother of the Earl of Burlesdon and (through an ancestor's sexual indiscretion) a distant cousin and look alike of Rudolf V, the soon-to-be-crowned King of Ruritania, a "highly interesting and important" ^[1] Germanic kingdom somewhere imprecisely between the German and Austrian Empires. Ruritania is, like Germany and Austria-Hungary at that time, an absolute monarchy. Rudolf Elphberg, the crown prince, is a hard-drinking playboy, unpopular with the common people, but supported by the aristocracy, the Catholic Church, the army, and the rich classes in general. The political rival to this absolute monarch is his younger half-brother Michael, Duke and Governor of Strelsau, the capital. Michael has no legitimate claim to the throne, because he is the son of their father's second, morganatic marriage: there are hints, from his swarthy appearance (he is nicknamed Black Michael) and Rassendyll's elliptically referring to him as a "mongrel", that he may have Jewish ancestry. Michael is regarded as champion of Strelsau's working classes, both the proletariat and the peasants, and of what Hope refers to as the criminal classes. The novel seems sympathetic, however, with those who would support the dissolute despot, King Rudolf. When Michael has Rudolf drugged, abducted and imprisoned in the castle in the small town of Zenda, Rassendyll must impersonate the King at the

coronation. There are complications, plots, and counter-plots, among them the schemes of Michael's mistress Antoinette de Mauban, and those of his villainous henchman Rupert of Hentzau, and Rassendyll falling in love with Princess Flavia, the King's betrothed. In the end, the King is restored to his throne — but the lovers must part.

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Elizabeth Bennet is a country gentleman's daughter in 19th Century England. She is one of five daughters, a plight that her father bears as best he can with common sense of his daughters Jane and Elizabeth, and a general disinterest in the silliness of his daughters - Mary, Kitty and Lydia. Elizabeth is his favorite because of her level-headed approach to life, whilst Elizabeth's mother's greatest concern is getting her daughters married off to well-established gentlemen. Only Jane, Elizabeth's older sister, is nearly as sensible and practical as Elizabeth, but Jane is also the beauty of the family, and therefore, Mrs. Bennet's highest hope for a good match.

When Mr. Bingley, a young gentleman of London, takes a country estate near to the Bennet's home, Mrs. Bennet begins her match-making schemes without any trace of subtlety or dignity. Despite Mrs. Bennet's embarrassing interference, Mr. Bingley and Jane become fond of one another. Mr. Darcy, who has accompanied Bingley to the country, begins his acquaintance with Elizabeth, her family, and their neighbors with

smug condescension and proud distaste for the all of the country people. Elizabeth, learning of his dislike, makes it a point to match his disgust with her own venom. She also hears from a soldier for whom she has a fondness that Darcy has misused the man. Without thinking through the story, Elizabeth immediately seizes upon it as another, more concrete reason to hate Mr. Darcy. She contradicts and argues with Darcy each time they meet, but somewhere along the way he begins to like Elizabeth.

When Bingley leaves the countryside suddenly and makes no attempts to contact Jane anymore, the young woman is heartbroken. Elizabeth, who had thought well of Bingley, believes that there is something amiss in the way that he left Jane in the lurch. Only when Elizabeth goes to visit her friend at the estate of Darcy's aunt does the mystery begin to unfold. After several encounters with Mr. Darcy while visiting her friend, Elizabeth is shocked when Darcy proposes to her. Elizabeth refuses him and questions him about his ungentlemanly conduct, the way that he misused her soldier friend, and his role in the manner of Bingley's abandonment of Jane. Darcy writes a letter to explain himself, and Elizabeth is embarrassed to learn that she had been misled about the facts of her concerns about the matters involving Darcy. In his turn, Darcy reflects on Elizabeth's criticisms and makes an effort to improve his manners in order to try to win her back. Elizabeth goes on a tour of the country and, coincidentally, they meet face-to-face while she is touring the gardens of his estate with her aunt and uncle. Darcy behaves with gentlemanly conduct and treats her relations with extreme

diffidence. Elizabeth sees this to possibly mean that he still harbours affections for her, but before they can take this a step further it is derailed by a shocking event. Elizabeth learns that one of her younger sisters has run away with the very soldier who misled Elizabeth and the rest of her family about Mr. Darcy. She returns home immediately.

When the indignity of her sister's shot-gun wedding is straightened out, Elizabeth is surprised that Darcy returns to the country with Bingley. She expected that the shame of her sister's actions had ruined any chances of a relationship with Mr. Darcy, or Jane and Bingley. Elizabeth learns from her aunt that Darcy did a great part to help get her younger sister properly married to the infamous soldier. Jane and Bingley sort out the misunderstanding that kept him away before and get engaged. Elizabeth and Darcy then work out their misunderstandings and agree to marry.

Deadlock by Sara Paretsky

Deadlock, V I Warshawski's second case, involves the huge Great Lakes shipping industry. Once again the subject is murder—this time the "accidental death" of Boom-Boom Warshawski, an ex-hockey star and V I's beloved cousin, who fell—or was pushed—off a rain-slicked pier on Chicago's busy waterfront. Convinced that Boom-Boom was in fact killed because of information he had uncovered about criminal doings on

the shipping lines, V I begins a long and frustrating search for her cousin's murderer. In the course of an investigation that takes her to a remote Canadian port city and a calamitous trip on a sabotaged freighter, V I finds all too many possible candidates for the killer, including a grain company executive involved in extortion; and rival heads of two shippers, one of whom is being blackmailed for his criminal past; a hockey player whose specialty is graft; and Boom-Boom's lover, an icily beautiful dancer with expensive tastes in men and merchandise.

APPENDIX 8:
Samples of learners' material used in their oral
performance
STORY N° 1: THE PRISONER OF ZENDA

C 7: Pictogram Summary





A3: Act the most interesting part of the story for the class





C 1: Before and After

D 1: Debate. Bad characters versus good characters:

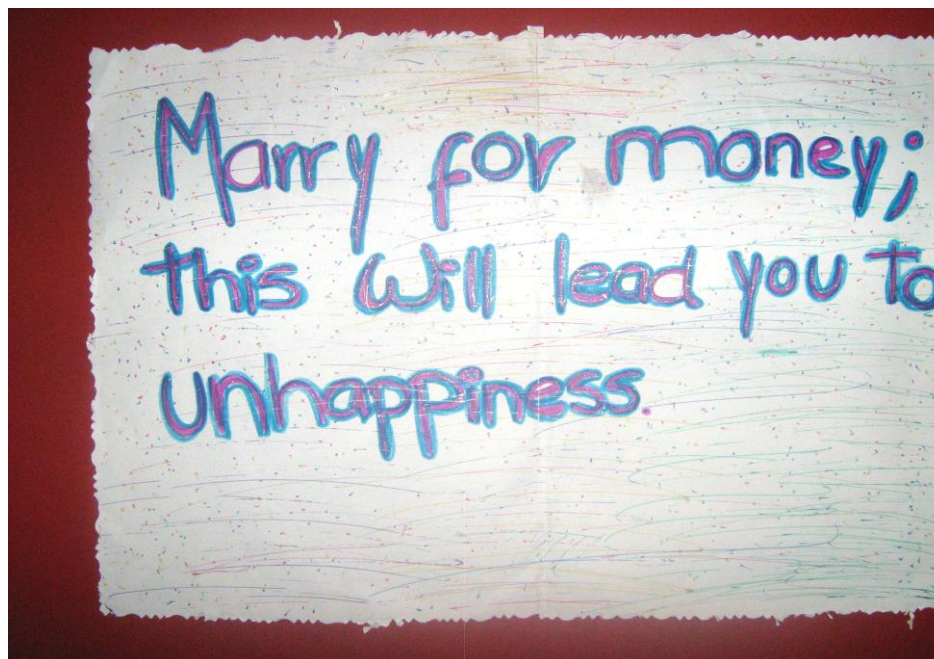
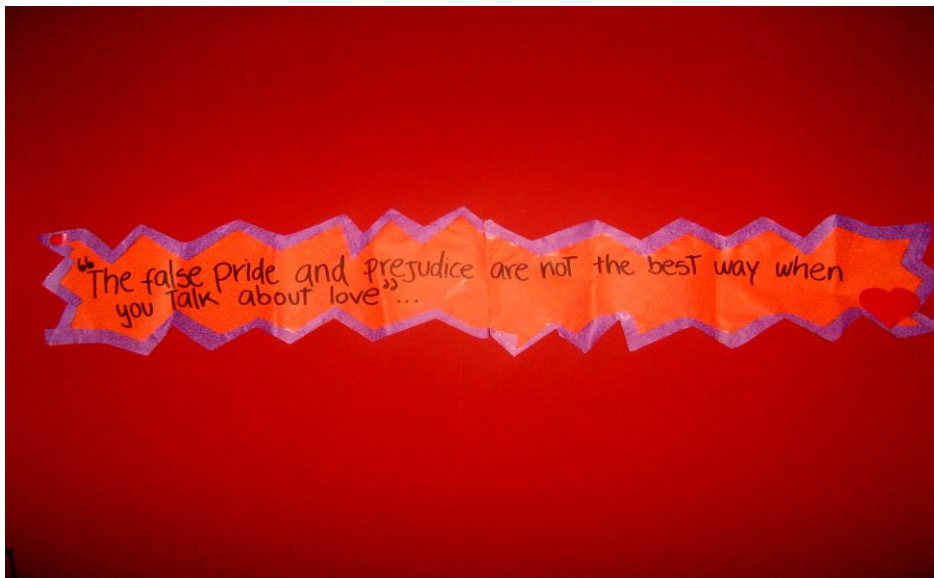


B 4: Speech. Which part of the book do you think is the most important: the setting, the plot or the outcome? Why?

STORY N° 2: PRIDE AND PREJUDICE



C 8: Board Game



C 2: Slogans. (Board Display)



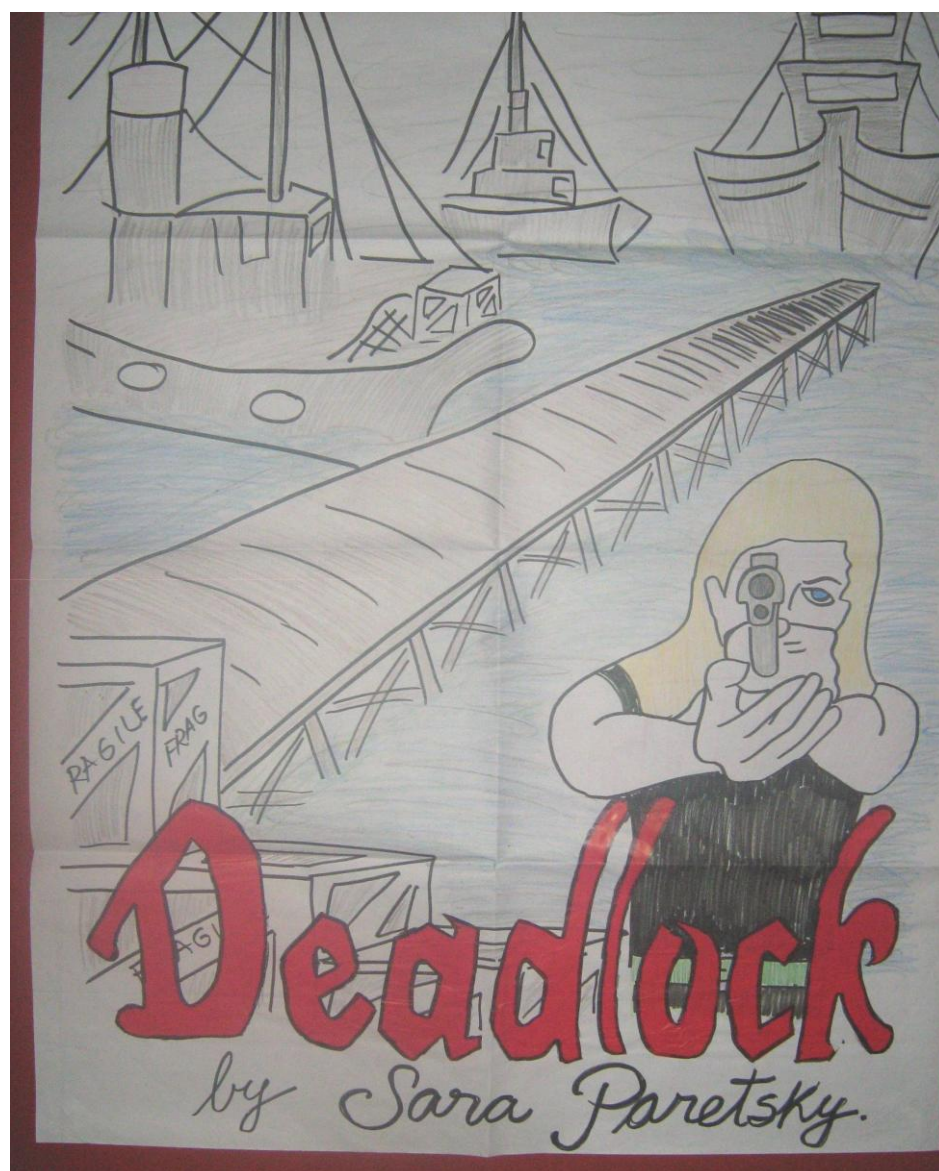
C4: Picture Galleries. (Board Display)

B 5: Speech. Which character in the book you have read would you most like to meet? What questions would you ask him / her?



B 1: Speech. Talk about the most interesting character in the book you have read: details of that person's character, and why you find him / her interesting.

STORY N° 3: DEADLOCK



C 1: Before and After



C7: Board Display

Represent one character in poster format



A 1: Role Play. Imagine you are in front of your favourite character of the book you have read. What questions would you ask him or her?



B 7: Speech. Do you think that the events and situations in the book you have read could happen in Peru nowadays? Why (not)?



Part of the group of students who took part in the project