

**Implementing the Learners Diary as Tool to Increase the Vocabulary and to  
ameliorate the Writing skill at José Horacio Betancur High School in 6th and 7<sup>th</sup>  
Grade in Medellín Colombia: an Action Research**

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH-FRENCH FOREIGN LANGUAGES PROGRAM

PAMPLONA

2017

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## **A view to the proposal**

This proposal gathers together all the skills and abilities that a foreign language student has acquired during the professional learning process. It focuses its attention on four main aspects which are: the pedagogical component, the research component, the outreach component and the administrative component.

To better understand the structure of this proposal it is hardly necessary to reckon each component. The first component contains the pedagogical part of the proposal in which it is in detail explained the tool or strategy to apply in order to achieve the goal, in this case, increase the vocabulary and ameliorate the writing production. This section contains eight main titles. Consequently, you will find the research component that takes part in a macro project, this section has six main titles concerning the introduction, problem justification, objectives, theoretical framework, and methodology.

The third section is related to the outreach component which engages the researcher to the community, this section has five main titles. Finally, the administrative component that is related to the engagement that the trainee teacher had better have in the public high school, in this part, you will find some important timetables that contain some activities for the teacher trainee to take part in.

## **Introduction**

Today, the human being seeks to accomplish a wider level of education; one of its overriding goals is to be able to communicate in several languages, due to a globalized world English has become an important language to learn. English is essential to open new horizons and possibilities. Thus, all these important aspects were taken into account in Colombia. For instance, the education ministry of Colombia (MEN) decided to implement a National Program “Colombia, very well” (2015-2025) which principal purpose is to improve the quality of teaching English in Colombia.

The education ministry of Colombia (MEN) strongly believes that this National English Program will structure and guide the English learning process achieving the goal of being the most educated country in Latin America and reaching the best English levels in 2025.

Consequently, a plethora of students in Colombia deserves to receive a high-quality education fulfilling necessary pillars as teachers with suitable English levels, adequate classroom plans, teaching strategies, technology-infrastructure, integration and a friendly setting to work in. During the institutional observation, it was noticed that José Horacio Betancur High school lacked all these aspects especially the “teaching strategies and classroom plans” that guarantee a foreign language learning. In addition, they lack motivation towards learning English as well as integration to do it.

Hence, this proposal is divided into four main chapters which are centered in eschewing these weaknesses and complementing the learning process. The first chapter is based on the necessary pedagogical component in which the author presents some theoretical aspects related to the learners’ diary and its uses in education as well as the

importance of Project-based Learning Approach (PBL), writing skill and vocabulary. The second chapter deals with the research component including theories and concepts. In addition, previous studies, methodology, and research questions are included. The third and last components contain the services that the teacher trainee offers to the educational community.

## **Justification**

Nowadays, it is highly important to express ourselves in different ways and in many languages. To learn a foreign language requires developing a sort of skills such as reading comprehension, speaking, listening and writing. For this reason, this proposal focuses on implementing learners' diary as a pedagogical tool to develop students' writing production and their vocabulary. For instance, Peachey (2005) in British Council asserts that "Learner diaries provide a 'one to one' connection to students" and permit to know how students are writing and how they express themselves like. This is enormously advantageous because the teacher may have an idea of the vocabulary and the writing style students have. In addition, the teacher understands student's likes and dislikes towards different aspects of the classes as well as the different methodology that might motivate or unmotivated students to learn.

Our recent society demands the use of English as a globalized language permitting the entire world to keep the communication in real time, concerning the education in Colombia students are supposed to be able and to be prepared to speak in English in different situations, unfortunately for José Horacio Betancur 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students, this is not possible due to different situations which hinder their learning



process. With the purpose of ameliorating the teaching practices and the learning process of the José Horacio Betancur High School, the teacher trainee decided to implement a pedagogical tool that permits to overcome the negative barriers and offers different possibilities to learn and motivate students to go further.

The learners' diary is a tool which offers a myriad of possibilities and assures to achieve the main goal of this proposal which is to increase the vocabulary and ameliorate the writing production. In addition, the positive aspects are plenty. The teacher can have a one to one communication with students and can reflect on his own practice. This pedagogical tool contributes not only for the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> students' learning process but with the teaching process itself.

## **General Objective**

To implement the diary as a tool to increase vocabulary and to ameliorate the writing skill among 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students of José Horacio Betancur high school.

## **Specific Objectives**

To implement reflection as a tool to transform internal pedagogical processes of the practicum.

To promote pre-service teachers' critic spirit development that allows them to analyze their pedagogical performance.

To attend English training needs of the primary school population in José Horacio Betancur high school in Medellín, Antioquía.

To include the English-French students' foreign language training to the educational reality in primary school.

To play an important role at José Horacio Betancur High school concerning different activities in which the teacher trainee can be invited.

## **Institutional Observation**

In this section, it is found a topographical location of the school, a description of the educative authorities, a brief description of the Institutional Educative Plan (PEI), some important aspects of the rulebook, the physical plant, the institutional organization, and finally some pedagogical aspects.

### **Topographical location of the school**

Jose Horacio Betancur High school is located in “Carrera 121 No. 57 - 57, Medellín - Antioquia - Colombia - Sudamérica.

### **Educational Authorities**

As many public schools, the structure of the educational authorities is divided into three parts: first the principle which is the highest authority, second the coordinator and finally the teacher.

Occupation	Name
Principle	Mario Antonio Naranjo Fulla
Discipline Coordinator	Francy Naranjo
English Teacher	Ludy Sofía Grozo Delgado

Table 6: educative authorities and occupations

## **Institutional Educative Plan (PEI)**

This part contains the most important aspects of the Institutional Educative Plan (PEI) of José Horacio Betancur high school.

### **Mission**

We are an official educational institution, located in the Municipality of Medellín – “Corregimiento de San Cristóbal, Vereda Primavera”- devoted to educate children, young people and preschool levels, basic, academic media and technical media, to develop performance competencies with quality and ethics, in their personal, academic and social dimension in order to face the contemporary challenges. To accomplish our mission, the institution has an appropriate team of teachers, managers and technological resources that permit pedagogical processes according to the local context. (p.4).

### **Vision**

In 2016 the institution pretends to be recognized for educating critical, responsible, participative, cheerful, respectful young people able to live in harmony with their social and natural environment; with communicative skills and an investigative spirit to propose solutions to everyday problems and conflicts (p.4)

### **Beliefs**

We believe that education can improve the quality of life.

The student is the reason why of the institution.

Students should be treated with dignity, respect, acceptance, and integrity.

It is important to know the potential of each person and to develop them.

Education should be imparted with quality and kindness.

The teacher facilitates the teaching-learning process.

The family is the first responsible for the children's education, therefore, it is responsible to ensure the necessary means and the appropriate conditions for it.

The family has always been the main pillar of society.

Education connects the student with the wonders of the natural world, through experiential situations that immerse the student in life and nature.

Education should promote the respect, care, protection and rational use of the environment, as well as an integration of the student with his inner being and the awareness of sustainable development as an option to raise the personal and collective well-being of the local community.

## **VALUES**

### **Responsibility**

It is the commitment that is acquired autonomously, to achieve the satisfaction of the duty fulfilled. It is always dynamic and leads to opinion and collaboration within the rules of coexistence of the Institution. Do what I owe without anyone reminding me.

### **Happiness**

All the happy moments we have lived, the good feelings that guide us, the optimism that accompanies us and the emotion that fills us at every moment of our life. It is the most important goal of each person.

## **Respect**

To know, to accept, to understand and to value the dignity and authenticity of each person, based on their individuality, managing their own limits in relation to others with a view to developing a healthy coexistence

## **Constructive criticism:**

All discernment that we realize with the objective of helping others, with the purpose of achieving a favorable change that benefits every single person in the community.

## **Quality policies**

José Horacio Betancur high school dedicates its efforts to form competent children and young people in their personal, academic and social dimension; it wants a continuous improvement of its processes seeking to satisfy the expectations of the educational community.

For this purpose, it counts on an ideal team of teachers and managers, adequate technological resources and permanent self-evaluation.

## **Quality objectives**

- Use the results of internal and external evaluations for the personal, academic and social improvement of students.
- Design and implement the curriculum through competences.
- Increase the satisfaction of the educational community.
- Increase the performance of human talent through ongoing training.
- Provide and maintain appropriate infrastructure, inputs, and technology to accomplish the mission.

- Continuously maintain and improve processes.

## Jose Horacio Betancur rulebook and its important aspects

### Organization chart

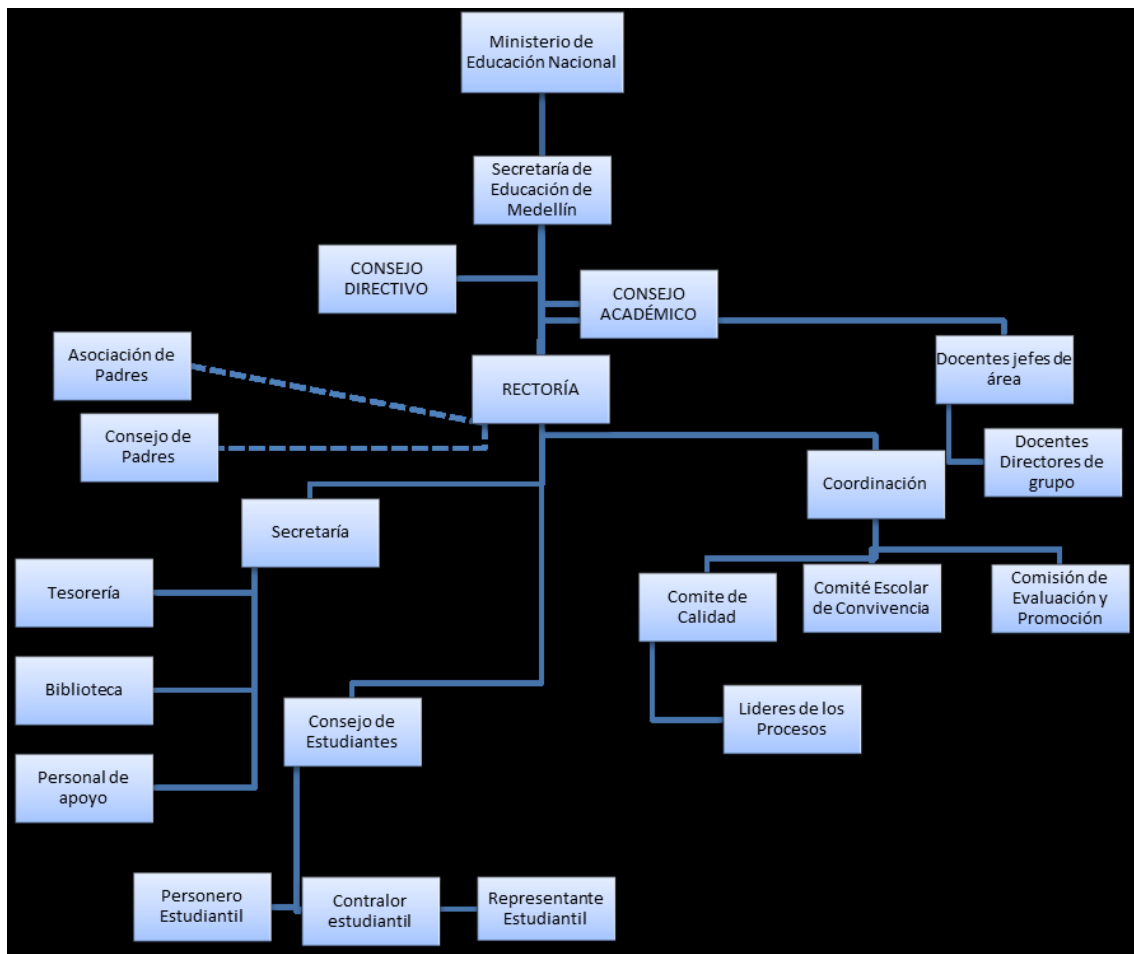


Chart.2 Division in the High School

## **Student profile**

Open minded. Critical. Creative, Committed to learning.

Builds on sharing, interaction, valuation, and coexistence with each other. Recognize its strengths and those of others. Reflect and review its learning process, analyzing the situations, strategies used, difficulties, advances and potentialities to make informed decisions about them and propose alternatives.

It is recursive. Recognizes the value and rights of individuals

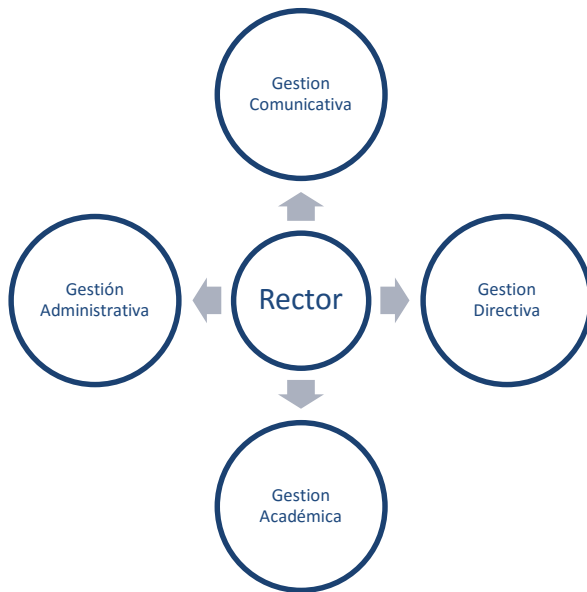
It values its cultural identity, respects it and promotes it.

## **Family profile**

They take responsibility with an attitude of delivery and collaboration with the educational process of their children, with a close collaboration with the institution, communicating with managers and teachers, to learn about students' academic performance and behavior. They instill in their children the love of study. They practice democratic, respectful and civilized norms in social interaction. They participate in the different activities of the school, collaborating with a positive spirit and solidarity with the institution. They promote the stability and good image of the institution because they are part of it and because of the role they play in a good example and positive values they must show to their children.



## Physical facilities



José Horacio Betancur school's physical distribution is divided into 12 classroom and 5 rooms in which 12 classrooms are in the morning for primary school and in the afternoon for secondary school. 5 rooms are devoted to; principal room, teachers lounge, discipline coordination, library, and psychological guidance.

Jose Horacio Betancur high school is not an enormous educational institution but is quite comfortable, it has two yards and two sportive fields, as well as, a cafeteria and a talking zone.

## Institutional calendar

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September

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Viernes, 1 sep 2017 (Cierre de Sistema, digitación de notas)

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Viernes, 8 sep 2017 (Entrega de notas a padres de familia 3° periodo)

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Lunes, 11 sep 2017 (Reunión de profesores)

---

October

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Viernes, 6 oct 2017 (Entrega de informes parciales tercer periodo-semifinal maratón de programación)

---

Lunes, 9 oct 2017 (Actividades de desarrollo institucional-receso estudiantil)

---

Viernes, 13 oct 2017 (Taller mañanas UDEM)

---

Lunes, 16 oct 2017 (Inicio de clases)

---

Martes, 17 oct 2017 (Semana de la convivencia)

---

Miércoles, 18 oct 2017 (Capacitación en línea sobre la maratón)

---

Viernes, 27 oct 2017 (Gigacampus)

---

November

---

Miércoles, 1 nov 2017 (Digitación de notas)

---

Jueves, 2 nov 2017 (Fundación de Medellín)

---

Viernes, 3 nov 2017 (Final de maratón de programación-maratón junior estudiantes de 5-6)

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Timetable n°5 institutional calendar from October to November

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**Ludy Sofia Grozo's English Schedule (classes in the afternoon PM)**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7 A (1:15-2:45)	7 B (1:15-2:45)			7 B (1:15-2:00)
6 A (3:45-4:10)	6 B (3:45-4:10)	7 A (3:45-4:10)	6:A (1:50-4:10)	6 B (4:10-6:00)

## **Chapter i: Pedagogical Component**

### **Implementing the Learners Diary as Tool to Increase the Vocabulary and to ameliorate the Writing skill at José Horacio Betancur High School in 6th and 7<sup>th</sup> Grades in Medellín Colombia: an Action Research**

#### **Introduction**

The relevance to learning a foreign language in the current globalized world has taken an important place, the education has given a primordial status of teaching and learning a foreign language in the Colombian public schools. Nevertheless, the effort seems not to be enough, it still exists a wide amount of weak teaching practices in the traditional teaching which is one of the most used by teachers in their classes. For instance, Correa (2015) asserts that in Colombia only the 8 % of the students will have an intermediate level for 2018, this is telling the education that something has been being wrong and has to be honed as soon as possible.

Sometimes teaching methods do not permit students to explore their entire abilities provoking a hindrance to developing the writing, listening, reading and speaking skills which are fundamental to full succeed in learning a foreign language.

Teaching a foreign language is essential to complement the education, but it is immensely necessary to know how to integrate the teaching process with the students learning process, in Colombian public schools, it has been considered the writing skill as one of the most appealing ones due to the “ICFES saber pro” and some others tests that are focused on the writing skill. However, to write correctly is necessary to extent vocabulary knowledge and to keep writing about different topics.

The purpose of this pedagogical project is to implement the learners' diary as a didactic tool to increase the vocabulary and ameliorate the writing production among the students of 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades at José Horacio Betancur High School in Medellín.

The diary is a perfect tool to explore a plethora of possibilities; it can be a tool for students to write about their daily life, different personal topics, thoughts, feelings, dreams and so on, they can also extend their knowledge towards vocabulary. For example, Guy (2004) affirms that diaries permitted students to look for farther information concerning their lessons (p.29). This means that diaries foster the further information searching assuring an extended vocabulary learning which is advantageous when the purpose is to ameliorate the writing production. Moreover, the teacher trainee may have a continuous communication with each student and ideas about his own practices.

To have an in-depth understanding of the pedagogical aspect it is indispensable to take into account some important theoretical aspects concerning the diary, (PBL), Writing skill and some other which are in detail explain in the theoretical framework.

## **Justification**

This pedagogical project aims at overcoming the lack of vocabulary and ameliorating the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students' written production at José Horacio Betancur high school in Medellín, Colombia.

The learners' diary is presented as a tool which does not interfere with the curriculum already established but it adjusts to it permitting a harmony. The diary seeks to give students a different tool to learn while writing about what they love the most and what they do; it extends their imagination and their language proficiency. Moreover, it helps to regard students as individuals rather than as a class.

All these aspects are the key to achieve the goal. It is important to use the diary towards the Project Based Learning having in mind that this is a pedagogical tool which serves at achieving a linguistic purpose and involves students, motivating them to learn and share with peers.

While observing the real setting that students are living day by day it was possible to notice the inconvenient they have not only with teaching strategies but also with infrastructure and materials, that is why it is primordial working hard to assure the foreign language learning. With regards to teaching strategies it was evidenced that students had problems when writing a simple text, they lacked the vocabulary, they took too much time to do it because the most of the time they would look in the dictionary.

All the aspects above are what the teacher trainee wants to overcome through the use of the learners' diary as a tool to increase the vocabulary and the written proficiency permitting students to discover by themselves and at the same time having fun while writing about topics of their interest and daily life.

## **Problem**

Once the observations were conducted in the classrooms of José Horacio Betancur high school, it was possible to notice that students lacked vocabulary which produced a low level of written products, for instance, some students usually asked the teacher for vocabulary to write, and the English book did not contain adequate activities to increase the vocabulary and ameliorate their written compositions. The students were talking most of the time because they did not know how to write correctly and they did not have a good guide in their English book either. This situation led the teacher trainee to think of something meaningful to motivate students to write and at the same time to learn new vocabulary, all this permitted the teacher trainee to wonder how the use of a diary would help students to develop their thinking and understanding towards writing. What are the advantages for the teacher to implement a diary in his classes? What are the advantages for students to use a diary in their classes? Can the communication between teacher-student increase? And is it possible for the teacher to improve his practices using a diary in his classes?

## **General Objective**

To implement a diary as a tool to increase vocabulary and to ameliorate the writing skill among 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students of José Horacio Betancur high school.

## **Specific Objectives**

To ameliorate the writing production among 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students at José Horacio Betancur high school.

To increase 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> students' vocabulary by using diaries at José  
Horacio Betancur

To understand how and why the Learners' diary can be I useful tool to  
teach English as a foreign language

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

When deciding to implement a pedagogical tool it is extremely important to define some aspects that complement the proposal. For instance, it is necessary to take into account what a diary is as well as its uses and applications, Project-Based Learning, Writing Skill, Vocabulary, and reflection of the learning process. All these aspects are explained and defined as follows.

### **Learners' Diary**

To teach deserves to look for tools which facilitate and complement this labor, one example of a great tool to work with is the learners' diary. According to Merriam Webster dictionary, a diary is "a record of events, transactions, or observations kept daily or at frequent intervals. Especially a daily record of personal activities, reflections, or feelings" the diary is an important tool which helps students not only to observe the setting but to write about it, it also extends the possibilities in a learning environment depending on the goals. For instance, a

diary maintains a continuous communication among teacher-students (Peachey, 2005, p.56). It also provides real and valuable insights towards the teaching process and environment. According to Alzate (2006), the learners' diary permits the teacher to connect with the student and to understand the journey she or he is taking towards learning (p.07).

. Furthermore, Haghnavaz (2016) affirms that Diaries can be a component of collective research such as collaboration or action research, this can be a positive aspect if the teacher wants to study how a pedagogical tool works like or how a teaching strategy can impact in the learning process (p.23).

Taking into account the importance of a diary as a pedagogical tool, it is necessary to keep in mind some aspects:

- “Learner diaries provide a 'one to one' connection to students and allow them to develop an individual relationship, which can be hard to do from the front of a classroom, especially with larger classes.
- They can become a form of authentic communication for our students. This kind of real communication can be very hard to achieve within the classroom.
- As a teacher-learner diaries provide with some really valuable insights into what students think of lessons, what they understand and what problems they are having.
- In every class, the atmosphere and general leaning dynamics of the classroom have been greatly improved.
- A private and individual learning relationship with each student can have a very positive effect on student behavior and class control, and discrete means of finding out about and addressing the causes of behavioral problems.
- Used over a period of time, students can look back at early diary entries and see how much their English has developed.” (Pedelty, 2014, p.4, in British Council)



Towards the writing process, a diary is a tool which motivates students to look for more information about their lives, setting, likes, feelings and so on, this takes them to the point of looking for some new words increasing at the same time their vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Rubin (2003) states that thanks to diaries

“more successful learners are in control of their learning; they know what they are doing and what they want to achieve; they know when they make mistakes, and they know how to go about correcting them. And in this process teachers can help their students provided that students allow them to see their diaries, comment on them and make relevant suggestions”(p.22).

### **Project-Based Learning**

Project Based Learning (PBL) has taken an important place among foreign languages teachers because of the myriad of possibilities that it offers to support learning. For instance, Ferrara (2012) asserts that Project-Based Learning is “A systemic teaching method that engages students in learning essential knowledge and skills through an extended, student influenced inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed tasks and products”, this permits students to be more engage in the learning process itself and to use their abilities in a real context.

(PBL) is used by many professionals as a tool to complement the learning process and it can be more effective than traditional instructions permitting students to interact with their setting and discover things by themselves.

Project has different applications and advantages in many settings. According to Goodman & Stivers (2010) Project- Based Learning:

- Situates students in a position to use their knowledge.

- Is effective to help students' understanding and application of the knowledge.
- Gives students the opportunity to have a collaborative work with the teacher and peers.
- Increases academic achievement.
- Benefits the acquisition and amelioration of different skills.
- Permits Students who work with projects to increase their motivation and interest towards the subject.

### **Writing skill**

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (2011) states that to learn a foreign language it is highly necessary to develop skills such as; Speaking, Listening Reading and Writing.

Writing is one of the four skills to develop in languages learning process. Writing permits the writer to produce his/her own text to express meanings, thoughts, feelings, ideas, stories and so on. It provides a physical channel of communication among different written sources as letters, texts, paragraphs, essays, books, magazines etc. An accurate written production deserves different knowledge application, containing; a wide vocabulary use, written structure, accuracy, cohesion, coherence, and punctuation.

## **Vocabulary**

Most of the time people tend to believe that vocabulary is only related to the words and the meanings but it is more than that. For instance, Taffy (2017), states that vocabulary is the knowledge towards words that come in both oral and written forms gathering different and necessary aspects of the language. For example, meanings depending on the context, politeness, words location, register and so on. Learning vocabulary is a complex work which deserves an important attention if the main goal is to ameliorate the writing skill.

## **Reflection of the Learning Process**

Reflection comprises a primary roll concerning the learning process. To evaluate and reflect on the practices is immensely important due to the positive aspects it implies. For instance, Fade (2015) defines reflection as process which “involves describing, analyzing and evaluating our thoughts, assumptions, beliefs, theory base and actions”

It includes:

- “looking forward”
- “Looking at what we are doing now”
- “looking back”

Learning through reflection does not only helps the teacher to improve his/her own practice and teaching strategies but also assists students to monitor their own learning process towards the teaching techniques and strategies.

Fade (2015) affirms that “Reflections can be expressed as verbal discussions or they can be written down in a reflective diary. Reflection is important, as it helps us capture and understand practical learning experiences. This is essential for effective practice and can facilitate the improvement”. Nowadays, a plethora of processes have a reflective part in which the professional make comments and suggestions towards the developing and application. Hence, to reflect on the learning and teaching practices is a fundamental strategy to improve education in several aspects.

## **Literature review**

This section contains some of the studies that guided and motivated the teacher trainee to focus his attention on learners’ diary as well as some different perceptions towards implementation of this pedagogical tool in a classroom.

A great variety of professionals in the teaching field have stated that a learners’ diary is a perfect tool to motivate students to learn and to improve some different skills. For instance, Klimova (2005) asserts in her research project published in “ScienceDirect” that diary writing is a very effective strategy to improve the whole learning process allowing the teacher to reflect on his/her own practice and the students to talk about their learning constraints and difficulties.

Tanaka (2010) in his study “Diary Studies: Their Potential to Explore Learner Perspectives on Second Language Learning” found a sort of benefits that a diary brings to the learning process. He affirms that diaries allow teachers to see the classroom experience in a dynamic and complex way also diaries can provide teachers with new insights as well as raise questions about the process.

In addition, Jones (2011) in her study “Professional Development through Individual Diary Writing” discovered that diaries were an excellent tool to motivate students to write and correct writing mistakes at the same time. To implement the diaries strategy she created a “diary framework” in which she included the guidelines to participate. Moreover, when using diaries students show more interest towards the matter and engagement with some other topics expanding their knowledge towards English (Nieto, 2016, (p.43).

## **Methodology**

The aim of this project is to increase the vocabulary and ameliorate the writing production by implementing the learners' diary as pedagogical tool, to achieve the goals it is highly important to guide the project with a methodology taking into account some necessary aspects such as; action research, data gathering instruments, participants, planning procedures and so on.

### **Investigative methodology**

#### **Action Research**

Action Research is the principal applied focus guiding this proposal. According to Mills (2011) cited by Creswell (2011) "action research designs are systematic procedures done by teachers (or other individuals in an educational setting) to gather information about, and subsequently improve, the ways their particular educational setting operates, their teaching, and their student learning" this design fits to be used while implementing the learners' diary as a pedagogical tool because it aims at improving a part of the education process concerning the teaching and learning procedures.

Creswell (2011), states that educators should use Action Research when they have a specific educational problem faced in the classroom. Action Research permits educators to reflect on their own practices arriving at the point of looking for new strategies to learn and teach in this case English. Action research unfolds three stages to develop;

"the first stage consisted of the identification of a process for addressing societal issues. The second stage turned toward practice and the need to involve practitioners, such as teachers, in the solution to their own problems. The third and most recent phase

represented the participatory, emancipatory, or community action research approach in which groups assume responsibility for their own emancipation and change”.

In education, Action Research Design has taken an essential place when talking about researching and improving. Creswell (2011) affirms that Action Research

- “Encourages change in the schools
- Fosters a democratic (i.e., involvement of many individuals) approach to education
- Empowers individuals through collaboration on projects
- Positions teachers and other educators as learners who seek to narrow the gap between practice and their vision of education
- Encourages educators to reflect on their practices
- Promotes a process of testing new ideas ( Mills, 2011 cited by Creswell, 2012 ) (p.578).”

### **Instruments for data collection**

This proposal takes the action research design as a core methodology. Hence, it is indispensable to define a sort of important instruments that will be utilized to gather data. The teacher trainee and researcher will use non-participant and participant classroom observations, photos and videos to support classroom observations as well as learners’ diaries and questioners

### **Participant observations**

Observations are frequently used by educators as a form of data collection. Observations permit the research to “be able to assume different roles in the process (Spredly, 1980 cited by Creswell, 2011).

According to Creswell (2011), observations can be participant and nonparticipant, in the case of the participant, the researcher takes part in the activities which are being observed. The researcher “assumes the role of an inside observer who actually engages in activities (p.214)”. Observing as a participant permits the researcher to record valuable information but it is sometimes difficult to take notes while participating forcing the researcher to write down once the setting has been left.

To eschew forfeiting valuable data concerning students’ perceptions, feelings, and behavior, the teacher trainee has to take notes at the end of each class in order to collect enough information that helps to answer the main questions of this proposal. To do so, the teacher has to record some classes and take pictures as support.

### **Nonparticipant observations**

Analogous to participant observations, nonparticipant observations consist of gathering data from the setting without being involved in the activities of the participants. According to Creswell (2012), “The nonparticipant observer is an “outsider” who sits on the periphery or some advantageous place to watch and record the phenomenon under study (p.215)”

### **Questioners and documents**

To better understand the progress of this proposal it is necessary to inspect if the pedagogical tool and the methodology are archiving the principal goal, to do so questioners are the most appealing tool. “A questionnaire is a data collection instrument



Consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents, questioners can be open format question and close format questions (Abawi, 2014, p.8)”

To gather information covering all the possible aspects open and closed format questions will be used.

Concerning documents, in this case, the core document will be the diaries of the participants. These diaries will provide the research with information concerning the class, the teaching practice and the students (Peachey, 2005, p.56).

### **Participants**

The participants of this proposal are 4 groups of José Horacio Betancur public high school in Antioquia, Medellin. 2 groups of 6<sup>th</sup> grade composed of 57 students and 2 groups of 7<sup>th</sup> grade composed of 50 students.

### **Purposeful sampling**

When deciding the core group of students it is necessary to take into account the students that show the problem the most, this is why it was a purposeful sampling which consists of “intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2011, p.626)”

5 students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade were chosen during the institutional observations because they were more appealing to provide valuable information throughout the proposal.

## **Data analysis**

To analyze data it is important to consider the type of data this proposal will gather which is qualitative for this reason some steps will be followed to organize and interpret the data.

Creswell (2011) presents a good structure technique to do so. First what the researcher has to do is to organize the data gathered using a software. In this case “MAXQDA” will be used as a tool to organize the data. Then, the researcher will have to code the data in order to find as much as possible codes. After, the researcher will organize the resulting codes in order to prepare the data to find out some important themes. A theme “is another way to analyze qualitative data. Because themes are similar codes aggregated together to form a major idea in the database, they form a core element in qualitative data analysis”

The themes will be organized into “major themes, ordinary themes, and minor themes. To better understand the themes, they will be layered, this means that they will be connected if possible. Creswell (2011) asserts that “Layering themes build on the idea of major and minor themes but organizes the themes into layers from basic elementary themes to more sophisticated ones”.

## Gathering data and process Timetable

Every process and project will have to be strictly organized and this proposal is not an exception. The timetable for each activity concerning the proposal and the data gathering is represented as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
From August the 8 <sup>th</sup> to August the 11 <sup>th</sup>	Classroom observation (non-participant observation)
From August the 14 <sup>th</sup> to August the 18 <sup>th</sup>	Proposal writing, first draft
August the 23 <sup>rd</sup> first proposal presentation	First proposal presentation
September the 1 <sup>st</sup>	First narrative
September the 4 <sup>th</sup>	First data collection procedure (recording class)
September the 8 <sup>th</sup>	Second narrative
September the 15 <sup>th</sup>	First Questioner (to participants only)
September the 27 <sup>th</sup>	Second Questioner (to participants only)
October the 12 <sup>th</sup>	Third Questioner (to participants only)
October 14 <sup>th</sup>	Participant Observation
October the 4 <sup>th</sup>	Second classroom recording
November the 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Participant observation
November the 24 <sup>th</sup>	Third classroom recording
November the 27 <sup>th</sup>	Third questioner (to participants)

This schedule contains the more important dates concerning the implementation of the proposal and the data collection

### **Pedagogical Methodology**

The methodology of a class is extremely important because it directs the process and organizes the activities in order to accomplish the main goal. This is the reason why this section consists of explaining how to use diaries in order to increase the vocabulary and ameliorate the writing production as well as some other activities proposed to achieve the goal.

### **Using diaries in the classroom**

The main tool that will be used in the classroom are the diaries but talking about diaries deserves understanding how they are managed to increase the vocabulary and ameliorate the writing production. Thus, Peachey (2005) in British Council presented an adequate methodology to use diaries in order to assess students learning, teach them new words and enhancing them to write and hone their productions.

First, it is important to state a method or activity to impulse students to write about, for instance, in this case, there will be each week a topic to write about in students' diaries, it is important to choose topics interesting for their ages.

Second, diaries must be a complementary activity in order to continue the normal progress of the class concerning the curriculum. However, they must be essential during the process.

To set a task is key during the process of using diaries, for instance, tell students to build a story from their daily living is a good strategy to make them write or tell their experiences during the week in their houses and classroom can be potential and will help the teacher to connect with students (Alzate, 2006, p.07)

Concerning the vocabulary increasing there are many strategies to implement and one of those is Rubin (2003) which consists of controlling students learning through the use of diaries this means helping them with extra activities to learn vocabulary. That is why during the use of diaries the teacher will ask students to write in a small chart five new words that catch their attention and use them in their productions, this will help them to learn at least 15 words per week.

To monitor if they are doing their job and they are learning, the teacher will take students diaries home, this will permit the teacher not only to evaluate their learning but to know about his/her own practices in order to ameliorate and progress.

The diaries will have and structure which is presented as follows:

### **First layout**

Name:

Grade:

Age:

(Space to write their favorite quote or message, in Spanish and English)

### **Second layout**

Address:

Phone:

(Space to make a picture)

### **Third Layout**

First day: (first writing activity, free topic)

Second day ( on the second week, writing about a day in my life)

Third day (on the third week, writing about my favorite song)

Fourth day (on the fourth week, writing about my English class)

Fifth day (on the fifth week, writing about my English class 2)

Sixth day (on the sixth week, writing about me)

Seventh-day (on the the seventh week, what would I change of my English class)

Eighth day (eighth week, my daily life)

Ninth day (ninth week, my normal life)

Tenth day (tenth week, free)

### **Schedule of activities**

Week	Activity
1 – (from August the 28 <sup>th</sup> to September the 1 <sup>st</sup> )	First explanation of the diary and its structure (layouts)

1 – (from September the 4 <sup>th</sup> to September the 8 <sup>th</sup> )	first writing topic (tell students to write about whatever they want to, giving them so examples and ideas.
2 – (from September the 11 <sup>th</sup> to September the 15 <sup>th</sup> )	Second writing topic (tell students to write about a normal day in their lives giving them some ideas. Remind them to look for five words and try to use them in their diaries)
3 – (from September the 18 <sup>th</sup> to September the 22 <sup>nd</sup> )	Tell students to write about their favorite songs and try to explain why (use 5 new words)
4 – (from September the 25 <sup>th</sup> to September the 29 <sup>th</sup> )	Tell students to write about their English class and try to explain why they like it or not (use 5 new words)
5 – (from October the 2 <sup>nd</sup> to October the 6 <sup>th</sup> )	Continues the previous writing and revise words and uses.
6 – (from October the 9 <sup>th</sup> to October the 13 <sup>th</sup> )	Tell students to talk about themselves giving them clues and ideas and using the previous classes as a grammar and vocabulary support
7 – (from October the 16 <sup>th</sup> to October the 20 <sup>th</sup> )	Tell students to talk about their English class and the activities they like and the activities they dislike as well as some aspects they consider positive and negative)

8 – (from October the 23 <sup>rd</sup> to October the 27 <sup>th</sup> )	Tell students to talk about a normal day in their lives by giving them ideas and asking them to write about how they are feeling like, what they like and what they do not.
9- ((from October the 30 <sup>th</sup> to November the 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	Tell students to talk about a whatever they want and ask them to write about their period of learning with the teacher trainee, and their best and worst experiences.
10- (November the 6 <sup>th</sup> )	Gathering all students' final productions.

Table n°3

This table contains the most important dates in which it will be given some directions to use the diary as well as some topics and ideas.

### **Project-based learning (PBL)**

PBL is “A systemic teaching method that engages students in learning essential knowledge and skills through an extended, student influenced inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed tasks and products”

(Ferrara, 2012, p.42). Following Ferrara’s definition, the learners’ diary will be used as a tool to arrive at a final product in this sense students will be more engaged to use diaries, participate in class, and learn.

The final project will be reported in the diary itself. It consists of a brief text in which students will use their imagination and will use some of the new words they have



learned during the process. All these texts will be typed in order to create just one production with all students ones.

### **Data analysis procedure**

Once all the activities proposed were carried out in the project “implementing the Learners Diary as Tool to Increase the Vocabulary and to ameliorate the Writing skill at José Horacio Betancur High School in 6th and 7th Grade in Medellín Colombia: an Action Research” a myriad of changes were evidenced in terms of learning and classroom environment.

When starting the practicum, it was possible to observe that students had different problems towards the foreign language in terms of writing. Hence, the idea of helping them to hone their oral production was born. At the very beginning, most of the students uttered to dislike English which was a professional challenge since they just were not interested. Thus, it was extremely important to take advantage of any possible source in the classroom and outside it. Concerning the experience and what it was evidenced through the use of a diary, it is possible to say that it was enormously helpful because students had many options to learn English and at the same time have fun. The use of a journal permitted them to explore different boundaries that they just were not interested in before, students started to show mutualism towards English especially in writing every single story they experienced during the day.

The data collected was analyzed following a structure which facilitates its comprehension. For instance, Hatch (2002) highly recommends eight important steps to be taken into account while organizing and analyzing the data gathered. First, he asserts that it is important to re-reading in order to get a whole sense. Second, reviewing

impressions previously recorded. Third, write down important impressions gathered from the data and put them into memos. Fourth, to study memos in order to get further information orderly. Fifth, re-reading data and coding what is important. Sixth, to write a draft summary. Seventh, reviewing interpretation with the participants and finally, to write a revised summary which identifies the codes and important elements.

Hatch (2002), asseverates that accomplishing a good data analysis is an extremely detailed task which deserves attention. Hence, when analyzing the data for this project, the information was organized in: first, questioners. Second, diaries and third observations-recorded classes. To better understand the data the pre-service teacher had to organize the information with MAXQDA in order to re-read and better organize the codes. Once the codes were defined depending on the data they were categorized and explained.

## **FINDINGS**

Findings are guided by the general question and the sub-questions proposed for the research. Once the data was analyzed following the procedure above, four principal themes emerged alluding the issue, describing and giving future clues to use this marvelous pedagogical tool for English learners.

### **Diaries as a factor of motivation and interest**

Working with diaries was extremely helpful and rewarding since the population chosen was sixth-grade students. Diaries can be seen as a tool of motivation and interest because they enhance the students to learn English. During the first classroom observations, it was possible to notice that students were not concerned in learning English at all, they just preferred to speak and copy what the teacher wrote on the board. When presenting the methodology to work with diaries, students showed

motivation towards how they were going to manage their diaries like and the activities they were going to do during their classes, one of the students *asseverated that he was so excited to have his own diary, he said it was going to write every single story he had...* (Pablo's diary). Camille asserted on his questioner that for her, diaries were a way to express herself and write without restrictions. Hence, the use of this pedagogical tool changed student's perception towards what learning a foreign language was, some of the students affirmed that for them, diaries were something great for writing and something new in their educational setting. For instance, Martha said, *"I am so happy to learn differently and not just with the book we always use for the classes, the teacher has got good ideas for us to learn and write, I am starting to love English"*. (Questioner 2 and diary). Furthermore, according to the questioner 2, question number 5, most of the students affirmed that diaries were a motivating, useful funny way to learn English.

### **Advantages and disadvantages when working with diaries**

Using a different pedagogical tool in a group which has always followed a different path is not an easy job, most of the professionals may be afraid of failure. Advantages and disadvantages emerged when implementing this pedagogical tool. Some of the most important advantages when using diaries were the possibilities of writing activities the teacher can use. For example, the students had to write five words but those words were scrambled in order for another student to organize them. In Camille's diary, she wrote *"Teacher I really love this activity because it permits me to think and at the same time it is funny to see who organizes the words first, I just love this activity"* In addition, diaries permit students to express themselves and to write about what they like the most. Pablo's diary, *"I prefer writing about my favorite music than writing about something else. I have learned a lot of new words and now I am writing better than I used to"* there is a myriad of possibilities when using a diary, it is

just a matter of imagination and creativity. Analogous to the advantages, it is possible to find some mishaps when trying to adapt the diary to some specific activities such as listening. For instance, Daniel through his diary suggested using the diary when working on listening which was kind of complicated because of the level. Otherwise, the writing and reading activities fit perfectly.

### **Communication on the top**

Using diaries was not just a tool for improving writing and vocabulary, it increased an important aspect which was the communication teacher-student. Most of the students affirmed to have enhanced their communication with the teacher and peers. For instance, Martha said *“for me now is easier to express how I feel like, sometimes I prefer writing than speaking”* they were free to tell me whatever they wanted, as teachers it is even better to get to know students using a pedagogical tool as diaries. For example, when reading the diaries every Friday, it was possible to evidence problems that students had at home, sometimes with their family and sometimes with their peers, one of the students wrote that his father was going to jail, some other wrote that they were having economical and family issues. All this permits the professional to understand the reality in which students live, being sometimes alien to teachers and reinforcing the connection that must exist between teacher-students.

### **Practices updating regularly**

The profit does not stop there, professionals can take much more advantage of this pedagogical tool. The educational setting is enormously varied, hence, diaries allow the professional not only to connect with students but to hone his/her own practices. Students' comments and suggestions towards the classes they have helped considerably professionals in terms of improvements. For instance, Martha wrote on her

diary *“I think the teacher should let the students which backwards talk, the first ones are always the ones who talk and participate”* this permits the professional to reflect and think that something is not working and it must be corrected as soon as possible. Diaries are an excellent tool to increase professional self-reflection providing different strategies to overcome these troubles.

### **Recommendations for further research**

It is well evidenced that the use of diaries provides a plethora of suitable activities for students, they enhance them and permit them to explore their entire potential. In additions, they led self-reflection and improvements steadily. During the respective observations and application of this pedagogical tool it was evidenced that it can be used in many other aspects than just writing, as an important recommendation for teachers is to integrate as many skill as possible, this will for sure increase diaries' use and at the same time the possibilities to work in class with the different topics that may come to an English class.

## **Chapter II: Research Component**

### **Introduction**

In the context of training in the PLEX, pedagogical practices of teachers in training are emerging as one of the focuses of interest and update to study and document to improve the teaching-learning process for qualification education.

Though there is a clear interest to the obvious need to understand and transform the pedagogical practice, it is also that a great part of the local studies focuses especially on the problems of learning rather than teaching.

It was considered appropriate to formulate a project that implements a reflective approach about the practicum stage as a way of objectifying knowledge, behavior, and attitudes that guide the teaching; also as an exercise of inwardness, dipping and conscious exploration of teacher subjectivity, by asking questions and finding information for troubleshooting and even self-recognition.

### **Problem**

Many institutional subjects are assumed at school without question, these are seen as impressions, stable and unchanging features that are part of the identity and school culture. When events development without much change, the teacher risks installing in a procedure which does not allow the pedagogical development and the renovation of school culture.

Taking into account this situation which affects teachers in one way or another; it is necessary that the teaching process encourages the teacher towards reflection and improvement of her/his practices, so that these at the same time are essential elements that impact and transform their work and their future professional performance.

Anyway, the Program in Foreign Languages at the University of Pamplona embraces the reflection as a key so that students who perform their practicum stage do their self-evaluating exercise, install a critical and constructive analysis about their work in the teaching process.

## **Justification**

The formulation of this project in the context of the Integral Practicum of foreign language's students is part of the professionalizing conception of practice as a spearhead to improve educational processes in the application centers where it is executed the PRADOS'. It is considered that giving importance to the role of reflection in the teaching is the first step to understand the difficulties of the profession, the actions themselves and to be interested in the knowledge of models and approaches to address a problematic situation and instituting an analytical look at the fact. In accordance with what the educational philosopher Jhon Dewey exposed, a pioneer in the field of reflective thinking applied to education, we justify the need for this project to provide students with tools of analysis and self-observation that allow them to distinguish between Routine action and reflexive action. We consider that a reflexive approach protects agents from the traditional context of inertia, and authority that pervades the school.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objectives**

To implement reflection as a tool to transform internal pedagogical processes of the practicum.

To promote pre-service teachers' critic spirit development that allows them to analyze their pedagogical performance.

### **Specific Objectives**

To consolidate a pre-service teachers group with a critic spirit, a group able to reflect and present proposals to face any problem in their practicum.

To socialize criteria, to share ideas and guidelines to assume all pedagogical practicum aspects.

To identify and analyze the strategies used by the pre-service teachers in his/her practicum.

To implement reflective workshops and to develop didactic units that guide pre-service teachers' reflection.

The pre-service teacher will analyze his/her beliefs about teaching performance and student's behavior.

To promote pre-service teachers' critic spirit development that allows them to analyze their pedagogical performance.



## **Theoretical Framework**

The theory of the teaching profession, reflection, reflective practice and teaching practice, constitute the conceptual framework of this study. To have a greater degree of clarity on the concepts covered in close connection with this research project, we present an approach to each of them.

### **The teaching profession**

One of the key members of any educational institution is the teacher who has the function of imparting knowledge in a particular science or art but who also has among its responsibilities the integral formation of students.

### **Reflection**

Talking about reflection involves addressing different conceptions of this notion. Reflection as a process, and reflection as a theme: for this reason, to deepen their definition, two aspects are taken into account. (Correa Molina, 2010)

### **The reflection as a process**

Reflection is performed from a series of steps cyclically resulting process. According to Schön (1983) cited by Correa Molina et al (2010) reflect on the experience involves "a kind of reflective dialogue with the situation, where language would promote access to the experiences of the individual, which would extract a new structuring situation. The stages of the reflection process are evident in the following



Picture 1: The reflection as a process

### **Reflection as a thematic**

The concept of reflection is based on a topic that is related to the concept. For this and with reference to Grimmett et al (1999) cited by Correa Molina et al (2010), reflection is based on three perspectives: reflection as instrumental mediation of action, reflection and deliberation, and reflection as reconstruction experience. As for the first two perspectives, the external aspects, the source of knowledge that allows for reflection; and contextual aspects allowing the exercise of reflection on the third perspective. In turn, these perspectives have mediators to that process run; in the first instance is the action, context, colleagues and the same person who reflects.

### **Reflective Practice**

Update and qualify the University academic proposals and guide the students to new ways of relating to the world, it is necessary that teachers be questioned on their own practice and the impact it has generated; that is able to objectify their behavior and assume different roles in the pedagogical relationship.

The teacher plays a central role in today's educational world; it acts in a complex space under constant change determined by the interaction of various factors and conditions. The teaching profession requires that "teachers develop their professional knowledge in relation to changing circumstances" (Ebutt and ELLIOT: 1986). In this context, the issue of practice, class spaces requires special treatment aimed at understanding and social interaction.

### **Teaching practice**

For analysis and reflection about practice is considered adequate recourse to a conceptual operation methodologically classification practice; for this purpose the proposal Zeichner who has established several modes of practice and is assumed:

#### **Academic Practice**

It aims to prepare teachers able to reflect on their courses, so that transform into understandable structures for students.

### **Practice social efficiency**

It is achieving effective teaching by applying teaching techniques that follow from general principles to which educational research has come. In this case, reflection is a strategic decision "to select from the range of techniques available which is considered most effective."

## **Developmental**

The teaching is based on the interests and development of students, and at the same time considers teacher development as a teacher and as a person.

## **Social reconstruction**

The object of reflection is the social, economic and political context so that truly democratic relations in the classroom are encouraged and equal and fair in the social sphere.

## **Generic**

Programs refer to generical reflection, but without specifying the pretensions of programs and the contents that should reflect or strategies to encourage reflective learning

## **Critical Element of Reflective Thinking**

This element of reflective thinking relates to "the moral and ethical aspects of compassion and social justice" as posed by Sparks-Langer and Colton 1991:39. The interest in social justice and ethics in education.

These authors established classification categories of knowledge

1. Knowledge of content
2. General pedagogical knowledge

3. Curricular knowledge (materials, programs, etc.)
4. Teaching knowledge and professional configuration
5. Knowledge of students and their characteristics
6. Knowledge of educational contexts.
7. Knowledge of fundamentals: philosophical, historical, axiological

According to Georgia Spark-Langer and Amy Colton the narrative element is another of the elements of reflective thinking that are included in the present study as an instrument. This is related to the narratives of the teacher, to encourage the stories of their experiences in the classroom that are presented in many forms and fulfill diverse functions in the subjectivity, and in the constitution of subjectivity. In this component are located the teacher's journals in which they write the elaboration of reflective thought of the teacher, about their experiences of practice, objective and subjective and intersubjective.

## **Methodology**

The methodological strategy had a central axis reflection that further contemplated holding meetings for strengthening the collective practice as an initial space where the teachers' trainee talked about education and labor issues. The organization principles were autonomy, planning, and self-observation. To review the impact of the proposed reflection about this process took just a process of socialization and systematization of it.

This study undertakes a qualitative approach, from the perspective of reflection as the central approach that will contribute to the description, identification, and analysis of the pedagogic practice itself. The data collection instruments proposed are:

### **Reflective workshops**

The reflective workshops' purpose is to guide the pre-service teachers' reflection, but at the same time to socialize and share experiences of each teaching process to enrich their training and to insert new tools that allow them to transform their pedagogical practices.

### **Self-observation sheet**

Its purpose is to guide the pre-service teacher towards an own view of his/her performance as a teacher and his/her role in the classroom, and in his/her the educational community environment.

## **Narrative**

The exercise of reflection will allow pre-service teachers to express themselves about their experiences as a way to provide sense to each everyday event of teachers' life.

## **Classes' registers**

To have evidence about pre-service teachers' actions in the classroom will contribute to the analysis and reflection of a variety of aspects concerning teaching and learning process. These registers will also provide an external and constructive view of their pedagogic practices.

## **Gathering data timetable**

### **Self-reflection Schedule**

	Reflection 1	Reflection 2	Reflection 3	Reflection 4	Reflection 5
Date	From September the 4 <sup>th</sup> to the 8 <sup>th</sup> 2017	From September the 18 <sup>th</sup> to the 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2017	From October the 2 <sup>nd</sup> to the 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	From October the 16 <sup>th</sup> to the 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2017	From October the 30 <sup>th</sup> to November the 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2017
	Timetable n°1				
	Dates to send the self-reflection which were set to be sent five times during the practicum.				

## Reflection workshops schedule

	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Workshop 3
Date	The 20 <sup>th</sup> September, Wednesday at 6:00 pm	The 11 <sup>th</sup> October, Wednesday at 6:00 pm	The 1 <sup>st</sup> November, Wednesday at 6:00 pm

Timetable N°2

This timetable represents the dates in which students will meet the researchers in charge of the project in order to discuss the process of the practicum.

## Results

Reflection as a process is primordial in every single activity the human being does, we are always updating our knowledge and correcting our behaviors. Reflection strongly helps professionals to improve, during the implementation of this research project it was fruitful to use as reflection tools as narratives and class register.

Narratives provide a feedback which comes from ourselves, throughout narrative the professional can auto-evaluate his/her own process looking for different strategies to eschew the same mistakes, for instance, the narratives permitted me to notice minimal problems I had in class concerning the discipline correction, sometimes I tend to say things which may harmful students' feelings, narrative helped me to



understand that I was doing so. Furthermore, the class register is the most complete self-reflection tool since it permits the professional to have a deeper look at his practices. For instance, the classes I recorded showed me how I was teaching and talking like, I could notice that sometimes I do not let some students take part, and always ask the same ones due to this I realized that I was doing so because I was sure they were going to answer me.

To record a class permitted me to take the role of a student analyzing my own practices, I could correct much inappropriate behaviors that prevented me to fully perform in class. For instance, I noticed that in class, I did not walk all around the class letting some students out of my sight, this always permitted some students to start talking and doing some other different things. It is important to have a look at what we do and through classes, recording is possible to study every single detail in order to look for strategies to improve.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The purpose of this self-reflection process was accomplished since it aimed at promoting a critic spirit, analyze strategies used by the professional and allow the professional to improve his/her pedagogical performance. To better create a critic spirit it is important to take into account some other tools that may help professionals to have a wider self-reflection spirit, one of this is the diary because professionals maintain a continuous analysis and reflection about what may be changed and improved.

## **Chapter III: Outreach Component**

### **Introduction**

Participation in world trade, academic, cultural and economic policies has motivated the Colombian National Government to foster the learning of foreign languages in the different education sectors of the country. So that, all citizens have the opportunity to participate in cultural exchanges that will allow them to gain access to equitable conditions concerning the social development of the country.

With a view to sensitize the learning of English language in Colombia as well as creating competitive citizens, the National Ministry of Education created its bilingualism policy in 2004 whose objective is “Having Citizens that can be able to communicate in English, with international comparable standards that insert the country in the global communication processes, in the global economy and in the cultural openness”. Thus, the Ministry has been implementing a wide range of strategies in the different levels of education with regards to the accomplishment of this goal. A clear example of that is the creation of English high standards for primary and secondary education, the definition of a solid and coherence evaluation system as well as the development of training plans.

This program has been developed all over the country in which the work of the Ministry of Education, public and private universities and English institutions work has been integrated. However, the results obtained until now have not been very encouraging since many educational institutions have not been impacted by the project.

In regards to primary school, National Government tends to expand the English teaching coverage to children, since many educational institutions do not often count with an English teacher that guides the teaching and learning processes and consequently evaluations nationally applied are not very promising.

The Universidad de Pamplona in Colombia as an institution considered trainer of trainers and more specifically the Foreign Languages Degree English and French, has further approached to the reality that faces primary schools in Pamplona city regarding to the National bilingualism policy, many educational institutions of the city do not count with an English teacher to meet the educational needs of this sector.

In recognition of this reality and the consequences it generates, this social projection proposal aims at meeting both, English teaching needs of childhood population from Pamplona city and the integration of the foreign languages training of the pre-service teachers from the foreign languages degree English and French to this reality in order to decrease irregularities between the public and private area in EFL.

The governmental policies have identified the problem. Nevertheless, these needs are not normatively fulfilling. It is missing monetary support, concretely, foreign languages trainers in order to achieve a balance between the students' results and tests with the Colombian educational purposes.

## **Justification**

Learning and acquiring a foreign language allows us to be at the forefront of our actual needs. For this reason, this process is highly necessary to be implemented from the beginning of children's schooling to have at the end of the basic education

cycle some foundations that allow them to continue this learning process in the secondary education, high school, and college, in order to train more people in such area.

This project aims at raising awareness of English teaching in primary schools in the city of Pamplona contributing to the foreign language basic training that becomes necessary and primordial at these levels. For this reason, it is carried out as part of the outreach component of the practicum developed by the last semester students of the Foreign Languages Degree in the University of Pamplona, as a matter of contributing to the English teaching strengthening in the primary basic school.

The implementation of this project favors both; the institutions and the student population of Pamplona city, as well as the foreign languages program students who develop their integral practicum. This benefit results in the possibility that primary school children have contact with the foreign language and at the same time with the students who finish their university training process. Hence, they get to know the realities and educational needs of the environment in order to be able to contribute, intervening in processes that impact on the improvement of those needs.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objectives**

To attend English training needs of the primary school population in José Horacio Betancur high school in Medellín, Antioquía.

To include the English-French students' foreign language training to the educational reality in primary school.

### **Specific objectives**

To familiarize José Horacio Betancur primary students with English Fundamental knowledge.

To include Pamplona English-French Foreign language students to the learning environment in the primary.

To articulate the practicum students' training to the social projection offered by the social interaction office in the University of Pamplona.

### **Methodology**

To accomplish the goals of this component, a subproject will be implemented, "Using pictures as a ludic tool to teach English in first grade at Jose Horacio Betancur high school in Medellin, Antioquía"

### **Population**

The population will be 65 first grade students at José Horacio Betancur in Medellin, Antioquía. Students' ages range from 5 to 7 years old. The courses are first grade A and B. the reasons for choosing these students are; first they are from primary school and second according to the principal, those students needed an English teacher to impulse them towards the learning.

### **Using pictures as a ludic tool to teach English in primary**

Nowadays, teaching brings together a myriad of strategies which aim at becoming the process easier and funnier but some teachers do not use them all or at least some of them. There are books, texts, workbooks, newspapers, dictionaries that have lots of pictures that a teacher can use as a tool to catch students attention.

Today, education centers its attention on a symbolic system so why some teacher does not use it? For instance, Llorente (2000) asserts that the symbolic system can represent a variety of dimensions concerning content and demanding different kinds of mental activities in this way it is possible to think that this provokes different learning processes (p.4).

Most of the students do not take seriously the symbolic system that a great variety of books have. Llorente (2000) affirms that there is something called “recognition memory” which shows the marvelous capacity a person has to be able to recognize a picture seen in advance, this seems to provoke a positive effect in our memory recognizing; meaning, complexity, color, movement and so on (p.6).

Working with pictures helps students to remember easily and it is advantageous because almost every single material has a picture. According to Goldstein (2013), it is important to take advantage of pictures because today it is impossible to think of a teaching process without flashcards, wall charts, posters, photos, books pictures and so on (p.123) Following this idea, the activities in primary will be focused on pictures in order to teach them English and have fun at the same time.

## Schedule in Primary

Class date (all Wednesdays 4  
hours in the morning, from 7:30  
am 9:05 am (2 hours) to 9:50 am  
to 10:30 (2 hours)

	First grade A	First grade B
1 class, the 30 <sup>th</sup> August	X	X
2 class, the 6 <sup>th</sup> September	X	X
3 class, the 13 <sup>th</sup> September	X	X
4 class, the 20 <sup>th</sup> September	X	X
5 class, the 27 <sup>th</sup> September	X	X
6 class, the 4 <sup>th</sup> October	X	X
7 class, the 11 <sup>th</sup> October	X	X
8 class, the 18 <sup>th</sup> October	X	X
9 class, the 25 <sup>th</sup> October	X	X
10 class, the 1 <sup>st</sup> November	X	X
Total hours	40 hours	

Table,5

In this table you will find the schedule of primary in which it is contained the hour of the class and the  
date

## **Results**

Since this project aims at raising awareness of English teaching in primary schools, the objectives were achieved being a fruitful experience helping students in primary with their English learning process.

The schedule for primary school was fully accomplished in order to fulfill the main purpose of the outreach component which was to use pictures as a ludic tool. The courses taken for this project were two first grades, grade 1-A, and grade 1-B.

Working with pictures was advantageous since children feel more attracted to what is colorful and pictured. Pictures are a tool that unfolds many possibilities to take advantage from. For instance, I worked with different animals in class and what I used as a tool were squares which step by step became an animal. This permitted the students to draw and at the same time to represent an animal through a picture.

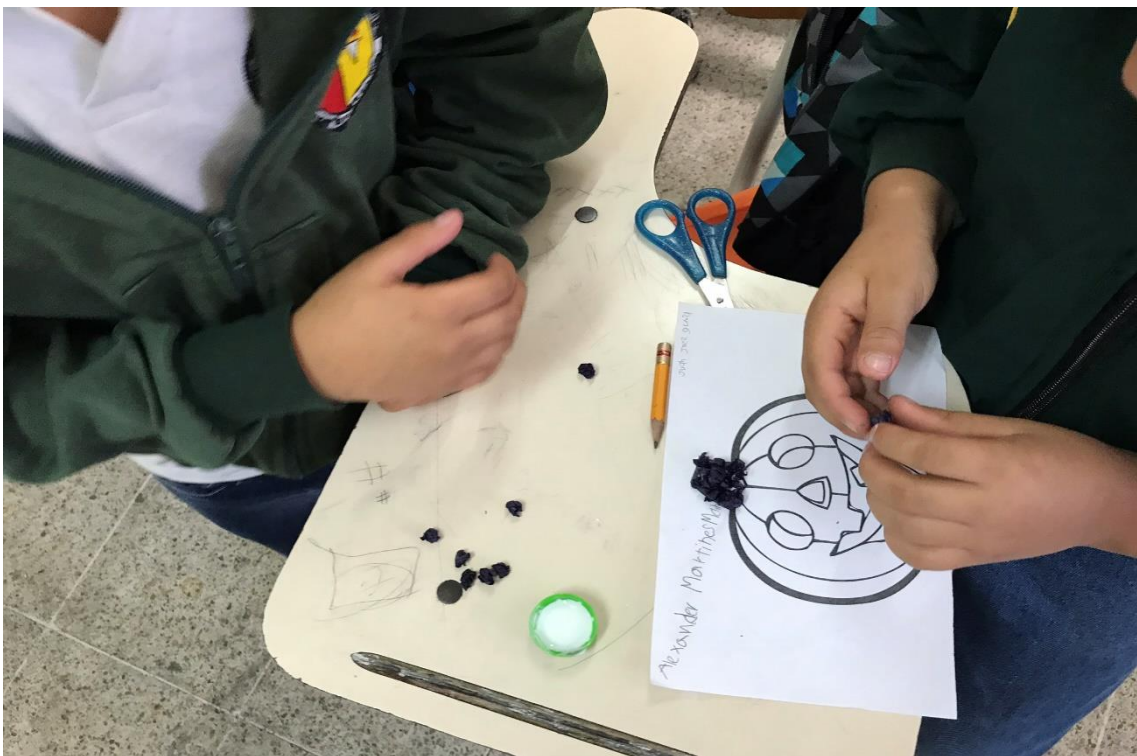




Picture 1. Exercise animals. Students had to follow some instructions to transform the square into an animal and then to color it.

This activity was key when learning the animals by heart because while they were drawing, they repeated the animals several times and at the end, they got a picture of the animals being this enormously representative for them.

Furthermore, I worked with pictures when learning everything about Halloween, we decorated a pumpkin or a ghost with color paper which was a playful and entertainment activity.



*Picture 2 -3, students decorating the vocabulary we were practicing in class.*

The classes in primary were funnier and more interesting because students always ask me to come more hours, they started to love English classes like that.

The symbolic system that pictures offer students is limitless, they can learn vocabulary, associate words, understand settings and so on.



## **Conclusions and recommendations**

Pictures are incredible when teaching English to children, they get concentrated and curious, associating easily the words since they learn almost everything visually, so professionals can take advantage of this learning process to reinforce the foreign language and at the same time to hone their native one.

I highly recommend using different kinds of activities with pictures such as coloring, completing, guessing the picture, flashcards and so on. This will become the class varied and students will maintain their motivation towards class. One common mistake professional makes when using the pedagogical tool, is looking for pictures which are very difficult to understand or are not clear for them.

## **Chapter IV: Administrative Component**

### **Introduction**

José Horacio Betancur high school organizes different activities involving all the education community. One important aspect of being a teacher trainee is taking part in different activities outside the classroom because this shows a sense of belonging. This section is devoted to the extracurricular activities in which the teacher trainee can take part of. Activities such as; meetings, cultural activities and so on.

### **Justification**

To be a teacher means to care about the students and the school. Teaching is not only giving a lecture or being in the classroom, teaching is being involved in every single activity which concerns the high school. That is why this section aims at promoting the teacher trainee participation during the cultural events or meetings already proposed in José Horacio Betancur agenda.

This component offers services to the institution, the teacher trainee is opened to different invitations by the high school, assuring a committed participation in order to make an impact in the school.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

To play an important role at José Horacio Betancur High school concerning different activities in which the teacher trainee can be invited.

### **Specific Objectives**

To contribute with something valuable to the possible cultural activities or meetings

To extend the boundaries and give support to José Horacio Betancur students concerning possible cultural activities which might involve the language

To be willing to participate in any teachers meeting

## Methodology

To take part of events means to be able to provide something valuable from the personal and professional dimension, this is why the administrative component seeks to contribute with the institution by giving the teacher trainee an important space inside and outside the institution.

The methodology to follow in this case is to attend the meetings and cultural events of José Horacio Betancur high school, contributing and highlighting the role of teacher and the University of Pamplona prestigious, provoking an impact in the community.

## Schedule

In this schedule, there are all the events and meetings proposed by the high school and in bold the events and meetings in which the teacher trainee has been invited.

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### September

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Viernes, 1 sep 2017 (Cierre de Sistema, digitación de notas)

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Viernes, 8 sep 2017 (Entrega de notas a padres de familia 3° periodo)

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Lunes, 11 sep 2017 (Reunión de profesores)

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### October

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Viernes, 6 oct 2017 (**Entrega de informes parciales tercer periodo-semifinal maratón de programación**)

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Lunes, 9 oct 2017 (**Actividades de desarrollo institucional-receso estudiantil**)

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Viernes, 13 oct 2017 (Taller mañanas UDEM)

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Lunes, 16 oct 2017 (Inicio de clases)

---

Martes, 17 oct 2017 (Semana de la convivencia)

---

Miércoles, 18 oct 2017 (Capacitación en línea sobre la maratón)

---

Viernes, 27 oct 2017 (**Gigacampus**)

---

November

---

Miércoles, 1 nov 2017 (**Digitación de notas**)

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Jueves, 2 nov 2017 (Fundación de Medellín)

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Viernes, 3 nov 2017 (**Final de maratón de programación-maratón junior  
estudiantes de 5-6**)

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Timetable n°6 institutional calendars from October to November

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## Results

Extending the boundaries and offering a complete teacher trainee service was the core of this component, the objectives were fully achieved offering an extracurricular service. I attended different activities in the high school but the more relevant one was “Encuentro deportivo intercolegiados” in which as an English teacher I took part in, organizing a presentation which was narrated by students from 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

To prepare students’ speech, there were necessary 10 minutes every English class. To avoid interrupting the normal class procedure, we decided to take the last ten minutes, during this time, students had the opportunity to prepare descriptions about different football features, such as; field organization, the uniform and different important rules.





I also joined the cultural week in which students had to do many activities, for instance, one of the activities was the educational and professional day in which students received information about the universities and degrees they can choose. There was an opportunity to talk about the University of Pamplona, so I told the students where the university was and the educational options it offers.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX N°1, Non participant-observation format

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University of Pamplona  
Foreign Languages Program

#### Classroom Observation Protocol

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

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Observation No: \_\_\_\_\_ No of Students: \_\_\_\_\_

Objective:

Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

|

Main goal of the class:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of the setting:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time	Description	Reflective Notes

## APPENDIX 2, FIRST QUESTIONNER



University of Pamplona  
Faculty of Education  
Languages and Communication Department  
Foreign Languages Degree English-French  
Practicum first questionner  
Pamplona

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

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Questionner # \_\_\_\_\_

Objective: This first questionner aims at providing a deeper students' perceptions about the diaries they are using as a tool to learn as well as the methodology the teacher has during the class to motivate them and make them feel comfortable.

### Questionner N° 1

El siguiente tiene como objetivo conocer la percepción de los estudiantes con respecto a los diarios que usan en las clases de inglés así como la metodología del profesor y las herramientas que usa para que los estudiantes se motivan y se sientan bien en el salón de clases. La información aquí suministrada será tratada de manera ética, profesional y confidencial, y usada únicamente para la recolección de datos del estudio investigativo "El uso del diario personal como herramienta pedagógica para mejorar la producción escrita y el vocabulario en Inglés"

¿Cómo llenar el cuestionario?

Es muy fácil llenarlo, solo debes colocar una X en la respuesta que consideres adecuada. En caso de encontrar una pregunta abierta las cuales estarán señaladas con una carita feliz 😊 deberás escribir una respuesta.

¡Empecemos!

1. ¿Te gusta trabajar con diarios como herramienta para el aprendizaje?

Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2. Los diarios te parecen:

\_\_\_ motivadores, útiles y divertidos.

\_\_\_ aburridos e inútiles.

3. ¿La metodología del profesor te gusta?

5. 😊 ¿Te gustaría agregarle algo al diario para que este sea mas interesante?

Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

¿Por qué?

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6. 😊 ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de la metodología del profesor en sus clases?

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7. 😊 ¿Qué te gustaría que el profesor mejorara en las clases de inglés?

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8. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes actividades te han ayudado a memorizar más vocabulario?

\_\_\_ sopas de letras

\_\_\_ juego del ahorcado

\_\_\_ las cinco palabras de cada página en el diario

\_\_\_ crucigramas

\_\_\_ organizar la palabra

\_\_\_ competencia de pronunciación

## APPENDIX 3, SECOND QUESTIONNER



University of Pamplona  
Faculty of Education  
Languages and Communication Department  
Foreign Languages Degree English-French  
Practicum first questioner  
Pamplona

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

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Questioner # \_\_\_\_\_

Objective: This second questioner aims at providing a deeper students' perceptions about the English classes and the teacher's methodology as well as different perceptions towards new possible activities to implement.

### Questioner N° 2

El siguiente tiene como objetivo conocer la percepción de los estudiantes con respecto a las clases de inglés así como la metodología del profesor y las herramientas que usa para que los estudiantes se motiven y se sientan bien en el salón de clases. La información aquí suministrada será tratada de manera ética, profesional y confidencial, y usada únicamente para la recolección de datos del estudio investigativo "El uso del diario personal como herramienta pedagógica para mejorar la producción escrita y el vocabulario en Inglés"

¿Cómo llenar el cuestionario?

Es muy fácil llenarlo, solo debes colocar una X en la respuesta que consideres adecuada. En caso de encontrar una pregunta abierta las cuales estarán señaladas con una carita feliz 😊 deberás escribir una respuesta.

¡Empecemos!

1. ¿Te gusta la metodología del profesor?

Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

2. la metodología del profesor te parece:

\_\_\_divertida e interesante

\_\_\_aburrida y poco útil

\_\_\_ ~~buena~~ y mejor

3. ¿Cuál de los siguientes aspectos describe mejor la metodología del profesor?

\_\_\_divertida

\_\_\_justa (trata a todos por igual)

\_\_\_ Injusta (hay preferencias)

\_\_\_ Variada

\_\_\_monótona

\_\_\_muy dinámica

4. ¿el profesor hace que el salón sea un lugar cómodo para todos los estudiantes?

Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

5. 😊 ¿Qué te gustaría que el profesor mejorara en sus clases?

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6. 😊 ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de las clases que el profesor lleva?

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7. 😊 ¿Qué te gustaría que el profesor hiciera para que la clase fuera más completa y dinámica?

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PERIOD (Semester):	LEVEL (level):	WEEK (Semester) N°:
TEACHER (Profesor): Luis Carlos Figueroa	LEVEL (level): ELEMENTARY <b>Unit 5th SEMESTER</b>	DATE/ DAY <b>2 week- semana del 4 al 8 de noviembre</b>
<b>LINGUISTIC OBJECTIVE (Objetivo Lingüístico):</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVE (Objetivo comunicativo):</b>	<b>SOCIO-CULTURAL OBJECTIVE (Objetivo sociocultural):</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Al final de esta secuencia el estudiante será capaz utilizar el presente continuo de una manera lógica para describir acciones realizadas en serie.</li> <li>Al final de la secuencia el estudiante será capaz de utilizar un vocabulario acorde al tema reconociendo su contexto y significado.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Al final de esta secuencia el estudiante será capaz de hablar sobre las actividades que realiza en un determinado momento.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>El estudiante será capaz de diferenciar la pronunciación de diferentes palabras dependiendo el país.</li> </ul>
<b>GENERAL COMPETENCES (competencias generales)</b>	<b>PREVIOUS SEQUENCES (secuencia previa)</b>	<b>TOPIC (tema)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaking</li> <li>Writing</li> <li>Listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs and professions</li> <li>Present simple</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present continuous</li> </ul>

STAGES (etapas)	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY (Descripción de la actividad)	TIME (tiempo)	SKILLS (habilidades)	MATERIAL
Opening	Para dar inicio a la clase es importante saludar a los estudiantes y preguntarles como estuvo su fin de semana, luego decirles lo que se va a trabajar durante la semana y hacer un pequeño repaso sobre el vocabulario aprendido la clase previa.	10 min	hablar	• tablero
Warm up	La actividad de warm up consiste en mostrar a los estudiantes para recibir el próximo tema, por ende, es importante hacer algo que active su atención. La siguiente actividad se llama me estoy comiendo que en inglés es "I am <b>feeding</b> ". La <b>actividad</b> consiste en escribir a los estudiantes que realicen ciertas actividades mientras que el profesor dice I am <b>feeding</b> , varias veces y cuando este deje de decirlo ellos deben quedarse quietos como estatuas.			
	<b>Social Aims:</b>			
	I am walking			
	I am jumping			
	I am turning around			
	I am sitting down and standing up			

## Appendix 4 , planning example.