



**UNIVERSIDAD LAICA VICENTE ROCAFUERTE DE GUAYAQUIL
FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN
CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN MENCIÓN INGLÉS**

**RESEARCH PROJECT:
“THE INFLUENCE OF A BLOG AS A TECHNOLOGICAL TOOL TO IMPROVE
THE WRITING OF PARAGRAPHS IN ENGLISH APPLIED TO SEVENTH GRADE
STUDENTS AT MONTE TABOR NAZARET”**

**PREVIO A LA OBTENCIÓN DEL TÍTULO DE:
LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA
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**AUTORES:
DAVID ANDRES CORAL ESPINAL
DIANA ELIZABETH GURUMENDI RIVERO**

**TUTOR:
MSC. LUIS LEÓN VELIZ**

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CERTIFICACIÓN DE ACEPTACIÓN DEL TUTOR

En mi calidad de Tutor del Proyecto de Investigación, nombrado por el Consejo Directivo de la Facultad de Educación – Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés.

CERTIFICO

Yo, Luis León Veliz, certifico que el Proyecto de Investigación con el tema: “THE INFLUENCE OF A BLOG AS A TECHNOLOGICAL TOOL TO IMPROVE THE WRITING OF PARAGRAPHS IN ENGLISH APPLIED TO SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT MONTE TABOR NAZARET” , ha sido elaborado por el señor David Andrés Coral Espinal y la señorita Diana Elizabeth Gurumendi Rivero, bajo mi tutoría y que el mismo reúne los requisitos para ser defendido ante el tribunal examinador, que se designe al efecto.

TUTOR

MSC. Luis León Veliz

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David Andrés Coral Espinal

Autor

Diana Elizabeth Gurumendi Rivero

Autora

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DEDICATION

We are dedicating our Project to God for giving us strength in every step. Our family for always being there and encouraging us to continue, and many friends who used positive and constructive words to let us know we could count on them. We will always appreciate all they have done for us.

ABSTRACT

The principal purpose of this Research Project is to improve the writing of paragraphs by using a blog as a technological tool in students of seventh grade at Monte Tabor Nazaret Primary School. To accomplish these goals some steps were necessary to follow. Find out errors made by students throughout assignments. Use a rubric to see specific areas where students need improvements. In addition, design a blog to teach students the way of writing paragraphs correctly. As part of this process, a survey was administered to students to see if they were exposed enough to technology and blogs. Then, a Pre-Test was given to students to determine the kind of errors they produced and their level of English. By using this information, classes were developed for students in order to improve their writing of paragraphs skills. After all these classes, a Post-Test was given to students obtaining positive results. Finally, after comparing results from the Pre and Post Tests, conclusion and some recommendations for the institution were given in order to improve the writing of paragraphs in English.

Key words: blog, assignment, goal, improvement.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Statement of the Problem

Writing is one of the productive skills in the English language that has been taken into consideration to measure people's performance in this language. It is also one of the requirements to evaluate students in the English language in any education stage. It is worldwide tested and researched by many people such as professors, researchers, or institutions like universities due to its relevant results that lead to solutions for different problems encountered in the English learning process.

A great deal of people has proved that writing has been a problem for a lot of people around the world and they have also shown solutions for these problems. It had to take several years to solve these problems and still problems continue coming to light. Solutions just cover some parts of the complications but not all of them, that is why, investigation **carry on with** analysis of new cases.

Comentado [U1]: continue

For this reason, as scores have been a proof to every person who wants to see the students' outcome for many years, the researchers of this study had checked different records of different teachers in different school year partials of seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret where they were able to see the low production in the writing section. Students got from medium to high scores in other English sections but not in the writing one. Moreover, speaking which is also a productive skill had better scores than the writing one.

Some seventh grade Language teachers were interviewed to find out if students were experiencing any difficulty at this level, which is the level of this study. The result was that they have serious problems in writing. Teachers find it difficult to improve this specific weak area no matter the practice or the number of assignments students could receive during the whole school year. The more they practice, the more errors are found.

In addition, revising different scores from the past two school years, it was noticed writing scores were even below borderline (According to Common European Framework (CEF) at Elementary level A2) and these cases were a tendency in at least the past year.

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Table 1. Common European Framework: global scale

An official test, ELASH 1, administered by CollegeBoard is given to students in October of every school year to determine their real level of English. Tests results are given to the school a few months later. Last school year was not the exception; CollegeBoard sent its comments and results to Monte Tabor Nazaret to inform of students' strengths and weaknesses according to their grading system. These comments revealed good students development in different sections such as use of English, listening, and speaking but not in writing. Students showed poor writing skills again.

Surveys were also conducted to students in order to have another point of view and perspective that could help to identify some possible problems, which seem to be the most problematic ones for them. Having a great variety of questions, multiple choice, selection,

grading, etc., students were able to define what their problems were by themselves. Some of these problems were the lack of vocabulary they could handle at the moment of expressing themselves, the form of how they had to arrange words to form correct sentences, or even the creativity they had to use to make a simple paragraph.

Recovering all these data and taking into consideration all comments from teachers, a test was given to seventh grade students to identify their problem or problems these students could have. The test results were what it was expected; several problems were found, from word order or phrases to false constituents. Writing in all aspects was poor and needed to be improved.

Other issues found in the results were grammatical mistakes that were too many even in elementary formation, improper vocabulary that shows L1 interference, erroneous spelling, etc. These errors could not be considered mistakes in case students in other parts of the paragraphs corrected them, but they continued making them.

Now, the key is to find somehow the solution for improving writing in a short term. A question related to likes and interests were included to students in the survey they were taken before. It **let out** that technology plays an important role, it is part of their lives, in students' way of living cause they all have an electronic device of equipment with them all the time.

Comentado [U2]: reveal

On the other hand, the use of technology in classes has been a trend since a few years ago, especially among young students. Teenagers and children feel more comfortable using a computer or any device with Internet access than the usual boring paper. The use of a computer has an advantage because pupils can see pictures, listen to songs, watch videos, or any other interesting and catching material for them. These materials are not only used by students in a regular class but they are also used for practicing outside any instructional institution because even books nowadays have a digital version. Besides the digital version, the book sets include other valuable material for students to intake language in a more realistic and funny way. Interactive material is well acceptable and attractive for any age: children or teenagers.

Considering that young people have at least one social network, researchers of this study thought about something alike these networks, which is the blog. It was very difficult to get to this conclusion considering that teenagers most of the time handle other applications of their interests and may not pay attention to any other tool. Blogs are useful due to its flexibility of adding other kind of information like videos or presentations and not only text as many people may think.

1.1.1. The Problem

What effect would the use of a blog as a technological tool have on the writing of paragraphs of seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret?

1.2. Objectives: Broad and specific

To improve the writing of paragraphs of seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret.

Specific

- Diagnose the errors presented in paragraph written by students through assignment of topics to develop.
- Evaluate students using an established rubric for writing.
- Designing a blog as a teaching tool to improve the low writing level of the seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret.

1.3. Rationale of the Study

This study is important for a number of reasons: students can learn writing using a blog because it is interesting and catching for any young person, enhance students' motivation because feelings are important in any learning phase, develop and improve comprehension skills because they are part of mental processes.

Students can learn writing using this blog because of the use of an electronic device that excites the curiosity of any person who uses it, especially students. Devices, nowadays, are friendlier and more portable than ever. However, devices can lead to a misuse of the resources on the part of students on account of multiple applications any device could have or downloaded using a Wi-Fi hotspot that at the present time is very common to find.

Comentado [U3]: Debido a

Students will enhance their motivation by showing them that they can produce little pieces of information which represents real communication among other people. By getting to this point, students will desire to feed their brain with more and more data to build more complex chunks of information to the point of constructing long strings of

communication and participate in a vivid conversation with any peer. People may not think this is important but it really is at any age. It is vital for any person to have intrinsic and extrinsic motivation especially at the learning process because if people have a bad experience caused by any factor at this stage, it will leave a deep scar in their mind and block these people to learn any language.

Students will develop and improve comprehension skills by learning them step by step to become not an expert but a very efficient person at understanding information in an easy form. Different methods will help students get to this point while they prepare for writing correctly and connect different areas of study to increase understanding.

Previous studies have shown or suggested that technology had played a crucial role in the learning process of all levels of human beings. Technology had become too strong through the pass of the years due to its friendly, powerful, and remarkable interface that helps learning or acquiring new information in a not difficult form and most of the time for free. Many companies that offer devices or services launch trendy and sophisticated equipment for people to stay updated in any social, cultural, or educational field. Furthermore, editorials or publishers did not want to stay behind or far from this reality, which is why all of them started creating software or mobile applications (some are free) for this new technological era. Since having the effortlessness of creating interesting and striking apps, these companies have gathered more people than ever and always innovating in order to catch new customers and stay at the top of the mountain among a wide range of competitors.

A blog, as an instrument, applies the use of different techniques to improve students writing skills. As it is a part of technology, students generally find it useful, interesting, and helpful at the moment of learning. This may result in an improvement in students' grades in their English subjects. This change will not only benefit students in these subjects but in Spanish ones too, especially "Lengua y Literatura", "Estudios Sociales", "Ciencias Naturales" among others because they share the same techniques as the English ones. Therefore, students will write better paragraphs using coherence, well-spelled vocabulary, and having a few grammar mistakes. By improving writing, pupils will also get a better way of communicating, thinking, and processing information in oral speech, not only in English but in their mother tongue, too.

Students will have the benefit of improving another skill like reading comprehension. They will be able to summarize and expand in great details what they read as well as they do in writing. This will be a tremendous advantage due to decoding in a

high level of understanding and linking different types of sentences to create mind maps about any given topic or random topic chosen by students, even topics of their interests which are not normally about education.

1.4. Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This research will demonstrate quality in writing a paragraph through a blog to seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret. This paper will not cover teaching grammar or reading itself for the reason that students already know it or will raise it throughout this process. Grammar was learned by way of five years in primary school in the Language subject and with the support of the other two subjects that are Science and Social Studies. Reading, comprehension or skills, was learned by checking each one of these little by little in these five years of instruction in an extensive variety of forms given by teachers.

Comentado [U4]: through

A good, valid, and interesting way of learning writing paragraphs effectively, for students, is by using a blog designed by researchers of this study following a scheduled program and constant monitoring. Besides, students will have to work on corrections and been given feedback in an appropriate time.

Students will be chosen at random to not show any particular preference by good-scored ones or even designated by teachers. These students in seventh grade are between eleven and twelve years old.

The universe of seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret is one hundred, fifty male and fifty female.

The sample used corresponds to twenty percent of students enrolled from the entire population that is twenty students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This research is based on principal methods, studies, and researches that were done throughout the beginning of teaching English many years ago. Taking into account this knowledge and its improvements all over the years, there are enough bases to conduct this research.

There are three major representatives who exposed key terms in the Language Teaching field. They are Edward Anthony, Jack Richards and Theodore Rodgers. They worked with definitions such as method, approach and technique that later they were changed and renamed as design, approach and procedure. These definitions gave a huge help in the Language Teaching field due to their clarity and easy way of understanding them.

Over the years, different methods and techniques have been used for a century or so that English language has spread from a few countries or societies to all continents. Methods such as grammar translation was used about two hundred years ago, the series method which gave a series of sentences to students which they had to perceive, the direct method that did not use grammar rules or even pay attention to them, the audiolingual method which is basically oral drills of chunk of information of a dialogue, suggestopedia that taught in a relaxed way, the silent way in which students had to learn by themselves, total physical response that used orders to teach learners, the natural approach which used techniques similar to acquisition of the language, and the communicative approach which is based on what to teach and how to teach it. These are the most common methods or approaches used along the language teaching time line that many of them are still used nowadays. Teachers do not only use one or two, they use some of them in their classes to achieve goals and more than that make students learn and apply the target language in their daily routines.

To carry out this research, technology is the science that has been used. It is widely used nowadays by almost every person around the Earth no matter the age or the price; this is because there is vast different equipment from which you can select. People also like to get the latest technological devices to be and feel updated, so it does not matter the cost, but show it to the rest of the society. They also believe is part of their lives to have one electronic device with them all the time.

Comentado [D5]: Edward Anthony
Published by: [Melba O. Cruz](#) on Nov 20, 2011
Copyright: Attribution Non-commercial
Chapter 2 A "Methodical" History of Language Teaching

Comentado [D6]: Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching, Jack c. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers. Cambridge university Press, 1999.

As people are connected to the web all the time, they have access to social networks to be updated about friends, relatives or any other person they might know or want to know something about him/her. Facebook, twitter, chaton, linkedin, among others are accessed every second per thousands of people around the Earth.

As well as social networks, there is another common and widely used tool that is the blog. Any human being can create a blog and include any information that he or she wants since personal information to projects. People normally post information they like or make others know it in order to express themselves in a free and easy way. Blogs have no cost most of the time and offer many tools to edit them or include files or media to them. Blogs started to be used as a tool to allow people to express themselves without any complains because it was people's decisions if they entered to read the posts or not. Later on, society started to use blogs in education and training including teachers and students' communication. Blogs have merged through the years and teachers have realized that blogs are a powerful tool in education, especially in language learning. Studies that have been published include research on blogging's effect on learner autonomy, increasing writing fluency, as a place for completing writing assignments (Ward, 2004; Wu, 2005), posting class materials (Johnson, 2004), and as a way to open communication with bloggers outside the classroom (Pinkman, 2005).

Writing has always been a considerable issue in the learning process and it is tried to be solved by taking the most important parts to accomplish this process. Many people suffer at the moment of writing just because they do not know how to do it, what to include, how to start, what grammar to use, etcetera. Since people start studying, they find writing difficult and it becomes so stressful that they prefer to not do it or do it because they are obliged.

2.2. Theoretical Review

In his study, Edward Anthony (1963) gave three terms to the teaching language field: approach, method and technique. Approach is a set of assumptions dealing with the nature of language, learning, and teaching. Method is an overall plan for systematic presentation of language based upon a selected approach. Techniques are the specific activities manifested in the classroom that are consistent with a method and therefore in harmony with an approach as well.

Many teachers still commonly use these terms today because teaching has not changed for many of them through the past of the years. However, education has changed and adapted more and more to the technological era that involves the use of different resources in a class. As a result, these three terms became obsolete owing to teachers needed other terminology to cover or try to overcome this problem.

Later, Richards and Rodgers (1982, 1986) proposed a reformulation of the concept of method, approach and technique. They called these three names in a different form; they were called approach, design and procedure respectively. A method, according to Richards and Rodgers (1982) “is an umbrella term for the specification and interrelation of theory and practice.” (p. 154). An approach defines assumptions, beliefs, and theories about the nature of language and language learning. Designs specify the relationship of those theories to classroom materials and activities. Procedures are the techniques and practices that are derived from one’s approach and design. Richard and Rodgers gave a schematic representation of method for a better understanding of what was explained before (see Figure 1).

Comentado [D7]: Due to

Comentado [D8]: <http://www-01.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/otherresources/bibliographyoflinguistics/ RichardsAndRodgers1986.htm>

Richards, Jack C. and Theodore S. Rodgers. 1986. Approaches and methods in language teaching: A description and analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 167pp.

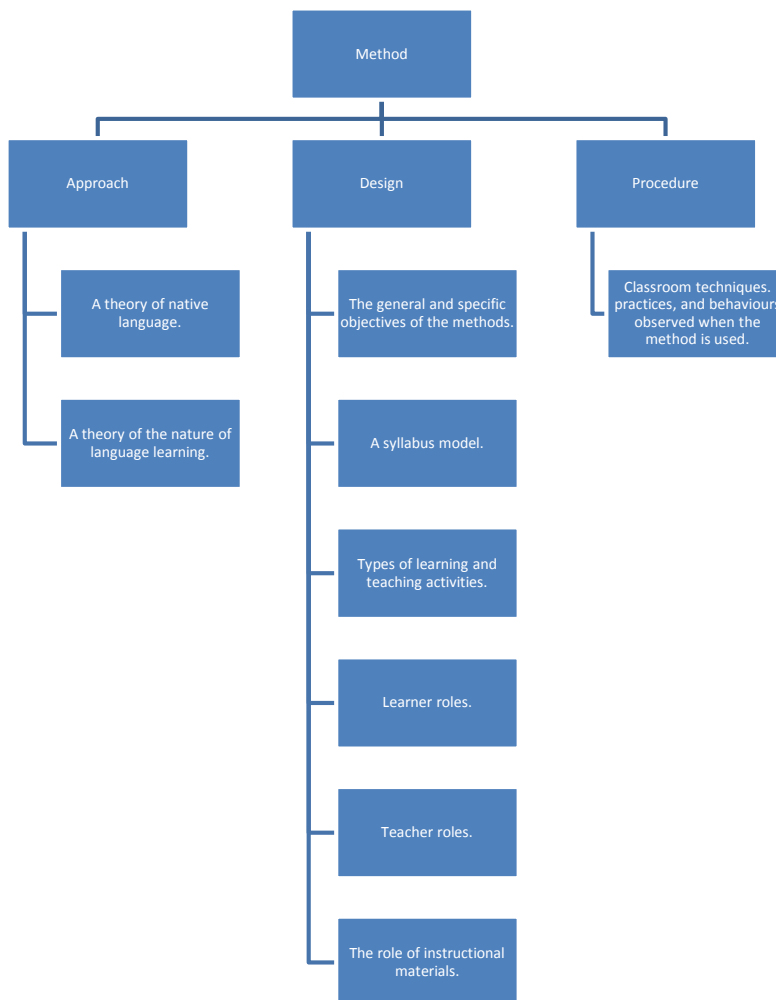


Figure 1. Elements and Subelements of Method (Richards and Rodgers, 1986)

Nowadays, Language Teaching refers to method and approach as only one unit which is called methodology. *THE OXFORD ADVANCED LEARNER'S DICTIONARY* (2015) defines methodology as a set of methods and principles used to perform a particular activity. This is what was before but united in one big term which tells educators how to proceed in a class.

Comentado [D9]: methodology: Learner's Dictionary. (n.d.). In *Oxford Dictionaries - Dictionary, Thesaurus, & Grammar*. Retrieved from <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/learner/methodology>

2.2.1. Teaching Methods And Techniques

Grammar translation method was used about two hundred years ago; it adopted the classical method that focused on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabularies, and certain conjugations. It was about translating a paragraph or a text from a foreign language to its native language focusing on grammatical rules as its basis. Classes using this method were taught in the mother tongue, including a lot of isolated words and an extensive grammar explanation. Pronunciation was a weakness due to its no practice which made the learning very difficult. Besides, learners had to use difficult classical texts to learn a new language without taking in to account its high level and complex of writing or meaning of words or expressions.

The series method gave a series of sentences to students that they had to perceive. François Gouin (1880) came to the conclusion “Language learning is primarily a matter of transforming perceptions into conceptions. Children use language to represent their conceptions. Language is a means of thinking, of representing the world to oneself”. A method that taught learners directly (without translation) and conceptually (without grammatical rules and explanations) a “series” of connected sentences that are easy to perceive. This method was successful but not implemented and left apart until another method came to light.

The direct method that did not use grammar rules or even pay attention to them, it is similar to the series method because the second language learning should be more like the first language. This method refers to the use of the language as the first language through oral communication, listening, pronunciation correction, concrete vocabulary teaching, and everyday vocabulary and expressions taught.

The audiolingual method which is basically oral drills of chunk of information of a dialogue, it is also known as the Army method due to the first use by the U.S. Army in the World War II. It really had oral interaction such as pronunciation and pattern drills and conversation practice leaving apart grammar translation or grammar rules. Later, this method became the Audiolingual method which bases were similar to the Direct Method and included Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement model. It used dialogues as model and substitution was built into these drills, everything was learnt gradually even by making mistakes that were used to correct and improve the learning.

Suggestopedia was taught using a relaxation technique. Comfortable seats and music were key points to teach by adopting this method. It was not really accepted considering

Comentado [D10]: François Gouin was a French teacher of Latin who published the book, *The Art of Learning and Studying Foreign Languages* in 1880

the fact that not many teachers had the supplies that this method implied. Moreover, it was very helpful for the reason that other studies were conducted thanks to the observation and conclusion that people can learn in states of relaxation.

The silent way in which students had to learn by themselves uses discovery-learning procedures. Students had to help each other in order to understand and solve problems without making any interference by them or the teacher. Teacher intercommunication was minimum and often too distant to students. Target language was taught using some materials according to the type of lessons that was going to be introduced or practiced.

Total physical response used the principle of psychomotor associations. Asher (1977) noted that children, in learning their first language, appear to do a lot of listening before they speak, and that their listening is accompanied by physical responses (reaching, grabbing, moving, looking, and so forth). The teacher was very directive in orchestrating a performance: "The instructor is the director of a stage play in which the students are the actors." (Asher, 1977, p. 43)

The natural approach used techniques similar to acquisition of the language, it aimed the goal of basic personal communication skills. In other words, its goal was everyday language situations - conversations, shopping, listening to the radio, and the like. At first, learners received comprehensible input, that is, information learners could understand or it might be at their level. Then, a silent period came until pupils were ready to speak and felt comfortable to do so. The teacher was in charge of creating interesting and innovative activities to be used in the classroom. Besides, the teacher was responsible for giving all input students needed to develop and intake language vocabulary. There were three clear stages in this method. The first one was the preproduction, which was the development of listening comprehension skills. The second one was the production stage, which involved errors made by students where teacher focused on meaning and not on form. For this reason, teacher did not intervene in the correcting process unless it was a big error, which could change meaning entirely. The last stage was an extensive production that could have a variety of activities such as complex games, role-lays, open-ended dialogs, discussions, and extended small-group work.

Communicative approach was based on what to teach and how to teach it. The "what to teach" aspect of the Communicative approach stressed the significance of language functions rather than focusing solely on grammar and vocabulary. A guiding principle was to train students to use these language forms appropriately in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes. The "how to teach aspect" of the Communicative approach is closely

Comentado [D11]: <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3852795-learning-another-language-through-actions>

related to the idea that “language learning will take care of itself”, and that plentiful exposure to language in use and plenty of opportunities to use it are vitally important for a student’s development of knowledge and skill. This method required real or realistic communication where accuracy is less important than successful achievement of the communicative task they are performing. Thus, role-play and simulation have become very popular in CLT, where students simulate a television programme or a scene at an airport, or they might put together the simulated front page of a newspaper. The main point of this is that students should have a desire to communicate something.

2.2.2. Technology

The growth of technology has spurred the inclusion of new and various forms of technology in many locations and branches of life, from government offices to communication companies and the social life, such as Twitter, Face book and MySpace. However, some of the most common places technology can be found are in our education systems, our classrooms and district offices. Although schools find themselves using more and more new technologies each day, they find themselves also the subject of much controversy over the use of this technology in the first place. (Patel, 2013, p. 62)

Comentado [D12]: PATEL, B. H. Technology in the Classroom.

The inclusion of technology is more common in all level of instructional institution due to the demand of students and the changes of society, thus, to look for the improvements of students in their learning process.

“With the advent of networked multimedia computing and the Internet, language teachers throughout the country have been warming up to using computers in the language classroom” (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000, 303). This is not only in higher education as Warschauer & Meskill say but in all educational levels. Kids are keen on using technology in any class instead of the typical boring books that by tradition have been used to teach. It motivates pupils and inspires them to create anything by using the target language as a primary tool. It will just depend on them how deep and extensive they want to learn; the more interactive, the more interesting and meaningful for pupils.

Comentado [D13]: Warschauer, M., & Meskill, C. (2000). Technology and second language teaching. *Handbook of undergraduate second language education*, 303-318.

“It is possible to perceive that the concept of m-Learning and its application are more and more diffused. The development of learning objects that fit mobile devices is valuable for educators that start having more options to promote education“ (Iskander, 2008, p.

278). It is seemed to have good acceptance by pupils for the reason that they are into technology, which is part of their daily lives. As every time devices are smaller and smaller, students tend to have the latest ones. There are too many applications, websites, and software that nowadays there is almost everything on the Internet that people could find it for free. On the other hand, if there is not what teachers need, they would find manuals or tutorials that could explain how to develop the application or resource the teacher needed. Moreover, editorials initiated developing their books pointing to the integration with technology to be used in a classroom to not fall back to the new changings in education. These resources are seen well by students who love to be part of the class by doing exercises by just clicking the keyboard.

Comentado [D14]: Iskander, M. (2008). *Innovative techniques in instruction technology, e-learning, e-assessment, and education*. New York, NY.: Springer.

2.2.3. Technology in the Classroom

As iPods, tablets, blogs, platforms are used by an increasing number of people; teachers are seeking ways to use that technology in the classroom. Online videos, blogs, wikis are examples of technology that have been used in the classroom as instructional tool. In his study, Patel (2013) mentions that “in the modern world, much of what may be considered the “typical” classroom is changing”. This is due to a fast change in technology as an overall. Textbooks, readings, listening are been replaced by eBooks, online readings, and podcast without considering that all of these could be stored in a tablet or iPod. Even, by using these tools, students could record their teachers and make it easier to study later by just clicking or touching the screen.

On the other hand, many people are worried because they believe their kids will lose all interaction with any human beings because of the increasing use of technology in the classroom. They also think students will not have any social skills and suddenly become introverted and shy people. Therefore, many parents do not agree to use technology in the classroom.

There are many benefits for pupils such as faster learning, less time in completing a task, and better writing fluency. All of these are as a result of constant exposition to learners to technology. Teachers will be able to use these resources and they will not disappear from classrooms but they lead students to achieve their goals by using these new mechanism.

There are some ways of using technology in any classroom setting. “A few ways to use technology in the classroom include incorporating Internet articles, multimedia

presentations, relevant videos and roll-taking” (Patel, 2013, p. 63). These resources will engage and create interest on all students no matter the way of learning they have.

Internet articles contribute relevant and reliable information from trusted sources. Teachers will only google the topic to be taught and project it in a class to students to read it, or print it to give one copy to teach students to have it in their portfolio.

Multimedia presentations will help visual students to conceptualize the point of the topic and to gain students’ attention. By using these kinds of presentations, teachers can include text, videos, images, or audio. This will be helpful to cover all multiple intelligences and therefore to get to the students’ understanding.

Relevant videos will be inspirational and funny for learners. Videos can be selected from a wide variety of websites and more important they could be addressed to different ages, so videos are going to be appropriate for students. Besides of presenting videos to pupils, they can make their own films and present them to their peers in the classroom.

“Use technology in the classroom by taking roll on the computer instead of on paper” (Patel, 2013, p. 64). Using a computer instead of paper, most of the teaching material will be digital and teachers must have to take control of this. Students will not lug big books or many notebooks with them but just an electronic device. Teachers will use the same device or a computer to upload their teaching material to be used in class.

2.2.4. Blogs

According to the Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, Blogs are “a Web site where a person writes regularly about recent events or a particular topic, sometimes with new information added every few minutes as events happen, and with the opportunity for readers to send in their own comments and opinions” (“Blog”, 2015). It is free without paying any fee in most cases.

Blogs have existed since August 1999 released by Blogger, a free blog hosting service, fostered the rapid growth of blog sites (Blood, 2000). Other institutions started to use blogs for doing business, journalism, and in any other professional field. Blogs boosted too fast that over 23,000 were created every day (Fortune magazine, 2005, p. 34). People only wanted to express themselves without any punishment by agencies or groups of people who disagree on certain topics because of the culture or taboos. “There are a range of potential applications of blogging technology in education and training including for student and teacher communication, delivery of learning materials, the provision of

Comentado [D15]: Blog noun. (n.d.). Retrieved January 23, 2015, from http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/blog_1

Comentado [D16]: Blood, R. (2002). Weblogs: A history and perspective. In Editors of Perseus Publishing (Eds.). *We’ve Got Blog: How Weblogs are Changing Culture* (pp. 7-16). Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing.

Comentado [D17]: Check this

mentoring to students, collaboration and professional development for teachers and knowledge management” (Zhang, 2009). Blogs are nowadays as common as a cell phone and educators are using them for all subjects, not only reading and writing as it started but languages or any topic in general.

Ward and Wu studies mention that blogs offer autonomy for learners and writing fluency (as cited in Zhang, 2009). This is because of the freedom learners have at the moment of producing in their own pace and self-confidence, thus, they will develop their reflective and critical thinking skills.

2.2.5. Writing

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, writing is “the activity or work of writing books, poems, stories, etc.; the way that you use written words to express your ideas or opinions; books, poems, essays, letters, etc.” (“Writing”, 2015). It is the skill people use to communicate anything to other people by using symbols known as letters and words.

Comentado [D18]: Writing. (n.d.). Retrieved January 23, 2015, from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/writing>

Writing, as it is, started thousands of years ago with some civilizations especially two principal ones, Harappan or Indus, which left some traces on pottery (Harmer, 2004). That was the initial point for different languages development and they evolved through the years to what we have in present days. Other of these kind of communication disappeared due to not having any record of them or because they were destroyed by the pass of the years.

As a contrary thought, speaking is acquired naturally meantime people grow but writing has to be learned along the reading skill. Hundreds of years ago, writing was not considered important and that is why is not taught or given enough importance to it; but now as civilization expanded, it is imperative that population learn how to writing if they want to succeed or even get a better job.

Without going far away, writing is even used to measure any person’s knowledge by given them a test in a written form. In a vast number of fields, writing is the tool used to assess people in the professional or educational life without leaving apart languages that are tested by applying this way.

2.2.6. The Writing Process

Many people may not think they are writers but they might be. It starts by just writing words like a list, maybe a shopping list, in this way people start checking if the words are written correctly, or if they are in the correct order. Later, people observe their list again to see if the list is complete before going and using it to go shopping. By doing this, people follow a process which looks so tiny and not really important but they do the writing process.

The writing process according to Harmer (2004) said “is affected by the content (subject matter) of the writing, the type of writing (shopping, lists, letter, essays, reports, or novels), and the medium it is written in (pen and paper, computer word files, live chat, etc.)” (p. 4). This occurs because writing has an intention that most people do not write because they like it or they just suddenly want to do it, it is because they want to transmit something to an audience.

“The writing process as a private activity may be broadly seen as comprising four main stages: planning, drafting, revising and editing. ... The stages are neither sequential nor orderly” (Seow, 2002, p. 315). As shown in figure 2.2.2.

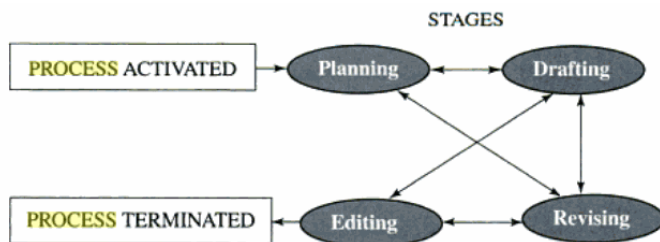


Figure 2. The Writing Process (Seow, 2002)

“many good writers employ a recursive, non-linear approach – writing of a draft may be interrupted by more planning, and revision may lead to reformulation, with a great deal of recycling to earlier stages” (Krashen, 1984, p.17). These stages need to be done more than once because people focus or get more information to include or they just change their minds and there is a necessity to modify some parts of the writing.

Planning

Comentado [D19]: Harmer, J. (2004). *How to teach writing*. Harlow: Longman.

Comentado [D20]: Seow, A. (2002). The writing process and process writing. *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*, 315-320.

Comentado [D21]: Krashen, S. D. (1984). *Writing, research, theory, and applications*. Pergamon.

This process depends on the person, style or mental development of ideas. For some people, it takes time to plan what they are going to write. For others, it is a good idea to take notes and for others it is just a few words enough to starting writing on the blank piece of paper they have.

“When planning, writers have to think about three main issues... purpose ..., audience ..., and content structure ...” (Harmer, 2004, p. 4, 5). These three points refer to the language the writer uses, the structure of the paragraphs and if they are formal or informal, and finally, the sequence of the events included in the writing.

Drafting

This is the first product of the piece to be worked. Obviously, it will be evaluated later for following arrangement of content and edition of it until the writer gets the final version.

Revising

From now on, writers will check the piece of writing several times for word order, grammar, connectors, or changes in the paragraphs. Sometimes it will involve other writers or readers for different comments they could afford to improve the paper.

Editing

This is the final stage before handing the paper in or presents it to the audience who it was written to. This is completely different from the first draft and somehow different after the revision process.

As it was mentioned before, these steps are done several times before the final stage. All parts of the process are recursive due to the writer assumptions. Writers go backwards and forward in their assignment in all processes until they reach its culmination.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

2.3.1. Rubrics

A rubric is a guide to assist the marker to make consistent and reliable judgments about the quality of student work. They also can be used to provide feedback to students about the quality of their work and how they might improve. (Southern Cross University, 2014, p. 2)

Rubrics are very powerful tools for educators who want to be fair to every student and thus have everything clear at the moment of grading a piece of work. They also give a

Comentado [D22]: Southern Cross University. (2014). Using Rubrics in Assessment. Retrieved from http://scu.edu.au/teachinglearning/download.php?doc_id=12921&site_id=301&file_ext=.pdf
<http://scu.edu.au/teachinglearning/index.php/50>

clear idea of students' work weaknesses and by using that data teachers can start a remedial plan to overcome any problems encountered.

Rubrics are composed by two main characteristics: the marking criteria and the grading standards.

Marking criteria – the elements that the marker will consider when judging a piece of work (such as quality of argument, research, technical aspects, etc.)

Grading standards – descriptive statements about the level of each criteria, often expressed on a scale (such as High Distinction, Distinction, Credit, Pass, Fail, or a number score). (Southern Cross University, 2014, p. 2)

Rubrics are as complex as the teacher wants to be more accurate. They usually use a matrix to set all parameters in which they describe the quality and characteristics of the work to be received. In addition, rubrics give no space for doubt among the people who could intervene in the development of the task; teachers, students, parents, peers, and everyone will have a clear view of what is expected from the assessment.

Rubrics can be used to evaluate different kinds of assessments due to its flexibility and feasibility. Some examples might be essays, reports, oral presentations, group work, and many others that could be graded by using a rubric. On the other hand, teachers must be careful when constructing the rubric because it could give a wrong result by not considering all aspects of the criteria.

It is suggested that when making the rubric some studies must be taken in consideration; like Bloom's Taxonomy or the SOLO Taxonomy. They both will enable the rubric cover standards, criteria, and hierarchy to grade students in a fair way. Besides, students will see and feel that their grade was impartial if the rubric was clear and everything was covered.

2.3.2. Why do we need technology in a classroom?

Since technology advances have increased in the past decades, it was a matter of time in using it in different locations. Blogs, as part of technology, provide peculiar experiences for any person who could participate in them by making posts, making comments, or just by checking what other people wrote. Blogs also offer the ability to go to deeper levels in the learning experience, it means, blogs are not used for delivering the typical assessment that students have to do because they have to but to enrich their learning by checking any hyperlinks provided by the instructor.

Comentado [D23]: Southern Cross University. (2014). Using Rubrics in Assessment. Retrieved from http://scu.edu.au/teachinglearning/download.php?doc_id=12921&site_id=301&file_ext=.pdf
<http://scu.edu.au/teachinglearning/index.php/50>

Comentado [D24]: Introduction to Tech Tools | Onestopenglish. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.onestopenglish.com/methodology/tech-tools-for-teachers/introduction-to-tech-tools/>

Technology in the classroom may enhance students' learning by using the appropriate approach to make it valuable and meaningful. To make it students use it, it has to be used several times or exposed to it; it has to become a habit for learners in order to explode students' skills and abilities. This may not only done by teachers but students may be part of this process, maybe not in the classroom but in the lab or at home.

Technology can enable us to extend the reach of our classroom and take our students into a world of authentic language use where they can really use their English language skills to communicate, collaborate and participate in activities that are relevant to their own lives and interests ("Introduction to Tech Tools | Onestopenglish", 2015).

Technology transports every pupil to their real world using their own terms and habits which involve the person and make it interiorize the content and language in a meaningful way.

2.3.3. Influence Of Blogs

As technology plays an important role in people's lives, it is obvious that communication happens at every moment, every second, by different forms and using multiple devices. Usually this communication takes place among friends, relatives, colleagues, just because they want to keep in touch with them.

Boling, Knobel & Lankshear, and Penrod mention in their studies that blogs can bring different dynamics into the classroom as writing becomes public, participatory, and continually developing (as cited in E., & Davis, A., 2011). Students are keen on using a computer or cell phone instead of a notebook or a piece of paper to do a writing assignment. Everyone would do the homework even shy ones who class participation is minimum in the classroom.

Zhang stated five influences of blogs in English writing: Facilitating the Students' Critical Thinking, Providing Examples for Students to Model and to Learn, Affecting the Students' Quality of Writing, Facilitating Meaningful Learning for Students, and Giving Students a Purpose for writing (2009).

Facilitating the students' critical thinking due to the interaction among each other will increase their reasoning level. In addition, students will judge what they read and write to discriminate if the information provided is valuable or needs to be changed.

Comentado [D25]: The application of blogs in english 200901.pdf p 5

Moreover, students will have a higher development of ideas on account of the interactions with their peers.

Providing examples for students to model and to learn will lead them to learn from one another by using comments. Pupils will think deeply about their classmates' posts before publishing a comment. It will also foster writing in a longer form and thus it will increase the number of visitors to the blog and therefore to the entries. That is why, students give more importance on what they write and following certain patterns left by their equals in other writings.

Affecting the students' quality of writing because they are alert to people will see what they write and pay more attention if the information is interesting, hence students write by having in mind their audience. To clarify concepts or something, students use visual help to cover what they want to express without being misunderstood. "Multimedia research shows that students with visual learning styles can benefit from technology with a multimedia format. In other words, adding visual associations to their blogs helps the students express their points of views" (Zhang, 2009).

Facilitating meaningful learning for students for the reason that interaction may not only occur with their classmates or people from the same institution but other students from various parts of the globe. Students have the possibility of learning from other cultures and share their own. It is meaningful for students because they can surf the net and check what they like, what is more, it is meaningful learning.

Giving students a purpose for writing lead them to feel comfortable, secure, and having the sense of ownership at the moment of writing. Blogs give authentic communication and feedback given by other participants. Blogs also provide the opportunity to search information to have ideas or arguments before writing which make more complex and impressive pieces of work. Taking this into account, students write more accurate and delicate having in mind the audience who are not only teachers or classmates but any other person with internet access.

2.3.4. Blogs Provide A Learning Space

Blogs, as they are known, are easily created, easily updateable Web sites that allow an author (or authors) to publish instantly to the Internet from any Internet connection. They can also be interactive, allowing teachers and students to begin conversations or add to the information published there.

Comentado [D26]: Using blogs to enhance critical thinking.pdf p. 4

Weblogs are the most widely adopted tool of the Red/Write Web so far.

(Richardson, 2010, p. 10)

Blogs supply learners the ability to learn at their own pace. They can learn what they want in a smooth way having the chance to get input from multiple places that could be included in the blog. Students are the center of learning; they are the stars at that moment. On the other hand, students could learn wrong information and they might believe it is correct without prompt rectification.

“Blogs pull together several of the most recommended pedagogies from learning theory: scaffolding, student-centered learning, the incorporation of multiple perspectives, and the use of learning communities” (Yang, 2009). All these may provide a real instruction to all students, not by giving them everything at once but little by little. Blogs become virtual language classroom for some students because they can offer and review what they checked in the classroom without having problems of shyness or not making questions.

2.3.5. Learning Through Reflection

Dewey studies refer to reflective thinking as purposeful thinking oriented toward a goal (as cited in Zhang, 2009). Reflection plays an essential role in the learning process because learning has to be revisited to then record that experience and give the importance it deserves. There are two factors which are involved in this process: the first one is that students need external help to get to the correct reflection and second that students are the only ones in charge of finding experiences to link them to learning.

“Reflection is governed by both cognitive and affective components and the reflective act is preceded and accompanied by individual feelings and perceptions that could either form barriers to or enhance learning” (Zhang, 2009). Identifying these components is crucial to carry actions of reflection that will assist individual needs in the writing process.

2.3.6. Communities Of Practice And Reflective Practice

Learning through a computer has overcome the barriers of communication. Traditional instruction is not done in some countries due to different factors but this does not stop the instruction itself, it has developed a new form to receive and give education;

Comentado [D27]: Richardson, W. (2010). Blogs, wikis, podcasts, and other powerful web tools for classrooms.

Comentado [D28]: Using blogs to enhance critical thinking.pdf p.2

that is why face-to-face meetings or classrooms are no longer necessary. Web and Internet provide the sufficient and necessary tools for constructing individual knowledge or sharing it in groups.

These groups have created communities in which learners take advantage of other learners' knowledge to improve theirs. If more students take part of this, the community itself will benefit by the information posted and encourage each member to continue participating in this platform. There will be chances that some learners will only focus on the topics of their interest and share what they know or only become active in those kind of post.

Besides, learners who are continuously involved in this process of reading, reflecting and posting, they gain more social skills and also more self-confidence because they will get acceptance among some members of the community. Teacher as a facilitator could model and help this occur by giving positive feedback and friendly comments to the people in different communities. By doing this, students perspective in writing will enhance if the experiences are positive and create barriers if they are negative.

"It is suggested that reflection enables us to evaluate experience, learn from mistakes, repeat successes, revise, and plan" (Zhang, 2009). By doing this, learning becomes meaningful and it is easier for mental process to intake the new knowledge provided.

According to Zhang (2009) reflection in the writing process could be listed and summarized as five points:

First, reflective statements shed important light on the form and content of students' written work. Second, they help students become aware of their preferred approaches to writing, and enable them to take risks to try new and more productive strategies on a particular task. Third, when revising, students may examine their reflections on their earlier process of writing and consider alternative processes or approaches. Fourth, reflective writing produces an intimacy between students and teachers that enables teachers to respond to and encourage students' growth in writing skills. Lastly, the reflective statements give teachers insights into students' thinking and development not normally accessible otherwise (Zhang, 2009, p. 70)

2.3.7. Paragraph Formation

The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2014) suggests a 5-step process for building a paragraph. These steps are decide on a controlling idea and create a topic sentence, explain the controlling idea, give an example (or multiple examples), explain the example(s), and complete the paragraph's idea or transition into the next paragraph.

Decide on a controlling idea and create a topic sentence is the first stage when writing a paragraph. This idea will lead the paragraph development and give a general statement of what the paragraph is going to be. Sometimes, the controlling idea is present in the form of a topic sentence.

Explain the controlling idea by giving reasons or intention is the second stage when writing a paragraph. The writer presents an explanation of how he or she wants the idea to be interpreted, it is the moment to expose the thinking of the writer about the main idea, topic sentences, of focus of the paragraph.

Give an example (or multiple examples) is the third stage when writing a paragraph. It gives evidence and a clearer explanation of the relationship between the controlling idea and the explanation given before. Examples are somehow the support of your controlling idea that is why they have to be related and precise to that idea.

Explain the example(s) is another important stage. It provides the rationale of why the examples are important to the controlling idea. All examples give support to the topic sentence or sentences that is why all examples must be explained. An explanation gives a better understanding of why those examples were exposed before.

Complete the paragraph's idea or transition into the next paragraph is the last step in the writing a paragraph process. This part offers the reader the opportunity to remind them the relevance of the information you discussed in this paragraph.

2.3.8. Types Of Paragraphs

As it was mentioned in previous discussions, paragraphs production depend on the audience it will be written to. Besides, it has to have a purpose to start writing. Paragraphs are a group of sentences together about one main idea. They have a special order and structure that will define the type of paragraph. "A paragraph is made of a few sentences that talk about ONE single topic. You should have at least five to seven sentences in your

Comentado [D29]: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/paragraphs/>

paragraph” (Ghajar-Selim, 2013). It is vital to include all parts of the paragraph to have coherence and cohesion for the reader to be able to understand it.

Three main paragraphs are used to follow this paper: narrative, descriptive, and compare and contrast paragraph. Each of them has their own rules and procedures to be developed. The paragraphs differ from each other by the first sentence until the last one.

2.3.9. Narrative Paragraphs

“A narrative paragraph tells a story” (Rawlings & Glasscock, 2010).

In a Narrative Paragraph, you will share your story or what happened with your reader. Again, to get your readers involved in your story in a better way, try using the Journalists’ Questions: why, who, where, what, when, where. Try to write the events in your story chronologically (in order of their occurrence) (Ghajar-Selim, 2013)

It is a retelling of a certain situation in detail. All details are really important and they make evidence of what happened, that is why, no small detail is unimportant as many people would consider. Sometimes people tend to omit things because they think they are not part of the assignment but the reunion of all these make the reader imagine the story in all its splendor.

2.3.10. Descriptive Paragraph

“A descriptive paragraph portrays a vivid picture or a person, place, or thing” (Rawlings & Glasscock, 2010)

In a Descriptive Paragraph, you should try to engage your reader by answering the Journalists’ Questions: why, who, where, what, when, where. If applicable, you should also describe how you, as the writer, felt. You should use active voice (normal) verbs in this kind of paragraph. In sentences with active voice verbs we know who the doer of the action is. For example: George washed my car yesterday (Ghajar-Selim, 2013)

“A description paragraph is required when you are asked to write about how something looks, sound, smells, tastes or feels. You should provide specific details of the most important features and use appropriate adjectives to describe attributes and qualities” (University of New England, 2015).

Comentado [D30]: Ghajar-Selim, 2013

<http://quwritinglab.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/paragraph.pdf>
<http://quwritinglab.com/writing-resources-2/writing-resources/>

Comentado [D31]: types of paragraphs.pdf

Books for Children, Educational Toys, Teaching Resources & more - The Scholastic Store. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://store.scholastic.com/content/stores/media/products/samples/30/9780439231930.pdf>

Comentado [D32]: Ghajar-Selim, 2013

<http://quwritinglab.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/paragraph.pdf>
<http://quwritinglab.com/writing-resources-2/writing-resources/>

Comentado [D33]: types of paragraphs.pdf

Books for Children, Educational Toys, Teaching Resources & more - The Scholastic Store. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://store.scholastic.com/content/stores/media/products/samples/30/9780439231930.pdf>

Comentado [D34]: Ghajar-Selim, 2013

<http://quwritinglab.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/paragraph.pdf>
<http://quwritinglab.com/writing-resources-2/writing-resources/>

Comentado [D35]: <http://www.une.edu.au/current-students/resources/academic-skills/fact-sheets>

Fact Sheets - University of New England (UNE). (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.une.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/9753/paragraph-description.pdf

The way the writer expresses is essential due to the precise and accurate of the description it has to be. The order of adjectives is crucial here; they have to indicate all the characteristics of the object without leaving anything to the readers' imagination. Words grouped as size, shape, age, color among others is used to describe something in this type of paragraphs.

2.3.11. Contrast And Compare Paragraph

“A compare and/or contrast paragraph is required if you are asked to examine similarities and/or differences. Compare focuses on similarities. Contrast focuses on differences” (University of New England, 2015). The order of arguments has to be taken in consideration if the writer wants to have good results. The information must not be mixed between the comparison and the contrast to not evoke confusion in readers. The first sentence, topic, sentence, introduces both items to be described to compare and contrast and the other sentences that come after give support to this first sentence. There are a set of words that can help writers in this type of paragraph such as both, alike, same, in common, opposite, unlike, however, etc., these words must be used in the sentences to not make confusion.

2.3.12. Writing Assignment

Students who do not care about doing them see writing assignments as just simple homework. They do not give relevance when doing homework; all students who demonstrate poor development or lack of accuracy give minimal effort. Therefore, writing assignment is not what was expected not even to have in mind the achieving of goals by the instructor.

Writing assignments provide course objectives accomplishment. As they can be used in all fields, the interaction between the blog and the writer will not be an issue, thus, it will provide a better clarification and encourage students to an active participation in the blog discussion with their peers. In addition, assignments may help students have their self-evaluation in the writing assignment and the learning.

“As a receptive learning tool, blogging can be used to frame assignments within a theoretical context that encourages students to acquire information and report what they have learned” (Glogoff, 2005). Blogs provide the setting to interact with others rapidly and

Comentado [D36]: <http://www.une.edu.au/current-students/resources/academic-skills/fact-sheets>

Fact Sheets - University of New England (UNE). (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.une.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/12959/paragra-ph-comp.pdf

Comentado [D37]: Glogoff, S. (2005). Instructional blogging: Promoting interactivity, student-centered learning, and peer input. *Innovate: Journal of Online Education*, 1(5).

grow the database about the given topic, Internet gives enough information to be read and summarize to then be posted in the blog.

“Each class ended with goal setting for the next session, and homework was assigned to support these goals” (McGrail, E., & Davis, 2011). Homework in the form of assignment is used to reinforce what was taught and to give the continuity of the goals proposed by the instructor. Assignment can be long or short to succeed in getting the objectives but more than that to let the information stablish in the students’ minds.

According to Hobart and William Smith Colleges (2015), some suggestions that work well when writing assignments are:

- make sure the task is clearly defined, using language that helps students know what they are expected to produce, when, and why.

- offer an authentic situation, one that provides students with a clear sense of purpose and audience.

- if there are specific steps that students need to follow to complete the assignment, make sure to include them (length, plans to see a thesis statement, notes, and/or draft; plans for conferencing and peer review, etc.).

- write assignments so that students can understand how their purpose ties into the overall plan for the course.

- if appropriate, include information about how you will respond to the writing assignment and grading criteria.

- consider whether there are aspects of the assignment that can be made flexible for students with special learning needs or different levels of ability (extended deadlines, time for conferencing, etc.). (Academics: Writing Assignments, para. 4)

Comentado [D38]: McGrail, E., & Davis, A. (2011). The influence of classroom blogging on elementary student writing. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 25(4), 415-437.

2.3.13. Writing As A Model-Based

Sometimes students’ abilities in writing are not well developed or at the right level, for this reason, students need different approaches and strategies to be used in a classroom or any other educational setting. Furthermore, research and studies have been conducted through the past years and getting to concrete conclusions that will benefit students’ production.

According to Johns Hopkins School of Education (2012), one the best writing practices is modeling students with the type of writing that educators want as result.

Comentado [D39]: Academics: Writing Assignments. (2015). Retrieved from http://www.hws.edu/academics/ctl/writes_assignments.aspx

Provide students with good models of the type of writing they are expected to produce. Teachers should analyze the models with their class, encouraging students to imitate in their own writing the critical and effective elements shown in the models (para. 16)

By looking at something, it would be easier to imitate it. Imitation is a matter of observation and replication, in that way, students can have a pattern to start writing and not starting without idea of what and how to do it. A model will enable students' thought organize and at the same time select what information to use in the writing assignment applying their own information.

Comentado [D40]: Evidence-based practices for teaching writing – Johns Hopkins School of Education. (2012). Retrieved from <http://education.jhu.edu/PD/newhorizons/Better/articles/Winter2011.html>

2.4. Research Questions

1. What English level do seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret have?
2. Which methodological strategies do teachers at Monte Tabor Nazaret use?
3. What effect will the use of a blog as a teaching tool have as a writing remedial plan to solve the problem detected?

2.5. Hypothesis

The design of a blog as a teaching tool will improve the academic performance on the writing of paragraphs of seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret.

2.6. Variables and Indicators

Independent Variable: Blog as a teaching tool

Dependent Variable: Writing paragraphs

VARIABLE	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	INDICATORS	INSTRUMENTS
Blog as a teaching tool	Teaching tool used by the teacher to guide the development of the skill of writing paragraphs.	Number of entries that a blog has. Acceptance level. Variety of topics covered. How often the blog is updated.	Counter. Survey Checklist
Writing paragraphs	Writing paragraphs using coherence, sequence of ideas, structure sentences and giving a clear of what the writer wants to express.	Paragraph structure. Adjustment of content or subject. Coherence of ideas. Transmission of ideas clearly. Using appropriate vocabulary.	Pre-test and post-test. Rubric

Table 2. Variables

2.7. Definition of Terms

Peer correction

A change that makes something more accurate that it was before done by a person who is the same age or who has the same social status as you.

Assignment

The process of giving a particular job or piece of work to someone, or of sending someone to a chosen place to do a job.

Reflective

Thinking carefully and quietly. The trait of thinking carefully before acting.

Scaffolding

Refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process.

Comentado [D41]: <http://edglossary.org/scaffolding/>

Communication

The various methods of sending information between people and places, especially phones, computers, radio, etc.

Media

The main ways that large numbers of people receive information and entertainment, that is television, radio, newspaper and the Internet.

Device

An object or machine that has been invented for a particular purpose.

Application

A computer program that is designed for a particular purpose.

Virtual classroom

Describes something that can be done or seen using a computer and therefore without going to a room in a school or college where groups of students are taught.

Post

An electronic message that you send to a website in order to allow many people to see it.

2.8. Summary

Methods have evolved during the years to have better results and make students intake the language. Moreover, these methods were redesigned to make understanding of the target language simpler and easier. New processes were introduced due to the changing world where we live and taking advantage of the technology.

Technology as a resource and tool to teach has been used and introduced to classes because of the acceptance of learners. It has been helpful due to its diversity and flexibility of materials it provides. One part of technology is the blog. It was developed for people to express themselves without restrictions or complains of any type. Blogs are part of the teaching-learning process of languages nowadays because of the powerful characteristics it has. They allow videos, presentation, audio and many other types of files for teachers and learners that can be used and focused to different learning and teaching styles.

Blogs are not only a tool to develop skills or teach certain topics, it can also be used to learn by others using a reflective learning. It also very important because learners think teachers are not fair with them at the moment of checking and correcting their assignments. Learners can make constructive and not destroying comments to their peers in order to help their classmates improve their work.

Learning to write has been a big issue for learner in the learning process since the beginning of the time. Writing paragraphs is not only to write words as people want to but following certain rules and procedures among grammar, punctuation, spelling, syntax, etc. People are not used to these kind of criteria when writing, they just write what they were assigned to write. In addition, writing is not only to follow all the rules but to check and recheck the work learners are doing because they can find certain errors or different ways to express one or some ideas in their work.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

3.1. Methods and Techniques

This research is quantitative because it uses statistical techniques to demonstrate whether the hypothesis was correct or not due to constant evaluation through a grading rubric. It is correlational because it seeks to explain the relationship between the variables under study. These variables are blog as a teaching tool and its influence on the production of correct paragraphs in English.

This research is also experimental because it demonstrates the weaknesses seventh grade students at Monte Tabor School have when developing paragraphs, identifying major errors their paragraphs have. Moreover, it will measure the percentage of students who have gaps in the paragraphs production process. The researcher manipulates one independent variable and then observes the effect on the dependent variable.

This is a research field because it is done on the information tool as a blog and its data will be obtained from primary sources which is the students. Another aspect to consider apart from information is obtained on the information tool, it is collected outside the institution premises where pupils can feel free, secure and inspire themselves without restrictions.

The way to collect data on this study will be through assignments that are given to students in every session and then by grading them, in that way researchers can see the results and after that, show the number of students with different problems presented in the execution of a paragraph. In addition, it serves to identify the type of problems, how deep they are, and then try to find a reliable solution in order to eradicate and correct that incorrect knowledge.

In observing, researchers use the blog as a guide for students to measure their knowledge. Instructions and information (to teach students) will be posted to reinforce and lead students to the autonomous development of paragraphs without the restriction or complication of peers among them in physical. Having the confidence and feeling secure, by being in a comfortable place, conduct students to a better production.

Comentado [D42]: This section describes the study method and design chosen for the project. Describe the design and techniques used to carry out the investigation. It is important to whether the research study is a qualitative or quantitative one. Explain why such method and techniques were chosen for this investigation

3.1.1. Techniques

A variety of techniques is used to gather the information to conduct this paper. Surveys, counter, checklist, rubric, pre and post test are the techniques used to develop this research and get reliable results.

The survey administered to the students with emphasis on the use of this resource (blog) as a medium of instruction for proper paragraph production is firstly used. It brought researchers to know the average ability on the use of this tool and the opinions about using technology as a learning instrument that is totally important at the moment of creating the classes on the blog and posting them.

Researchers used a counter to enumerate the number of entries or posts to be made on the blog for the students according to the teaching-learning process and progress. It kept track of the total of times students have to visit the site to review or do the assignments. It also determined the necessity of certain instructions pupils needed the most and to decide if more posts had to be published by researchers.

Researchers used a checklist of activities to be implemented by means of topics, tasks, multiple choices, or visual choice for students to be evaluated consistently as appropriate. It showed sequence, order and a variety of actions taken by researchers to cover multiple intelligences and scaffolding in the teaching process.

The rubrics to evaluate paragraphs served to define students through quality produced by the student section and also defined reinforcement work to be given in order to eliminate any problems and continue the process. In addition, it gave feedback and self-evaluation to students because they could see their scores in a page inside the blog and it helped them improve in that or those specific areas. Different rubrics were used to grade students to cover different types of paragraphs which pupils needed to learn and work on. It also helped to differentiate students' characteristics and styles when writing by just reading a topic.

Comentado [D43]: by order and planning

3.2. Research Population, Sample, and Setting

The research project was conducted at Monte Tabor Nazaret School. It works with 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th EBG, which approximately has a number of 500 students. There is a staff of eleven English teachers whereas only eight are dedicated to the teaching of the Language Subject.

The researchers applied this project to seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret. There are two male grades and two female ones. Students were chosen at random among the four grades. There were no differentiations because of the students' grades, discipline, or teachers' comments or suggestions. Students are between eleven and twelve years old. The secretary of Primary provided all this selective information.

The universe of seventh grade students at Monte Tabor Nazaret is one hundred and the sample used corresponds to twenty percent of students enrolled from the entire population; that is twenty students.

3.3. Research Instruments

Data Collection

The first data for the qualitative study consists of:

- ✓ A survey to students by emphasizing the use of this medium (blog) as a basic instruction for proper paragraphs production.
- ✓ The group of students reinforces knowledge through paragraphs peer observation on the blog during this investigation.
- ✓ Using a counter to number the entries to the blog.
- ✓ A rubric to evaluative paragraphs developed by students.
- ✓ A Pre-Test to evaluate students in a quantity form and give a grade over seven points; in this way students can improve in specific areas.
- ✓ A Post-Test to evaluate students in a quantity form and use these data to compare results with the Pre-Test.

Comentado [D44]: This section describes the research population that the investigators examine or work with, as well as the setting where the study is conducted. The section states the size of the research population (if known), some characteristics of the group, and from where and how this information is obtained. Finally, it explains why the particular sampling design being used was chosen. Remember that sampling methods vary in quantitative and qualitative research designs.

Comentado [D45]: This section mentions any instruments that were used in the study in order to gather data. For example, in quantitative designs this can be software to gather statistics. In qualitative data this can be surveys or questionnaires given to research participants.

3.4. Results/Findings and Analysis

3.4.1. Students' Surveys

Comentado [D46]: This is the most extensive section of your research report. Present all findings of the research. Findings are presented in words and complemented in a number of ways including graphs, charts, or other visuals. Remember, the use of visuals only complements the findings report; it does not substitute it. Findings are analyzed and interpreted in relation to the conceptual framework, the research question(s) and hypothesis/anticipations. Findings are grouped in a logical way: using headings and/or subheadings.

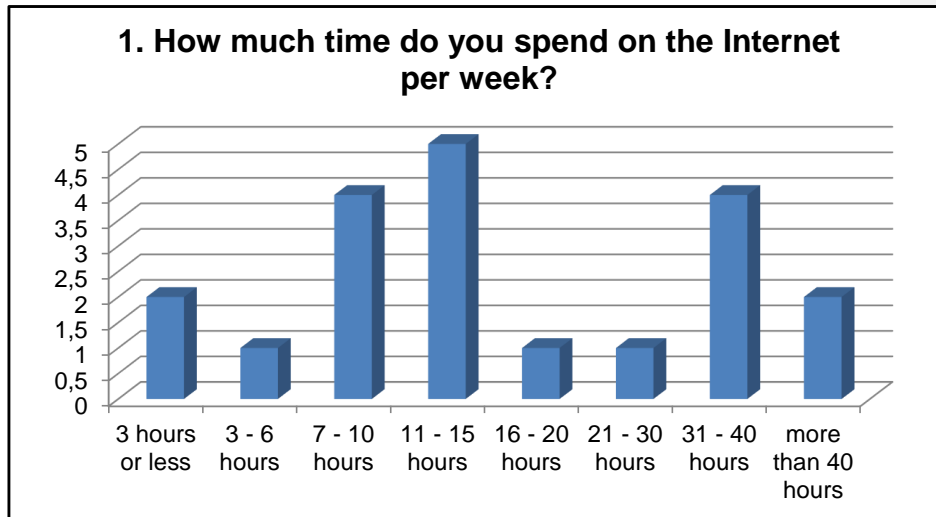


Figure 3. Bar chart of question 1.

	Number of Students	Percentage
3 hours or less	2	10%
3 - 6 hours	1	5%
7 - 10 hours	4	20%
11 - 15 hours	5	25%
16 - 20 hours	1	5%
21 - 30 hours	1	5%
31 - 40 hours	4	20%
more than 40 hours	2	10%

This chart reveals the time students at Monte Tabor Nazaret spend time on the Internet per week.

The greater percentage was 25% of students who spend between 11 to 15 hours a week on the Internet. It indicates students have plenty knowledge of immersion on the Internet and the use of websites.

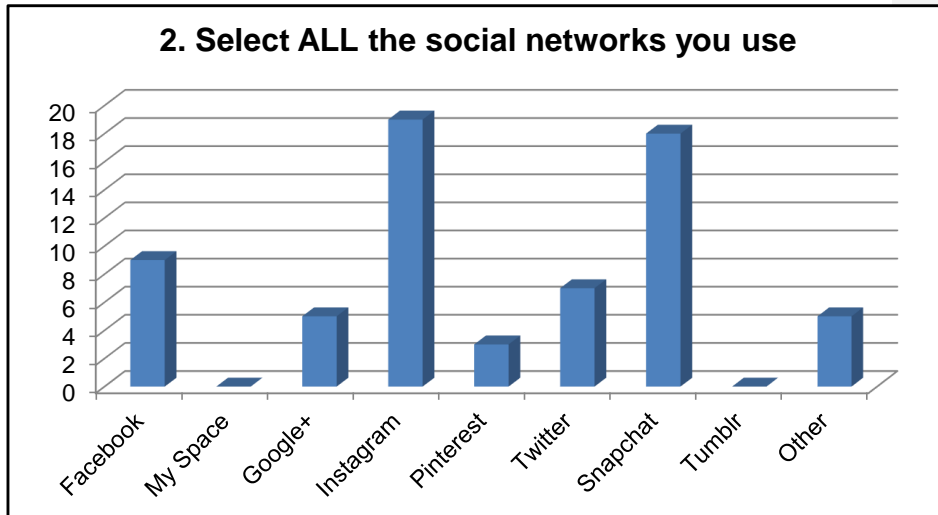


Figure 4. Bar chart of question 2.

	Number of Students	Percentage
Facebook	9	45%
My Space	0	0%
Google+	5	25%
Instagram	19	95%
Pinterest	3	15%
Twitter	7	35%
Snapchat	18	90%
Tumblr	0	0%
Other	5	25%

The chart shows the students preferences when using social networks.

The majority was 95% of students who use Instagram. 90 % of students use Snapchat and no student use My Space or Tumblr. It shows students are all the time aware of their peers or friends activities and be part of them, too.

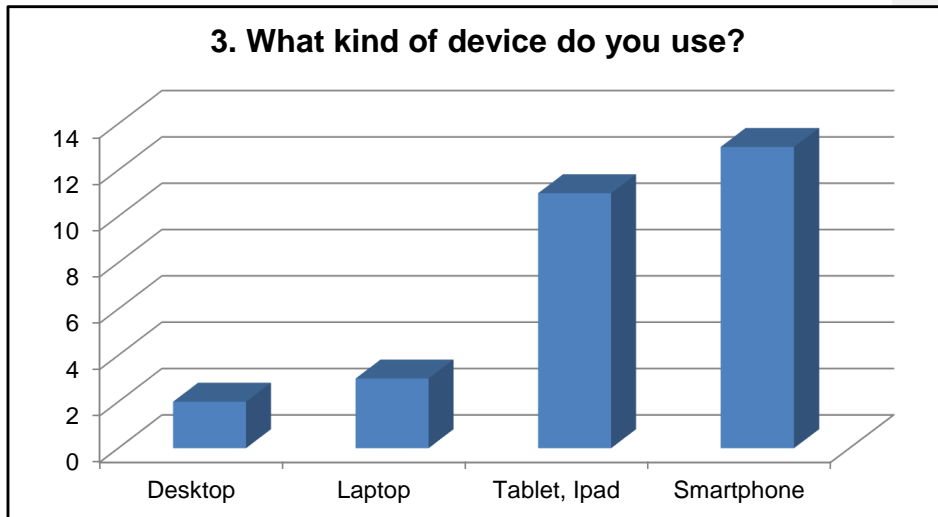


Figure 5. Bar chart of question 3.

	Number of Students	Percentage
Desktop	2	10%
Laptop	3	15%
Tablet, Ipad	11	55%
Smartphone	13	65%

This chart demonstrates which electronic device is the mostly used by the students.

The greater percentage was 65 % of students who use any smartphone. Then, we have an 55% of students who use a tablet or Ipad and only 10 % of students who use a desktop. Basing on this information, students are keen on using mobile modern devices and not old fashion equipment as a desktop is.

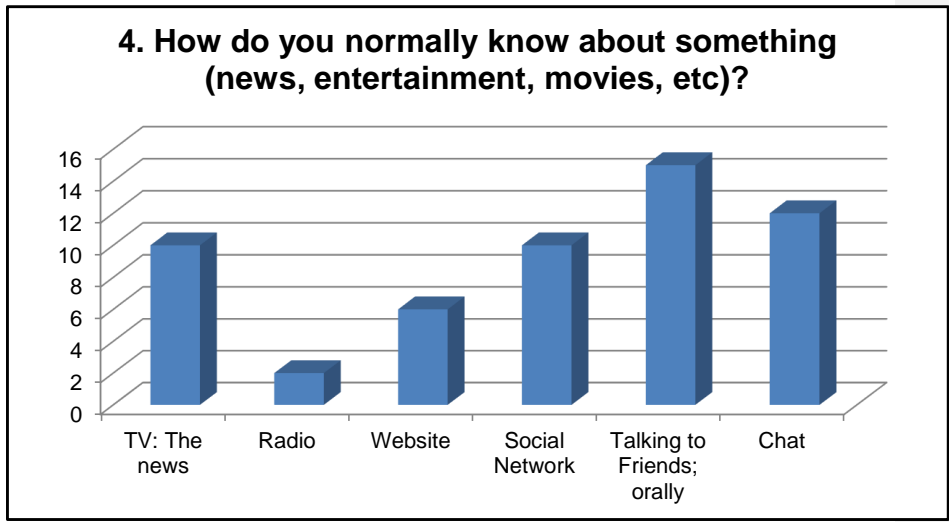


Figure 6. Bar chart of question 4.

	Number of Students	Percentage
TV: The news	10	50%
Radio	2	10%
Website	6	30%
Social Network	10	50%
Talking to Friends; orally	15	75%
Chat	12	60%

This chart shows how students know things happening in the neighborhood, city, country or around the world.

The 75 % of students talk to friend in an oral form. 60 % of students chat by using any device and only 10 % use the radio. No matter the time or modern life, people still use their oral proficiency but using devices is growing more and more.

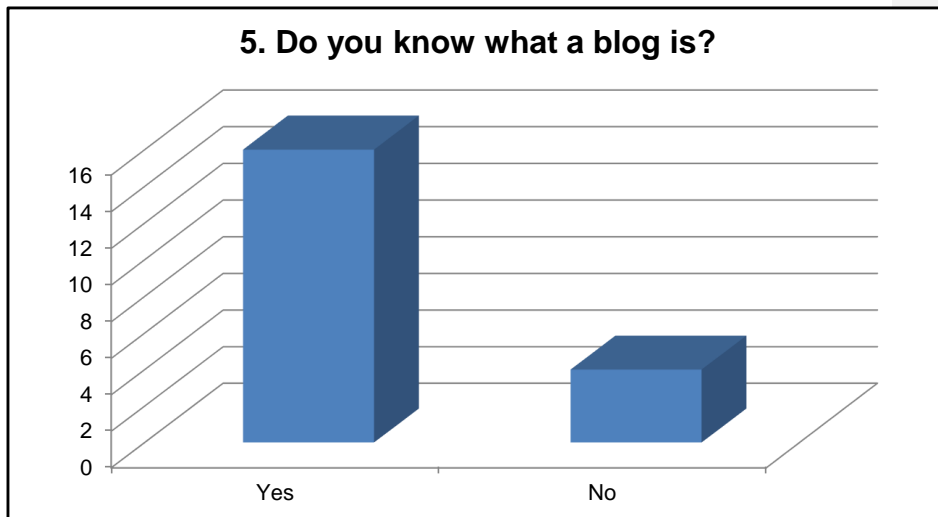


Figure 7. Bar chart of question 5.

	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%

This chart proves if students at Monte Tabor Nazaret know what a blog is.

The majority of students, 80 %, mentioned they know what a blog is. 20 % declared they do not know what a blog is. Blogs are sometimes confused with some apps because of their similarities and features. It is helpful because it can be familiar to students and they can use it without problems.

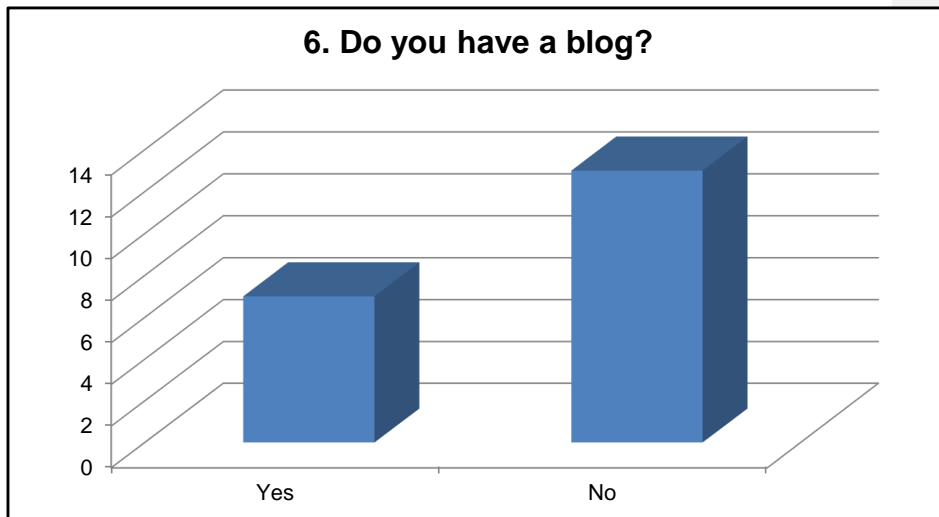


Figure 8. Bar chart of question 6.

	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	7	35%
No	13	65%

This chart establishes if students at Monte Tabor Nazaret have a blog.

The majority of students, 65 % of them, do not have a blog. Only 35 % of students do one. Having a blog benefits students because they can move in the blog easily. Moreover, they can find things easily.

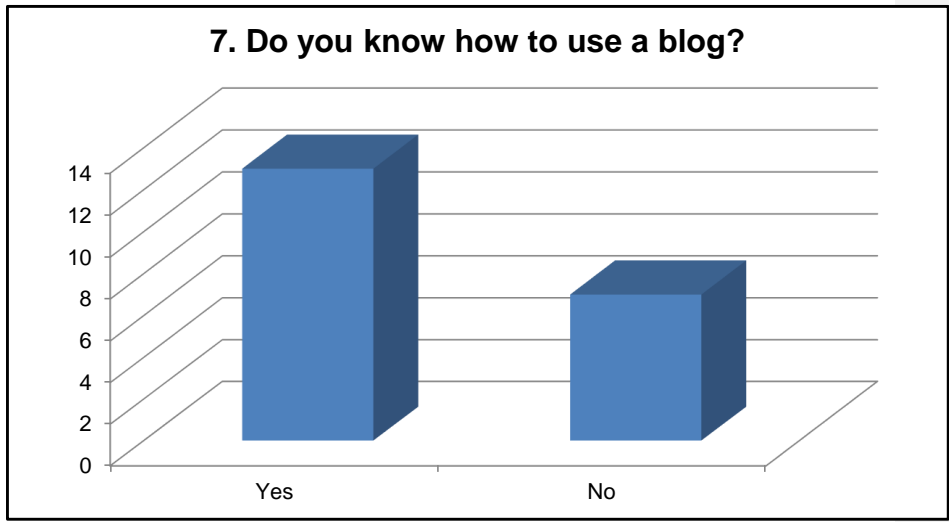


Figure 9. Bar chart of question 7.

	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	13	65%
No	7	35%

This chart demonstrates if students at Monte Tabor Nazaret know how to use a blog.

The greater percentage was 65 % of students who said they know how to use a blog. 35 % do not know how to use a blog. It is very convenient because students can see everything very familiar to them and feel free and secure to use it.

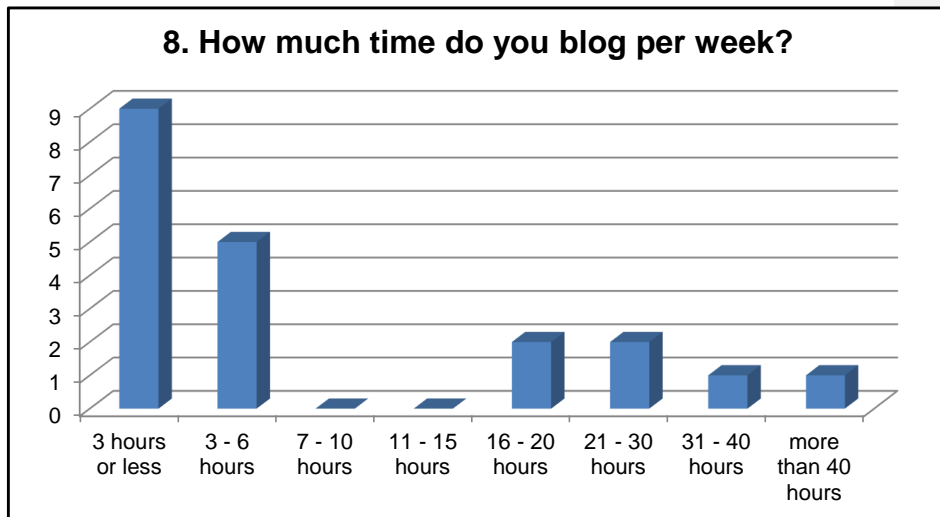


Figure 10. Bar chart of question 8.

	Number of Students	Percentage
3 hours or less	9	45%
3 - 6 hours	5	25%
7 - 10 hours	0	0%
11 - 15 hours	0	0%
16 - 20 hours	2	10%
21 - 30 hours	2	10%
31 - 40 hours	1	5%
more than 40 hours	1	5%

This chart indicates the time students blog per week.

The majority was 45 % of students who blog 3 hours or less per week. 25 % of students blog between 3 to 6 hours a week and 0 % blog 7 to 10 or 11 to 15 hours a week.

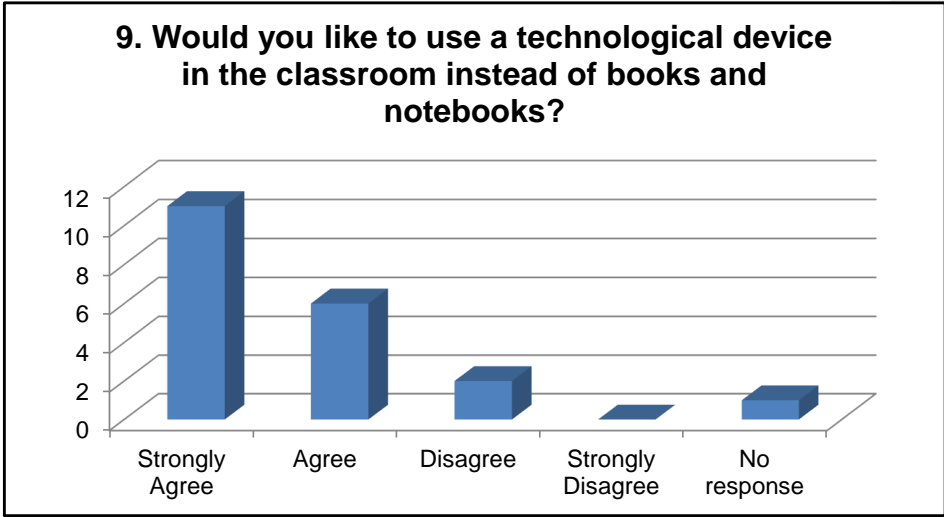


Figure 11. Bar chart of question 9.

	Number of Students	Percentage
Strongly Agree	11	55%
Agree	6	30%
Disagree	2	10%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No response	1	5%

This chart shows if student want to use any technological device in the classroom.

55 % of students strongly agree to use a technological device in the classroom and only 2 % of students indicate disagreement. This indicates students can show more interest at the moment of receiving classes by just using any device in their classroom as instructional media.

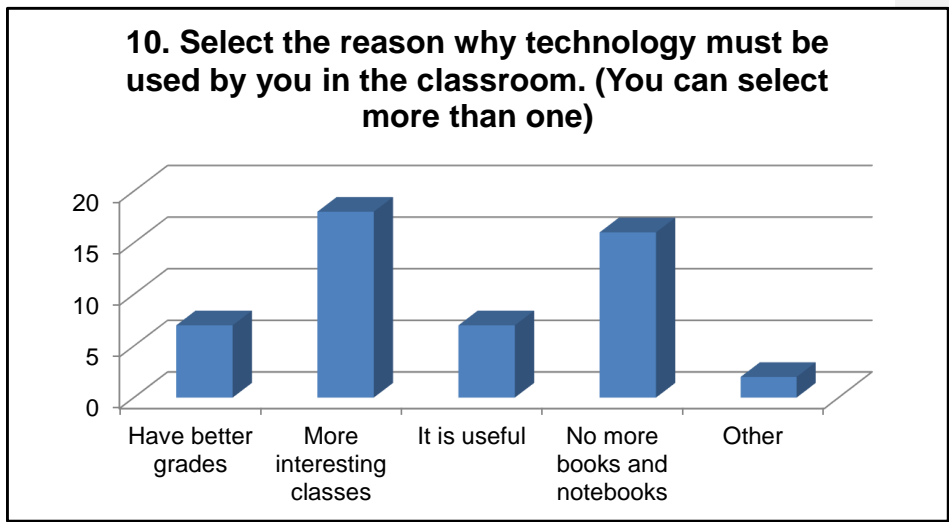


Figure 12. Bar chart of question 10.

	Number of Students	Percentage
Have better grades	7	35%
More interesting classes	18	90%
It is useful	7	35%
No more books and notebooks	16	80%
Other	2	10%

This chart demonstrates why students want to use technology in the classroom.

90 % of students manifest they want technology to be used in the classroom to have more interesting classes. The main reason to use technology is because students get bored and tired of using the same classic materials in class and not using what technology is given to all of us in this time.

3.4.2. Pre-Test to Students

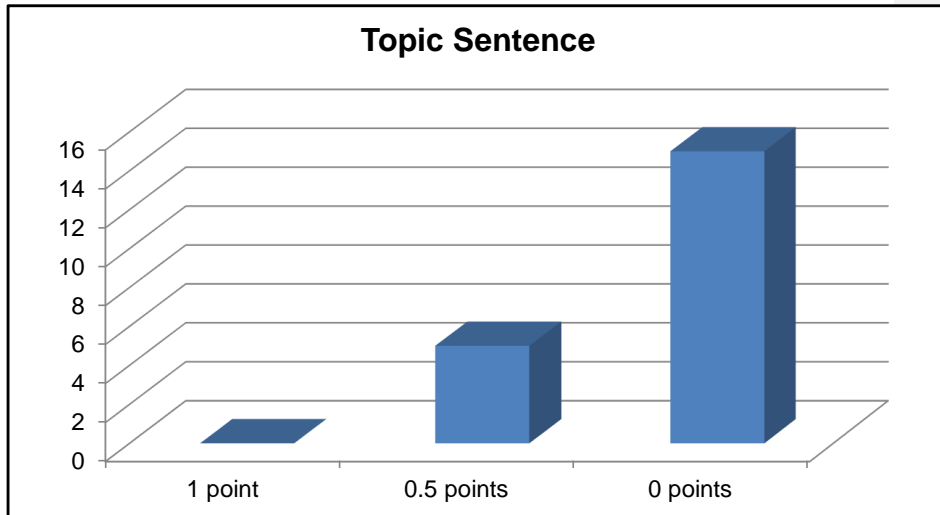


Figure 13. Bar Chart of Topic Sentence.

Topic Sentence	Number of Students	Percentage
The topic sentence is the first sentence in the paragraph. It is a clear statement of the paragraph content. 1 point	0	0%
The topic sentence gives some clarity of the overall connectivity of the sentences presented. 1/2 points	5	25%
There is no topic sentence presented in the paragraph. 0 points	15	75%

This chart shows if the topic sentence is well determined by the student.

75 % of students do not state clearly a topic sentence in their paragraph. It clearly indicates they need a central idea to start their paragraphs.

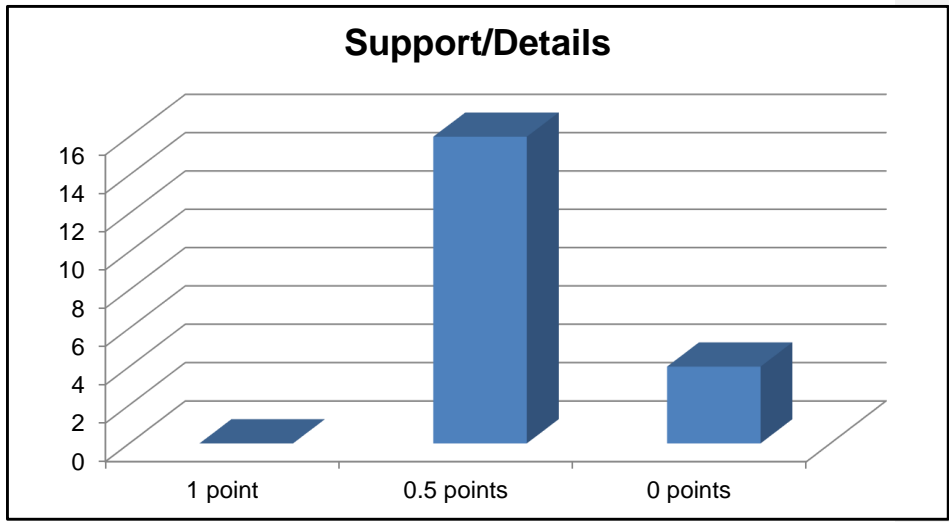


Figure 14. Bar Chart of Support/Details.

Support/Details	Number of Students	Percentage
Topic is supported by many specific details. 1 point	0	0%
Topic is supported by a few specific details. 1/2 points	16	80%
There is a slight attempt at support. 0 points	4	20%

This chart demonstrates if the topic sentence has enough details.

80 % of students give a few details to the paragraph. 20 % of students try to give some details to the paragraph but it is not enough. Students write a few ideas to complete the assignment.

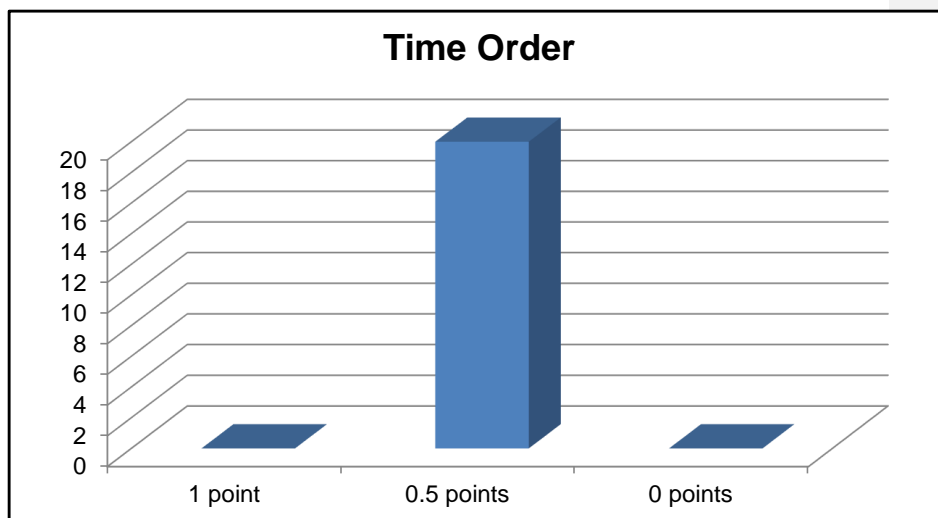


Figure 15. Bar Chart of Time Order.

Time Order	Number of Students	Percentage
Paragraph has good organization, events are time ordered, sharp sense of beginning and end. Correct time order transition words or phrases are used. 1 point	0	0%
Paragraph is organized, events somewhat jump around. Some time order transition words/phrases are used. 1/2 points	20	100%
Paragraph is not organized, events make no sense. No use of time order transition words/phrases. 0 points	0	0%

This chart shows if the time order is well determined by the student.

All students organize the events in a fair way. They try to follow the story as they want to write about it.

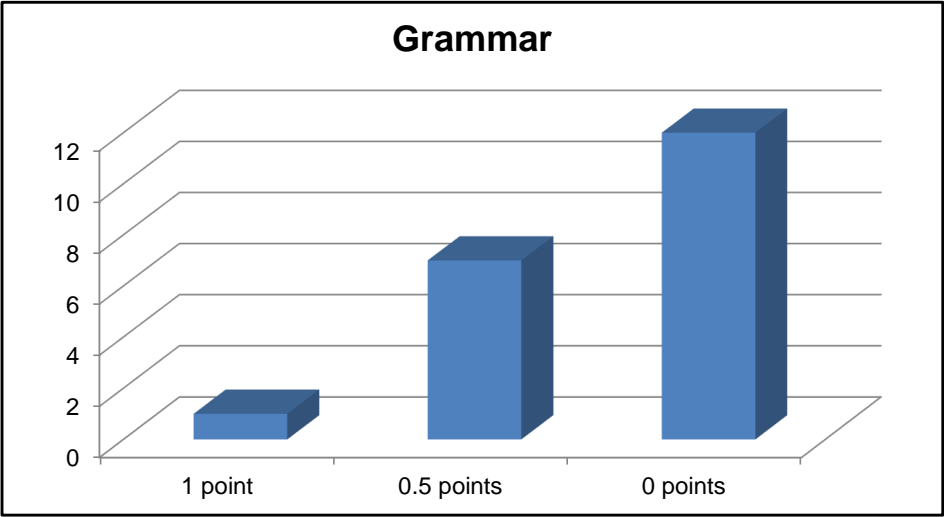


Figure 16. Bar Chart of Grammar.

Grammar	Number of Students	Percentage
There are few to no errors in grammar. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	1	5%
There are some errors in grammar. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	7	35%
There are many errors in grammar. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	12	60%

This chart demonstrates the use of grammar in the paragraph production.

60 % of students have a lot of grammar mistakes in their paragraphs which involves a poor understanding of them. 35 % of students have some errors but they are not an obstacle to understand the paragraph. Students mix tenses and make mistakes when using them.

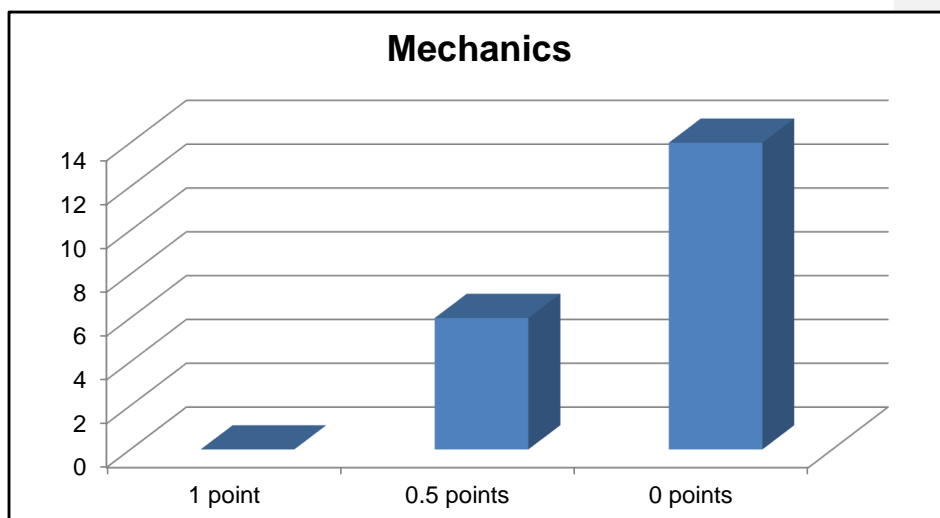


Figure 17. Bar Chart of Mechanics.

Mechanics	Number of Students	Percentage
There are few to no errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	0	0%
There are some errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	6	30%
There are many errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	14	70%

This chart indicates the use of mechanics which involves capitalization and punctuation in the paragraph.

70 % of students have many errors when using capitalization and punctuation in their paragraph. The lack of use of punctuation rules provokes the misunderstanding of students' ideas and loses track of the reading.

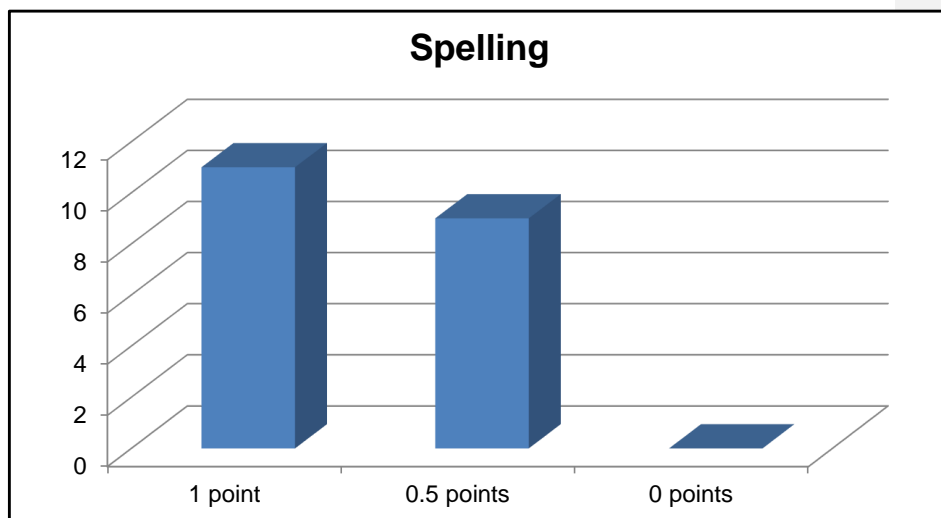


Figure 18. Bar Chart of Spelling.

Spelling	Number of Students	Percentage
There are few to no errors in spelling. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	11	55%
There are some errors in spelling. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	9	45%
There are many errors in spelling. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	0	0%

This chart indicates if students use spelling rules correctly when writing their paragraph.

55 % of students have a few errors of spelling when writing their paragraph. Students commit certain error of spelling especially mother tongue and consonant combination ones.

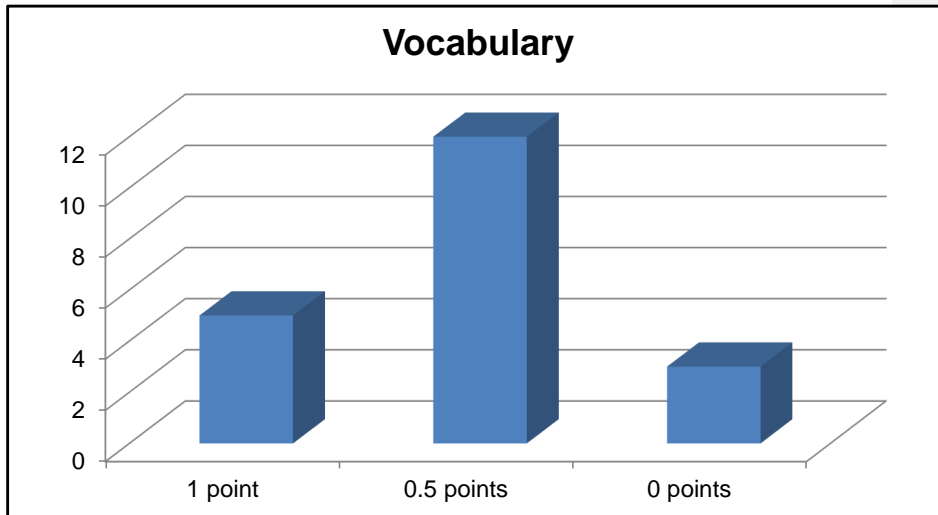


Figure 19. Bar Chart of Vocabulary.

Vocabulary	Number of Students	Percentage
Words are accurate, precise and engaging. 1 point	5	25%
Words are sometimes incorrect or imprecise. 1/2 points	12	60%
Words are incorrect or imprecise. 0 points	3	15%

This chart indicates the correct use of vocabulary when producing written assignments.

60 % of students use incorrect or imprecise words when writing their paragraph. 15 % of students use correct and accurate words to make a better understanding of their ideas. Students use words which are familiar in Spanish but not in English, they make mistakes of connotation.

3.4.3. Post-Test to Students Results

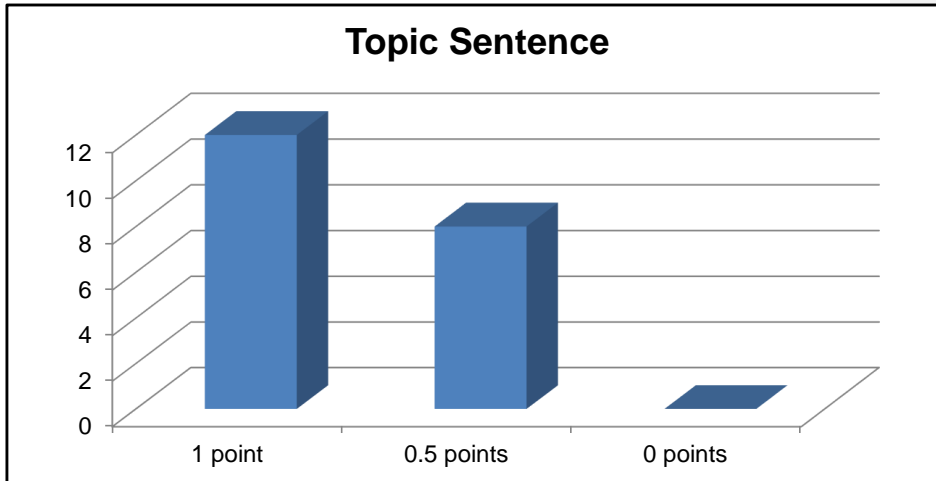


Figure 20. Bar Chart of Topic Sentence.

Topic Sentence	Number of Students	Percentage
The topic sentence is the first sentence in the paragraph. It is a clear statement of the paragraph content. 1 point	12	60%
The topic sentence gives some clarity of the overall connectivity of the sentences presented. 1/2 points	8	40%
There is no topic sentence presented in the paragraph. 0 points	0	0%

This chart indicates if students include a topic sentence in their paragraph.

The majority of students, 60 % of students, include a clear topic sentence in their paragraph. 40 % of students include a topic sentence.

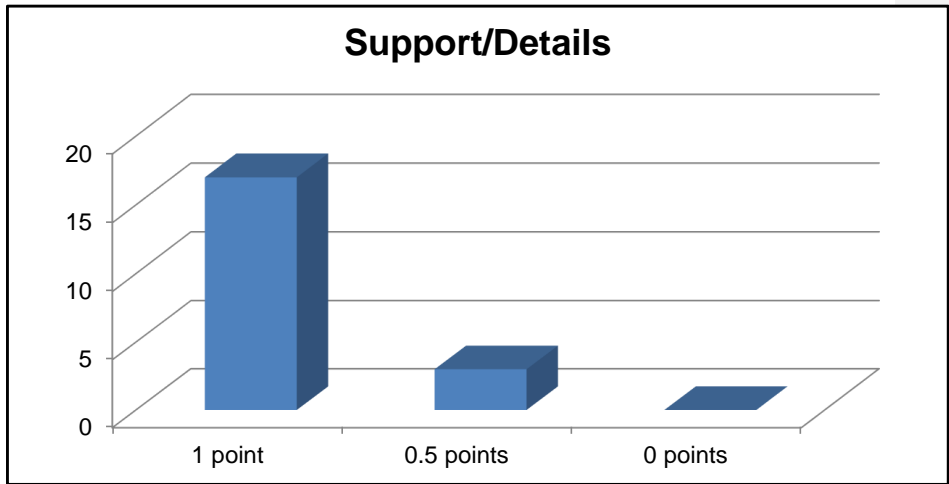


Figure 21. Bar Chart of Support/Details.

Support/Details	Number of Students	Percentage
Topic is supported by many specific details. 1 point	17	85%
Topic is supported by a few specific details. 1/2 points	3	15%
There is a slight attempt at support. 0 points	0	0%

This chart demonstrate if students give enough details to their paragraphs.

This chart shows that 85 % of students give a good amount of details to their paragraphs. Only 15 % of students give a few details to their paragraphs.

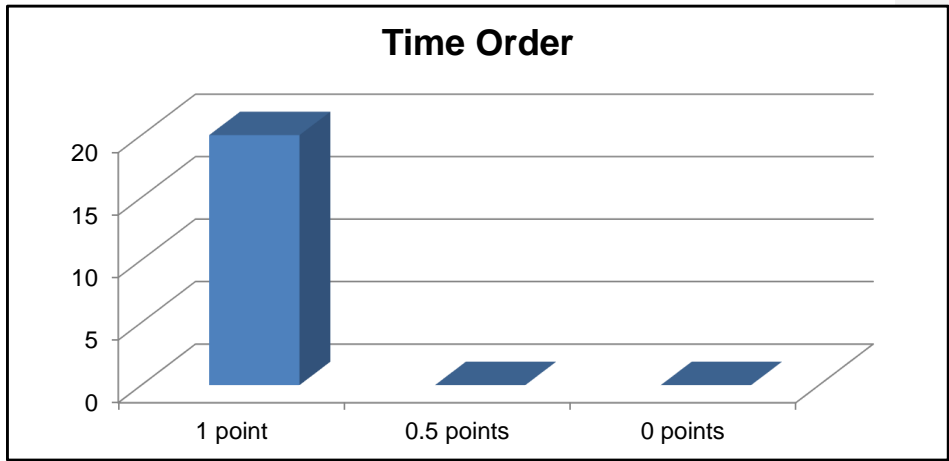


Figure 22. Bar Chart of Time Order.

Time Order	Number of Students	Percentage
Paragraph has good organization, events are time ordered, sharp sense of beginning and end. Correct time order transition words or phrases are used. 1 point	20	100%
Paragraph is organized, events somewhat jump around. Some time order transition words/phrases are used. 1/2 points	0	0%
Paragraph is not organized, events make no sense. No use of time order transition words/phrases. 0 points	0	0%

This chart indicates if students have a good organization and use of time phrases in their paragraphs.

All students organize their paragraphs in the correct way and thus include sufficient time order or phrases to them.

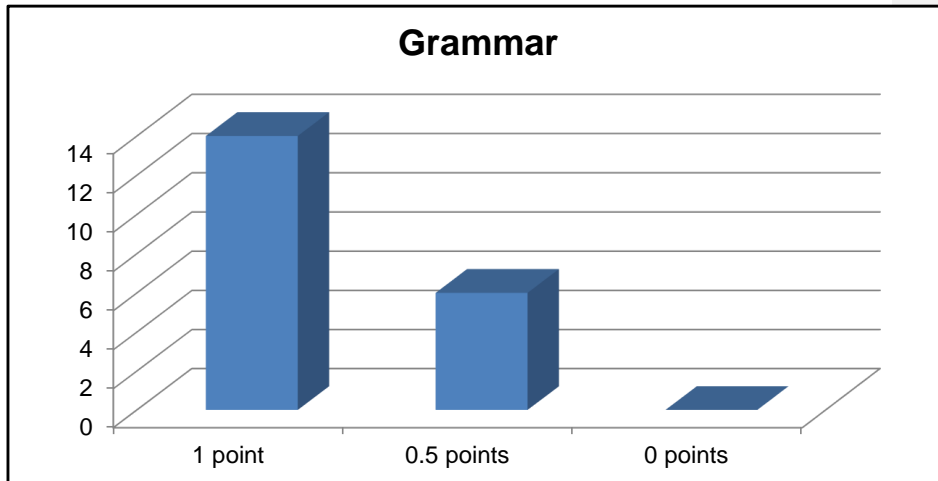


Figure 23. Bar Chart of Grammar.

Grammar	Number of Students	Percentage
There are few to no errors in grammar. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	14	70%
There are some errors in grammar. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	6	30%
There are many errors in grammar. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	0	0%

This chart shows if students use the correct grammar tense when expressing in their paragraphs.

The majority of students, 70 %, make a few grammatical mistakes. Only 6 % still make some grammar mistakes.

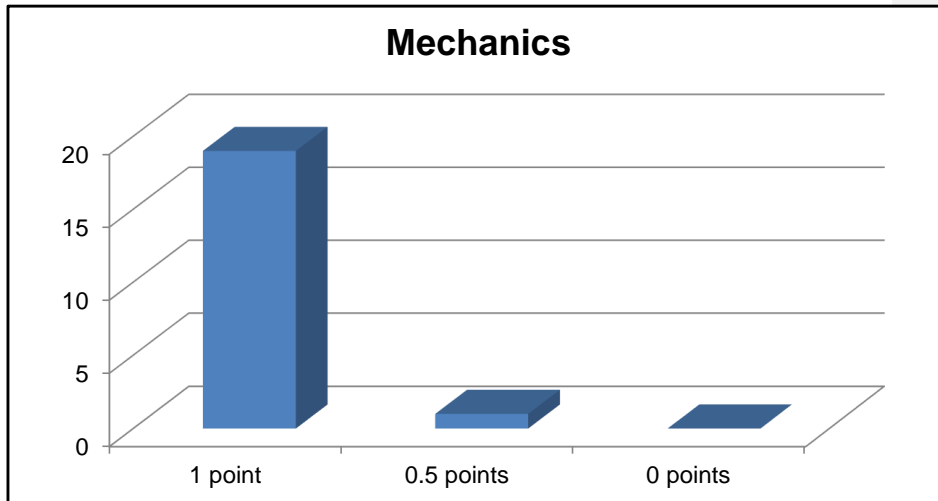


Figure 24. Bar Chart of Mechanics.

Mechanics	Number of Students	Percentage
There are few to no errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	19	95%
There are some errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	1	5%
There are many errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	0	0%

This chart demonstrates if students use the capitalization and punctuation rules correctly.

Almost all students capitalize and use punctuation correctly, that is 95 %.

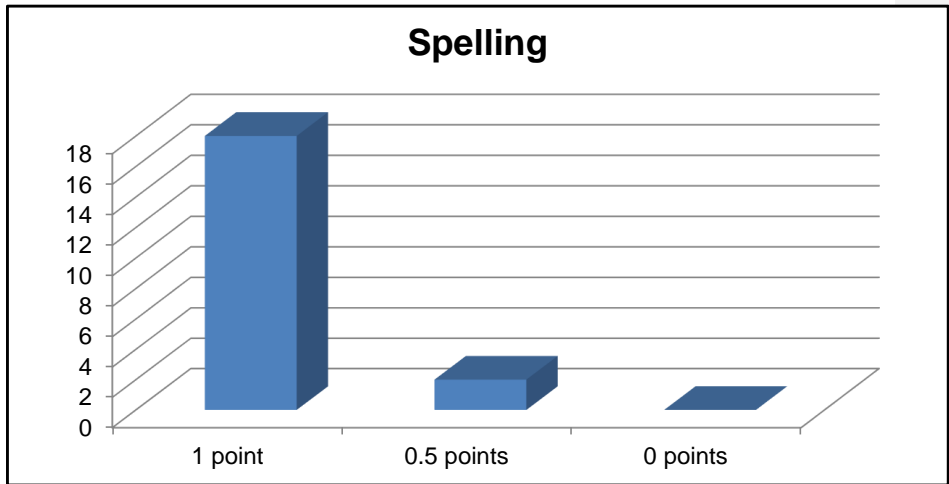


Figure 25. Bar Chart of Spelling.

Spelling	Number of Students	Percentage
There are few to no errors in spelling. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	18	90%
There are some errors in spelling. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	2	10%
There are many errors in spelling. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	0	0%

This chart shows if students write words correctly.

90 % of students write almost all words correctly. 2 % of students write words incorrectly. Some of these mistakes are because students omit letters or confuse them with others.

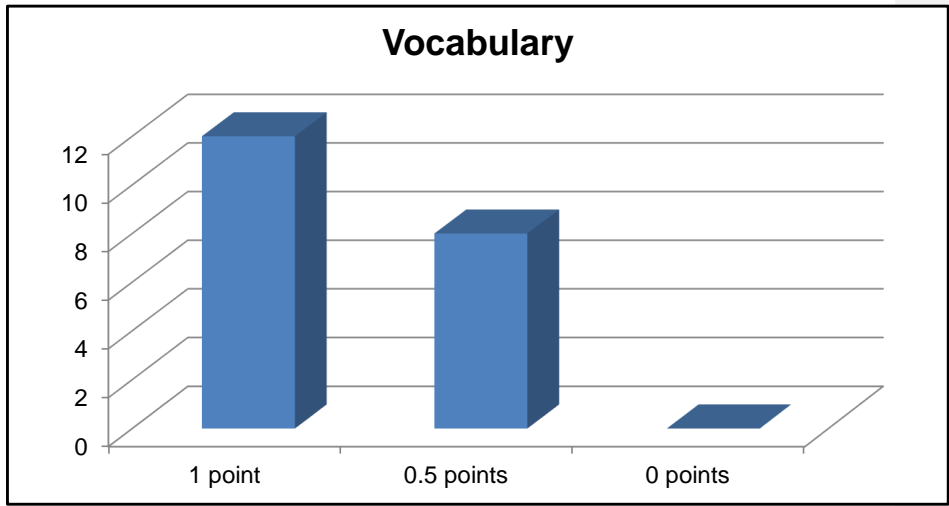


Figure 26. Bar Chart of Vocabulary.

Vocabulary	Number of Students	Percentage
Words are accurate, precise and engaging. 1 point	12	60%
Words are sometimes incorrect or imprecise. 1/2 points	8	40%
Words are incorrect or imprecise. 0 points	0	0%

This chart shows if students use the right words to what they want to express.

60 % of students use correct and precise words in their paragraphs. Only 8 % of students sometimes use incorrect or imprecise words. These mistakes occur due to the use of erroneous synonyms when students write their paragraphs.

3.4.4. Pre and Post Test Comparison

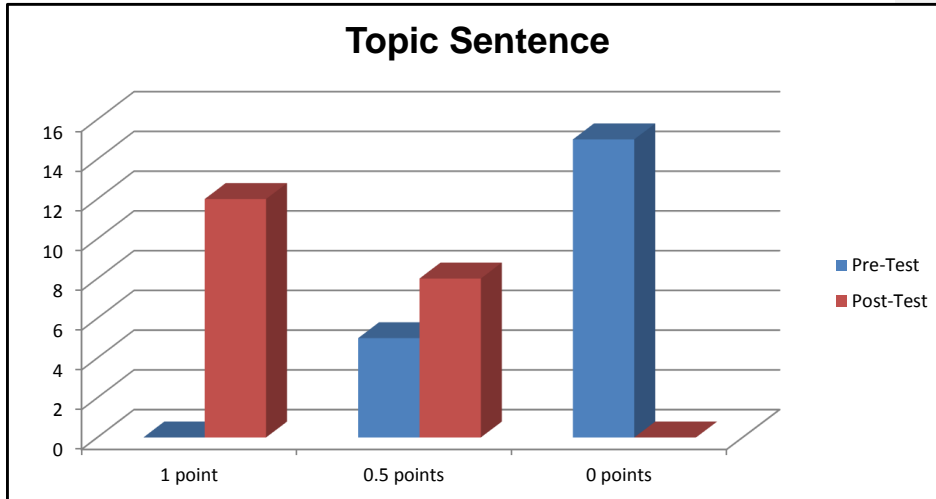


Figure 27. Bar Chart of Pre and Post Test Topic Sentence Comparison.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Topic Sentence	Number of Students	Number of Students
The topic sentence is the first sentence in the paragraph. It is a clear statement of the paragraph content. 1 point	0	12
The topic sentence gives some clarity of the overall connectivity of the sentences presented. 1/2 points	5	8
There is no topic sentence presented in the paragraph. 0 points	15	0

Students improved significantly when including a good topic sentence in their paragraph that gives clarity to the reader.

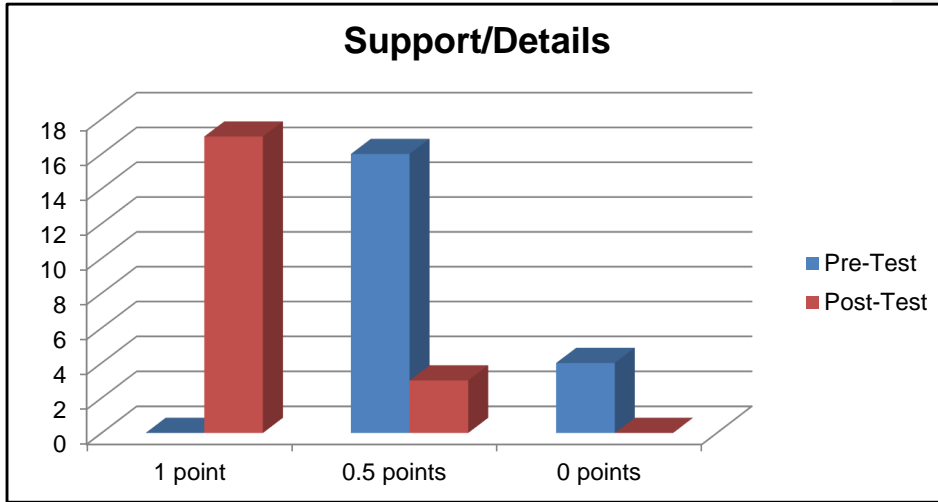


Figure 28. Bar Chart of Pre and Post Test Support/Details Comparison.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Support/Details	Number of Students	Number of Students
Topic is supported by many specific details. 1 point	0	17
Topic is supported by a few specific details. 1/2 points	16	3
There is a slight attempt at support. 0 points	4	0

This chart shows students gives sufficient details to support the main idea they stated in the beginning.

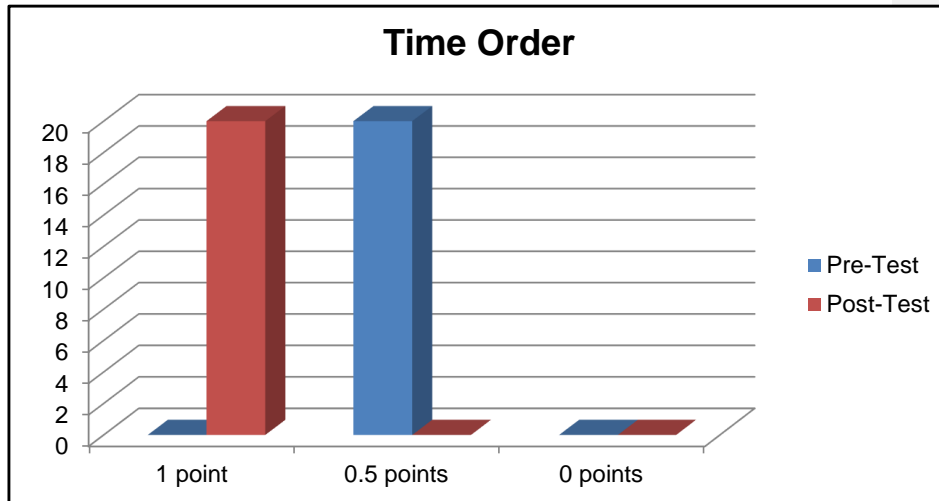


Figure 29. Bar Chart of Pre and Post Test Time Order Comparison.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Time Order	Number of Students	Number of Students
Paragraph has good organization, events are time ordered, sharp sense of beginning and end. Correct time order transition words or phrases are used. 1 point	0	20
Paragraph is organized, events somewhat jump around. Some time order transition words/phrases are used. 1/2 points	20	0
Paragraph is not organized, events make no sense. No use of time order transition words/phrases. 0 points	0	0

This chart indicates all students organized their paragraphs in a chronological way, thus, students include time order words for a better sequencing.

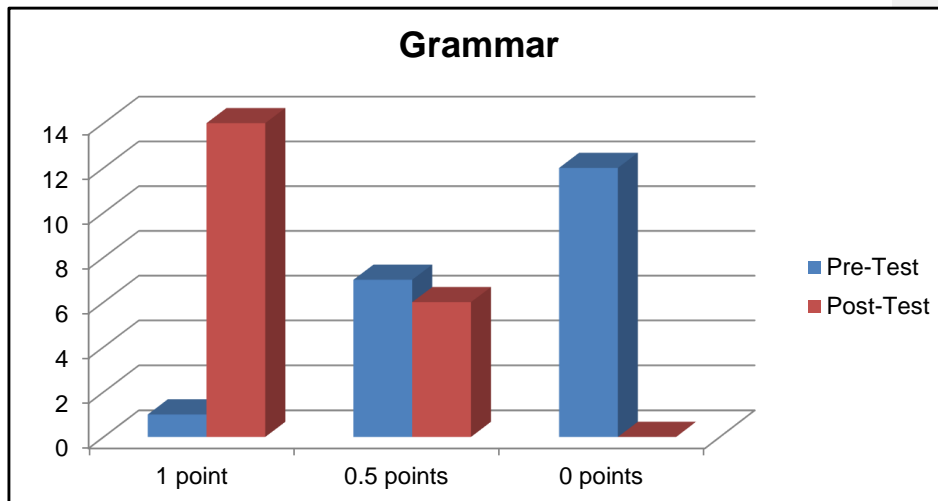


Figure 30. Bar Chart of Pre and Post Test Grammar Comparison.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Grammar	Number of Students	Number of Students
There are few to no errors in grammar. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	1	14
There are some errors in grammar. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	7	6
There are many errors in grammar. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	12	0

This chart demonstrates students improve when using the correct grammar tense when writing their paragraphs. Besides, they follow the grammatical rules in a simpler way.

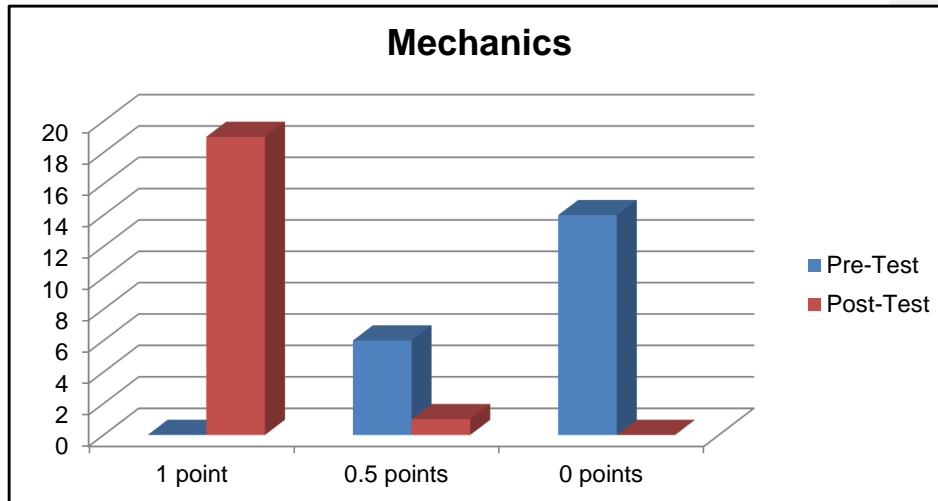


Figure 31. Bar Chart of Pre and Post Test Mechanics Comparison.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Mechanics	Number of Students	Number of Students
There are few to no errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	0	19
There are some errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	6	1
There are many errors in capitalization and punctuation. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	14	0

Students have almost no errors in capitalization or punctuation. They still have some mistakes when writing proper names.

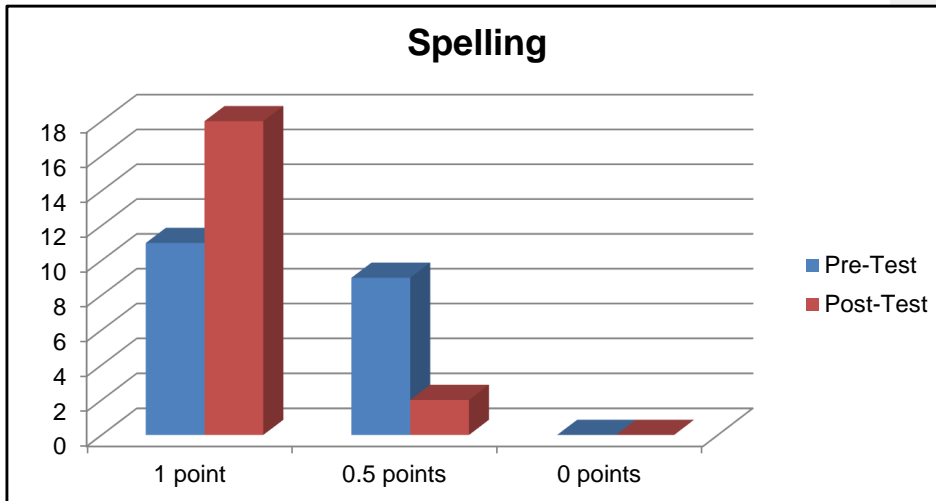


Figure 32. Bar Chart of Pre and Post Test Spelling Comparison.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Spelling	Number of Students	Number of Students
There are few to no errors in spelling. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point	11	18
There are some errors in spelling. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points	9	2
There are many errors in spelling. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points	0	0

Students have a few errors in spelling due to the synonyms they try to use to express their ideas. Moreover, they can use an online dictionary that is very helpful when producing their paragraphs.

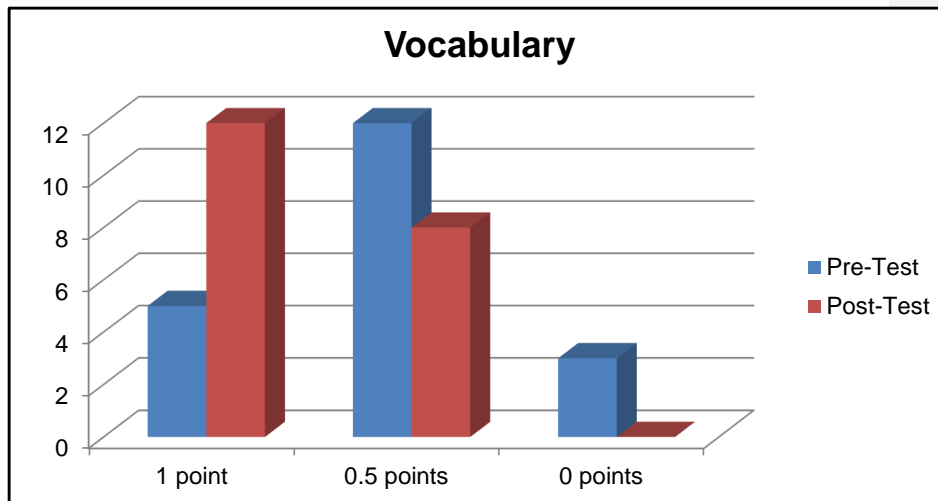


Figure 33. Bar Chart of Pre and Post Test Vocabulary Comparison.

	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Vocabulary	Number of Students	Number of Students
Words are accurate, precise and engaging. 1 point	5	12
Words are sometimes incorrect or imprecise. 1/2 points	12	8
Words are incorrect or imprecise. 0 points	3	0

This chart indicates students improved when using correct and precise words but they still make mistakes because they try to express many things at the same time and use incorrect synonyms.

3.5. Resources, Timeline, and Budget

3.5.1. Resources

RESOURCES	REQUIREMENTS
HUMAN RESOURCES	
Students and teachers	To obtain data from surveys and tests.
MATERIAL RESOURCES	
Computer	To write the research project, create the blog, make the forms.
Internet	To investigate and find relevant information for the project and update the blog.
Printer	To print the research project.

Comentado [D47]: This section states the cost and expenses made in order to carry out the research project. It also gives a timeline of the overall research project, indicating the various operational steps and tasks and their respective time of completion. Finally, the section mentions any other resources or materials that were needed when carrying out this project

Table 3. Resources: shows the resources used during the process.

3.5.2. Timeline

ACTIVITIES	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT
Bibliography	X																
Title, Presentation of the research project.		X	X														
Writing Chapter 1				X	X												
Writing Chapter 2						X	X	X									
Survey elaboration.									X								
Application of the survey									X								
Pre-Test, classes and Post-Test										X	X	X	X				
Data Processing														X			
Writing Chapter 3															X		
Writing Chapter 4																X	
Project presentation																	X

Table 4. Timetable: shows the time it took to develop the project.

3.5.3. Budget

COST ESTIMATES AND BUDGET		
Accounting Unit Budget		
CATTEGORY		
TOTAL	SUBTOTALS	
1 Travel		
Transportation	<u>\$800.00</u>	\$800.00
2 Equipment		
Laptop	\$0.00	
Computing Program	\$0.00	
Printer	<u>\$0.00</u>	\$0.00
3 Materials and Supplies		
Surveys	\$0.00	
Pre-test and Post-test	\$0.00	
Rubrics	\$0.00	
Website related to blog	<u>\$0.00</u>	\$0.00
4 Contracted Services		
Internet	<u>\$350.00</u>	\$350.00
RESEARCH GRAND TOTAL	\$1,150.00	

Table 5. Budget: shows the cost estimates and budget.

4. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Conclusions

The purpose of this Research Project at Monte Tabor Nazaret Primary School was to improve the writing of paragraphs in English through the use of a blog as a technological tool and determine different areas where students commit errors to try to solve them.

To reach these goals, different instruments were used to establish the source of those problems. A survey to students was administered before the experimental part started. A Pre-Test was given to students to discover the areas where they had major problems. A Post-Test was given to students to compare its results with the Pre-Test. Moreover, a counter was added to the blog in order to keep track of students' participation. Furthermore, some rubrics were used in all assignments to constantly evaluate students' progress to check if they were improving or not.

The survey provided information about the proficiency students have at the moment of using technology or the use of a blog as teaching tool. It was really important to see because in case students did not know how to use the blog, a manual or any kind of instructions had to be prepared and given to students to not have any problem when checking the blog or doing the assignments. All the assignments were posted in the blog and after the class to keep an order of the teaching-learning process. These assignments helped to validate if teaching was understood and students could apply it to the practice, it means, to use what they learned appropriately when writing their paragraphs.

The student's answers from their survey also revealed that classes are boring and pupils prefer to use of any technological device inside their classrooms for a better class. This could help students when not only writing paragraphs in English but in general to obtain better results in their learning process and the way they internalize what they learn.

A counter was essential to include in the blog due to the validation of students keen on using technology when doing any assignment or checking the classes. It is shown that students enter to the blog several times a week to see their peers work and use them as a guide to produce theirs.

Rubrics were vital in the development of this research project because they gave conclusions in numbers of the students work in all instructional stages to be calculated later and classes adapted to these results. Different rubrics were used in order to assess assertive

different nature of paragraphs. All paragraphs were not equal, that is why different rubrics had to be used due different characteristics paragraphs have and measure fairly and correctly.

A Pre-Test was used to find out different problems students have when writing paragraphs. Thus, it was utilized to compare it with the Common European Framework to see in what level students were. By checking students' level, researchers adapted their classes to their pupils' level and the kind of exercises they could find more useful and more interesting for them.

Finally, after six sessions of instruction in the blog about writing paragraphs, a Post-Test was given to students which confirmed the validation of the research hypothesis by getting conclusive results. Results in criteria differ from the ones in the Pre-test and a better and more natural way of writing was proved by students.

4.2. Problems and Limitations of the Study

At the beginning, there was not acceptance by the students' parents.

Parents did not want to sign the permission for their sons/daughters due the risks Internet have and they could be exposed. They stated they could not be with their kids all the time or their schedule was complicated to check what they were doing.

However, after researchers talked to them, the project started and continued without difficulties. In addition, the option of working in the school laboratory was proposed to parents and it was also accepted by them. Fortunately, students did not have to do their work in the school premises; it would have provoked students' negation to the work and therefore incorrect learning.

4.3. Recommendations

Evaluating all the results obtained from students after doing all assignments, it is strongly recommended to implement the use of blogs to improve the writing of paragraphs in English during one Term one time per week to see good results.

Students were motivated and interested to see the next classes, specially their peers' works because they could know more about them and satisfy their curiosity which is normal at this age.

Blogs offer a wide variety of tools for creating, editing, posting, etc. any information. This is useful because teachers can do anything in an easy and comfortable way without the help of any expert. Many blogs integrate different websites to make this a better experience.

This tool has to be updated weekly with important information to students and taking into consideration their interests. Grateful comments or jokes might be written by the teacher. Besides, examples and any other kind of data have to be according to students' level because it shows interest from their teacher.

The blog has to be colorful and must contain funny images and some information about the teacher apart from videos. All these together will provide students a sense of membership which is very important when trusting and putting all effort.

Classes posted in the blog must not be long because pupils might think they are studying in a typical textbook and this is not the reason of using blogs in a class. The extension of the post might be long because of the images or videos but not because of the text. It is not a board or a double-side worksheet where students have to spend almost an hour to finish it.

As parents could be a problem for not accepting the participation of their son/daughter, they have to be called for a meeting and given as many details as possible about this project to avoid rejection. Moreover, they could receive an example of what their kid is going to do, where he/she is going to do it, and the frequency they are going to do it.

Training for teachers is vital to develop this project. Blogs are simple tools to use but nowadays there are teachers who do not know how to use a computer, laptop, tablet or any other kind of these devices, which will provoke the rejection of teachers at the moment of setting up their classes in their blogs. Learning by doing is the appropriate technique to teach teachers the use of blogs and their different features for creating, editing, and posting easily and productively.

Researchers also recommend the use of the Internet to download and adapt any material teachers could use with their students.

By using blogs, educational institutions will be able to change the typical paradigm of the teaching-learning process of only textbooks, notebooks or any kind of these resources used in classes to achieve goals by antique techniques utilize by teachers who do not want to go beyond because of the fear of failure. It will create an environment of satisfaction and relaxation when using this tool not only by students but also by teachers who need a space to set free their creativity and freedom and blogs provide these essential qualities in a teacher's life.

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APPENDICES

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LETTER TO PARENTS



UNIVERSIDAD LAICA VICENTE ROCAFUERTE DE GUAYAQUIL

AUTORIZACIÓN

Estimado Padre de Familia,

Por medio de la presente nos dirigimos a usted con el respeto que se merece para solicitarle le conceda permiso a su hijo(a) para que pueda utilizar como herramienta de estudio y bajo su control el acceso a Internet.

Éste servirá para que él/ella aprenda la forma correcta de escribir párrafos en Inglés por medio de un blog diseñado por los investigadores a ser usado entre su hijo(a) y éste de forma on-line; es decir en línea durante un corto periodo de estudio.

De antemano le agradecemos su permiso de utilizar esta herramienta como estudio, también le doy a conocer que la dirección de la Sección Primaria tiene conocimiento y estuvo de acuerdo.

Sin más que acotar esperando contar con su apoyo.

PHOTOS

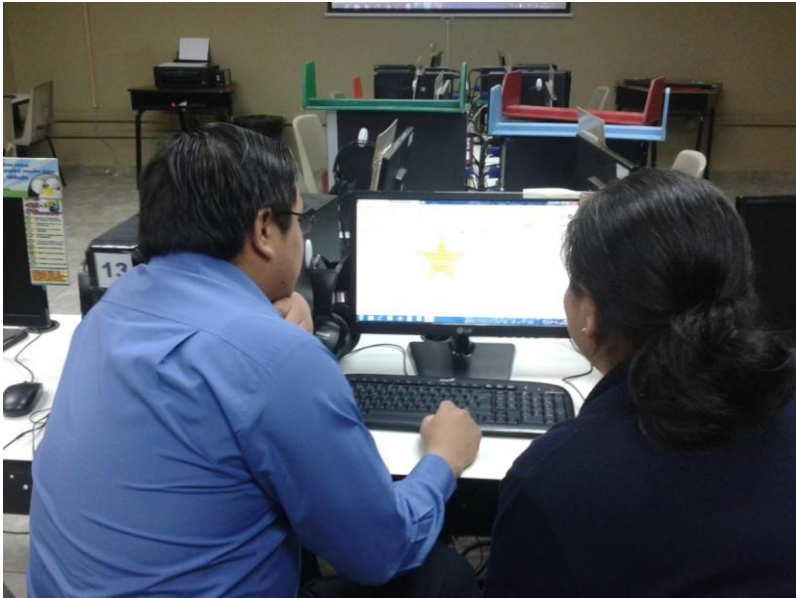


Figure 34 shows researchers checking the Pre-Test in the blog.



Figure 35 shows researchers checking the final presentation of the Last Class (Post-Test) in the blog.




Figure 36 shows students working on the blog. They are moving around the blog to get familiar to it.



Figure 37 shows students working on the blog. They are watching the introductory video.

SURVEY



The image shows a Google Forms interface for a survey titled "Survey to Students". The form is displayed in a browser window with the URL <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1RRUUGL78Fj6OLp3Xk10WZypffw0bQN6MQnA6mDswpZl/viewform>. The form content includes a header image of a desk with a coffee cup, a notepad, and pens. Below the header, the title "Survey to Students" is followed by a required field question: "How much time do you spend on the Internet per week?". The options for this question are: 3 hours or less, 3 - 6 hours, 7 - 10 hours, 11 - 15 hours, 16 - 20 hours, 21 - 30 hours, 31 - 40 hours, and more than 40 hours. The next question is "Select ALL the social networks you use:", with checkboxes for Facebook, My Space, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, Snapchat, Tumblr, and an "Other:" text input field. The third question is "What kind of device do you use?", with checkboxes for Desktop, Laptop, Tablet, iPad, and Smartphone. The final question is "How do you normally know about something (news, entertainment, movies, etc)?", with checkboxes for TV: The news, Radio, Website, Social Network, Talking to Friends, orally, and Chat.

Survey to Students

* Required

How much time do you spend on the Internet per week? *

- 3 hours or less
- 3 - 6 hours
- 7 - 10 hours
- 11 - 15 hours
- 16 - 20 hours
- 21 - 30 hours
- 31 - 40 hours
- more than 40 hours

Select ALL the social networks you use: *

- Facebook
- My Space
- Google+
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- Tumblr
- Other:

What kind of device do you use? *

- Desktop
- Laptop
- Tablet, iPad
- Smartphone

How do you normally know about something (news, entertainment, movies, etc)? *

- TV: The news
- Radio
- Website
- Social Network
- Talking to Friends, orally
- Chat

Do you know what a blog is? *

- Yes
- No

Do you have a blog? *

- Yes
- No

Do you know how to use a blog? *

- Yes
- No

How much time do you blog per week? *

- 3 hours or less
- 3 - 6 hours
- 7 - 10 hours
- 11 - 15 hours
- 16 - 20 hours
- 21 - 30 hours
- 31 - 40 hours
- more than 40 hours

Would you like to use a technological device in the classroom instead of books and notebooks? *

Ex: Desktop, tablet, laptop, smartphone

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- No response

Select the reason why technology must be used by you in the classroom. (You can select more than one) *

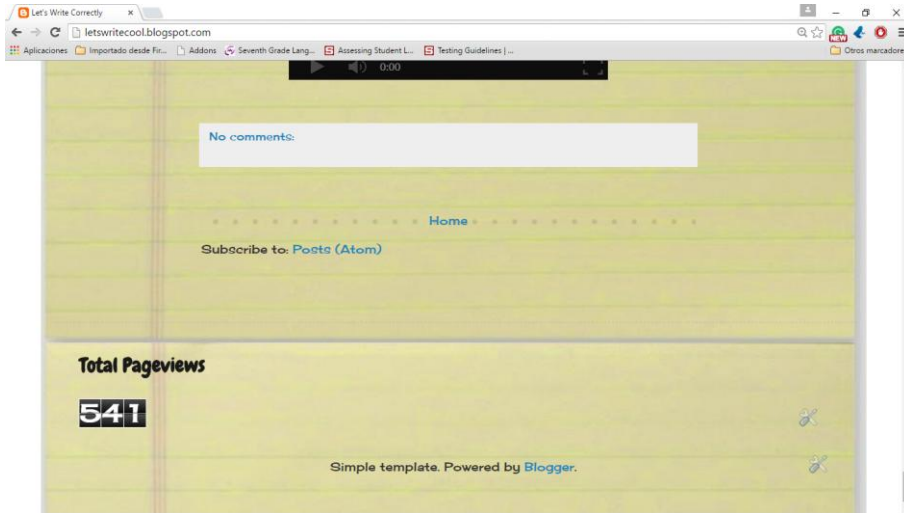
- Have better grades
- More interesting classes
- It is useful
- No more books and notebooks
- Other:

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

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COUNTER



CHECKLIST

The image shows a screenshot of a Google Forms checklist. The browser address bar shows the URL: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1B1vh1ecj2Rj6fLwvHWshW8ZaE6notdgdUj_V-EHh7E/viewform. The form has a blue header with icons for a calendar, a die, a card, a domino, and a pin. The title is "Checklist" with a red asterisk indicating it is required. Below the title is a list of activities, each with a checkbox. At the bottom of the form is a blue "Submit" button. The footer includes the Google Forms logo and a disclaimer: "This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google. Report Abuse - Terms of Service - Additional Terms".

Checklist
* Required

Checklist
Activities

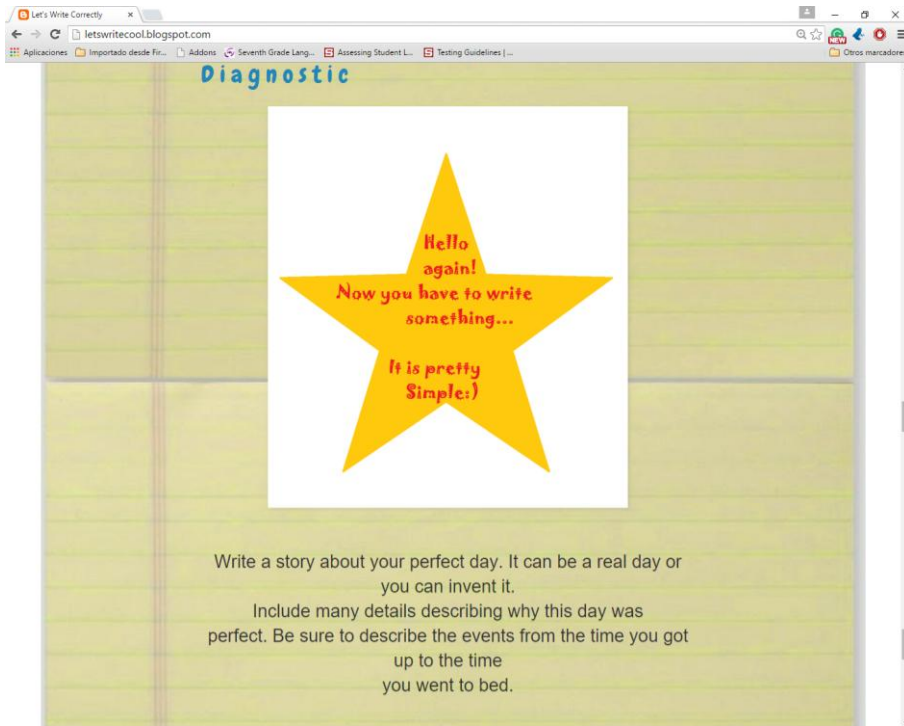
- Survey
- Pre-Test
- Grading Paragraphs Pre-Test
- Class 1
- Images and video, exercises
- Grading Paragraphs Class 1
- Class 2
- Exercises and samples, images
- Grading Paragraphs Class 2
- Class 3
- Images and samples, exercises
- Grading Paragraphs Class 3
- Class 4
- Samples, images and exercises
- Grading Paragraphs Class 4
- Class 5
- Image, exercises
- Grading Paragraphs Class 5
- Class 6
- Image, video, models
- Grading Paragraphs Class 6
- Post-Test
- Grading Paragraphs Post-Test

[Submit](#)

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PRE-TEST



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "letswritecool.blogspot.com". The page content is set against a background of a green notepad. At the top left, the word "Diagnostic" is written in blue. In the center, a large yellow star contains the text: "Hello again!", "Now you have to write something...", and "It is pretty Simple:)". Below the star, the following instructions are written:

Write a story about your perfect day. It can be a real day or you can invent it.
Include many details describing why this day was perfect. Be sure to describe the events from the time you got up to the time you went to bed.

POST-TEST

Let's Write Correctly Last: x
letswritecool.blogspot.com/p/last-class.html

Let's Write Correctly

Pages

- Home
- Rubric
- Class 1
- Class 2
- Class 3
- Class 4
- Class 5
- Class 6
- Last Class

Last Class

Now comes a decision date.

The test date.



Do not get nervous or angry.



It is easy.

Guess what!!!

It is a **paragraph**.

Think about one of your favorite early memories. Is it the first time you rode a bike? Is it the first birthday party you can remember? Write a paragraph about that memory. Explain what happened and why it is important to you.

Teacher



Teacher



Dictionary




Meanings

Synonyms



RUBRICS



Grading Rubric

* Required

Topic Sentence *

- The topic sentence is the first sentence in the paragraph. It is a clear statement of the paragraph content. 1 point
- The topic sentence gives some clarity of the overall connectivity of the sentences presented. 1/2 points
- There is no topic sentence presented in the paragraph. 0 points

Support/Details *

- Topic is supported by many specific details. 1 point
- Topic is supported by a few specific details. 1/2 points
- There is a slight attempt at support. 0 points

Time Order *

- Paragraph has good organization, events are time ordered, sharp sense of beginning and end. Correct time order transition words or phrases are used. 1 point
- Paragraph is organized, events somewhat jump around. Some time order transition words/phrases are used. 1/2 points
- Paragraph is not organized, events make no sense. No use of time order transition words/phrases. 0 points

Grammar *

- There are few to no errors in grammar. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point
- There are some errors in grammar. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points
- There are many errors in grammar. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points

Mechanics *

- There are few to no errors in capitalization. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point
- There are some errors in capitalization. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points
- There are many errors in capitalization. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points


Spelling *

- There are few to no errors in spelling. These errors are not obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1 point
- There are some errors in spelling. These errors are not sometimes obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 1/2 points
- There are many errors in spelling. These errors are obstacles to the understanding of the student's writing. 0 points

Vocabulary *

- Words are accurate, precise and engaging. 1 point
- Words are sometimes incorrect or imprecise. 1/2 points
- Words are incorrect or imprecise. 0 points

Taken and adapted from <http://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?codes=64754X&sp=true>

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