

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS' WRITTEN PRODUCTION**

**IMPROVEMENT OF THE WRITTEN PRODUCTION IN ENGLISH IN TENTH  
GRADERS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CREATIVE WRITING  
WORKSHOPS SUCH AS SHORT STORIES AND AUTOBIOGRAPHIES**

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**FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

**DEGREE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES ENGLISH- FRENCH**

**PRACTICUM PROCESS**

**PAMPLONA**

**2019-1**

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**APPROVAL NOTE**

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**Practicum Committee Signature**

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**Cooperative Teacher Signature**

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# IMPROVEMENT OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS' WRITTEN PRODUCTION

## General presentation

The main purpose of this project is to improve tenth graders written production in the public institution Mercedes Abrego school and apply both knowledge and skills acquired during the Bachelor Degree Program in Foreign Languages English-French as a pre-service teacher.

This study is divided into four main components: Pedagogical, research, outreach and administrative component. These factors are part of the practicum process, each of them contains different aspects for the teaching and learning development in an integral way both in pre-service teachers and in students.

Thus, the pedagogical component contains the proposal designed by the trainee teacher, in order to implement a strategy and apply it within her classes, the statement of the problem to resolve, justification, objectives, the theoretical framework, literature review, pedagogical and research methodology used to develop the appropriate procedures For reaching the expected results which have been mentioned in this section. Afterwards, the research component is focused on the reflection as an important and transformative tool in order to self-assess teaching training process. In this way, the outreach component, is emphasized on extends the pre-service teachers benefits to other parts of the community, more specifically in primary school groups with the objective of attending the students training needs in English. Finally, in the administrative component, the pre-service teacher is an active member of the institution with the objective of having a direct involvement with the experience that the teachers have in the real context which implies to be part of extracurricular activities organized by the institution.

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## Introduction

Currently, English learning is an essential part of a person's integral education. According to Otto (2000) in the globalization era, English is the great international language, a "lingua franca" that every day is used more in almost all areas of knowledge and human development. The advantages of having the ability to understand, speak and write the English language are innumerable among stand out: acquire scholarships in other countries, access research and development projects, attend international events, have access to information that is found in this language such as: articles, magazines, books, videos, courses, among others. The learning of this language cannot be seen only as a luxury or a pastime, but as an obvious need.

In this way, the Ministry of National Education through programs such as "Colombia Bilingüe" and "Colombia Very Well", promotes the English learning and establishes some specific parameters and competences for each level as well as tools that seek for students to reach an English level that allows them to communicate, interact and share knowledge, while enhancing their human and professional capacities (MEN, 2014). Thus, for the development of the four skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading) it is necessary to have tools that allow their development; and for the students to reach the required level according to the referents established in the Common European framework. That is why this research project will focus on one of these four skills: Writing, which by the implementation of short stories seek to improve the development of this skill in Mercedes Abrego school tenth graders. This is because the creative writing is one of the main classroom strategies that stimulate the imagination and increase the analytical capacity of students in school environments (Soto, P. 2016). Furthermore, through this,

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students can apply their previous knowledge of English as well as learn vocabulary and communicate their thoughts improving in this way their written production.

On the other hand, the elements of qualitative research are taking into account for the development of this study, since it allows the description and analysis of the events in the implementation of the creative writing and the development of students' written production.

In addition, due to its characteristics and nature elements, this research is framed within the action research defined by Creswell (2012) as the research that deals with the study of a specific social problem that requires a solution and that affects a certain group of people, this kind of research is characterized by its flexibility, since it is necessary to make adjustments during the study progress to help students in the English learning field, until the solution to the problem is reached. The implementation of it is necessary to solve the problem observed which was the lack of students' written production spaces in the context this research is carried out.

The pedagogical impact of the research is oriented to improve tenth graders' written production in English inside the classroom using creative writing as a didactic tool for the students to be motivated for learning and writing in the English language.

### **Justification**

The teaching task today, is based on students and their way of learning, students who feel motivated, have better results in learning a second language. According to Pourhosein, Leong, and Saburi (2012), the success of any action is dependent on the extent to which persons try to get their goal, along with their desire to do so. Without desire to

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learn, it is very difficult for learners to gain effective learning. For this reason teachers should implement innovative and creative classes to reach students' attention and interest for English.

During the classroom observations made in the 10 grade Mercedes Abrego school, it was identified the necessity of capturing students interest on the English class and to promote writing activities through which students could implement their knowledge and could express their thoughts due to the fact that the class becomes monotonous and the study of English is limited to the development of grammar exercises in the book and the students tend to get bored. For instance, the practitioner is forced to implement new teaching methods and processes that benefit not only the students but also the teachers, giving them a new kind of motivation for both to learn and to teach.

The purpose of this study is to benefit the tenth graders through the didactic and writing activities that have been planned such as short stories and autobiographies writing workshops offering them the necessary tools to produce in the English language based on the previous knowledge they have acquired during their academic life in the institution. Moreover, this research aims to improve the students' written production in order to become an active member of each class opening the doors to new thoughts and critical positions. Additionally, it will be noticeable that student will not only improve their writing skill, but they will learn new vocabulary, expressions and cultural facts from different countries.

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## Objectives

### General Objective

- To improve the written production in English in tenth graders through the implementation of creative writing workshops such as short stories and autobiographies.

### Specific Objectives

- To promote the development of critical thinking on students.
- To promote in pre-service teachers the development of a critical spirit that allows them to analyze their pedagogical work.
- To meet the English Teaching demands of child population in primary school in Cúcuta.
- To serve the needs of English formation of children in primary schools where the teacher-practitioner develops her project.
- To integrate the foreign languages education of the students belonging to the Bachelor Degree Program in Foreign Languages English-French to the educational reality in primary school in Cúcuta.
- To participate in all additional activities that the high school proposes: events, meetings and extracurricular activities, and integrate all these events to the experience of being a teacher.



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## **Institutional observation**

During the execution of the integral practice as well as at the beginning of a work in any institution, the teacher-practitioner must follow some necessary steps for the correct development of the same; the first step is to know the school in an integral and detailed manner. This task is fundamental to start the execution of any activity, to know the teaching staff of the school, the administrative plant, its functions; the people who offer their services, such as the cafeteria and the restaurant; those in charge of order and cleaning the educational institution; and even the people who surround the school. For this reason it is vital to know the coexistence handbook as well as those who are part of school governance.

On the other hand, it is important to know the rules set by the school for the correct behavior of all its members, the manual and the coexistence plan, which are the rights and duties of each member of the school and also the sanctions to be applied if one of these rules is broken; on the other hand, the community management program which includes the parent school, the risk plan, the evacuation routes in case of an emergency are some other factors which are going to be reviewed. For this reason, the teacher-practitioner must be an active participant, a counselor and an integral professional inside the secondary school to provide a complete service to the community.

## **Topographical location of the school**

The Commercial Technical Institute Mercedes Abrego, was created under ordinance number 28 of November 21, 1960; for the assembly of Norte de Santander. Currently, the school that houses students from the sixth to eleventh grade is located on Avenida Libertadores Calle 8N in the city of Cúcuta, Norte de Santander department. The primary school is located at # 4a- a, Av. 13 East # 4a68 from the same city.

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### Identification of the authorities

CHARGE	NAME
President	Gloria Teresa Sepúlveda Villamizar
Academic coordinator	Eddy Virginia Rodríguez
Academic coordinator	Victor Manuel Neira Rubio
Representative of coordinators	Jesus Nain Contreras Contreras
President of the parent council	Omar Eduardo Pineda Mora
President of the student council	Diego Fernando Rada Quintero
Representative of teachers	Miryam Teresa Becerra
Representative of parents	Julio Alberto Gallo
Student personero	Johan Antonio Chavez Rozo
School orienter	Javier Leonardo Torrado

*Table 1. Identification of the school authorities*

*Phylosophy of the institution*

The harmonious social coexistence in the school starts from the recognition that all are human beings with rights to enjoy and duties to fulfill and that the students are children and young people that must be trained to be frank, direct, sincere, critical, active, responsible, full of initiatives and loving. Therefore, the educational community seeks to ensure a broad, flexible, motivating student life, allowing the student to manifest, within an established order, their concerns and desires, their difficulties and successes. Mutual trust between teachers, students and parents is a fundamental pillar of this purpose.

### Mission

Provide education with the highest level of excellence

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## **Vision**

In the year 2025, the Technical Institute Mercedes Ábrego will be recognized as one of the best schools in the country, obtaining in the ISCE - Synthetic Index of Educational Quality - a score above 9.0, in the elementary, secondary and middle levels.

## **Institutional principles**

*Democratic participation.* The educational community will take an active part in the decision-making that is incumbent upon each institution, promoting activities that stimulate constructive debate, the exercise of rights and compliance with institutional norms.

*Efficiency.* It will be sought that the established objectives and goals are fulfilled in time and with the appropriate elements, in a rights approach, that is, that there is equity in the distribution of resources, the learning and pedagogical supports that the students receive and in the satisfaction of the needs of all the levels of the educational community.

*Integration.* All students will be guaranteed access to learning, making the curricula more flexible, seeking the inclusion of students with special educational needs, if this is the case.

*Good deal.* The institution will tend that the communication between all the members of the educational community is assertive, cordial and respectful. It will be looked for so that there is an increasingly fraternal coexistence, more cheerful and with guarantee of the rights of all.

## **Institutional objectives**

- To develop a management system that allows quality education.

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- To train talented students, looking for each day they are more cheerful, more fraternal and more competent.

### **Main aspects of the coexistence handbook of the educational institution**

The coexistence handbook of the Mercedes Abrego educational institution has the name : "For a more joyful, fraternal and healthy school competition every day". This rulebok is the document that contemplates the fundamental principles that normatively govern the processes of the organization and socialization of a community. As such, it is the product of the consensus of all the members of the institution and bases the harmony, good behavior, respect and human excellence, individual and collective.

In addition, it is an institutional guide that guides and informs about the rights and duties of the students and their relationships with the other levels of the educational community, becoming a support document where the norms that enable harmonious coexistence among students. teaching staff, managers and parents are recorded, providing an educational and formative environment, a participative climate and an authentic social coexistence. For the elaboration of this manual, the pronouncements and jurisprudence of the Constitutional Court were taken into account, which makes the provisions here presented not only comply with the educational, legal and regulatory standards, but also the tutela rulings, to protect children and adolescents enrolled.

### **Organization chart of the educational institution**

In this organizational chart, it is possible to find the order of the authorities of the educational institution.

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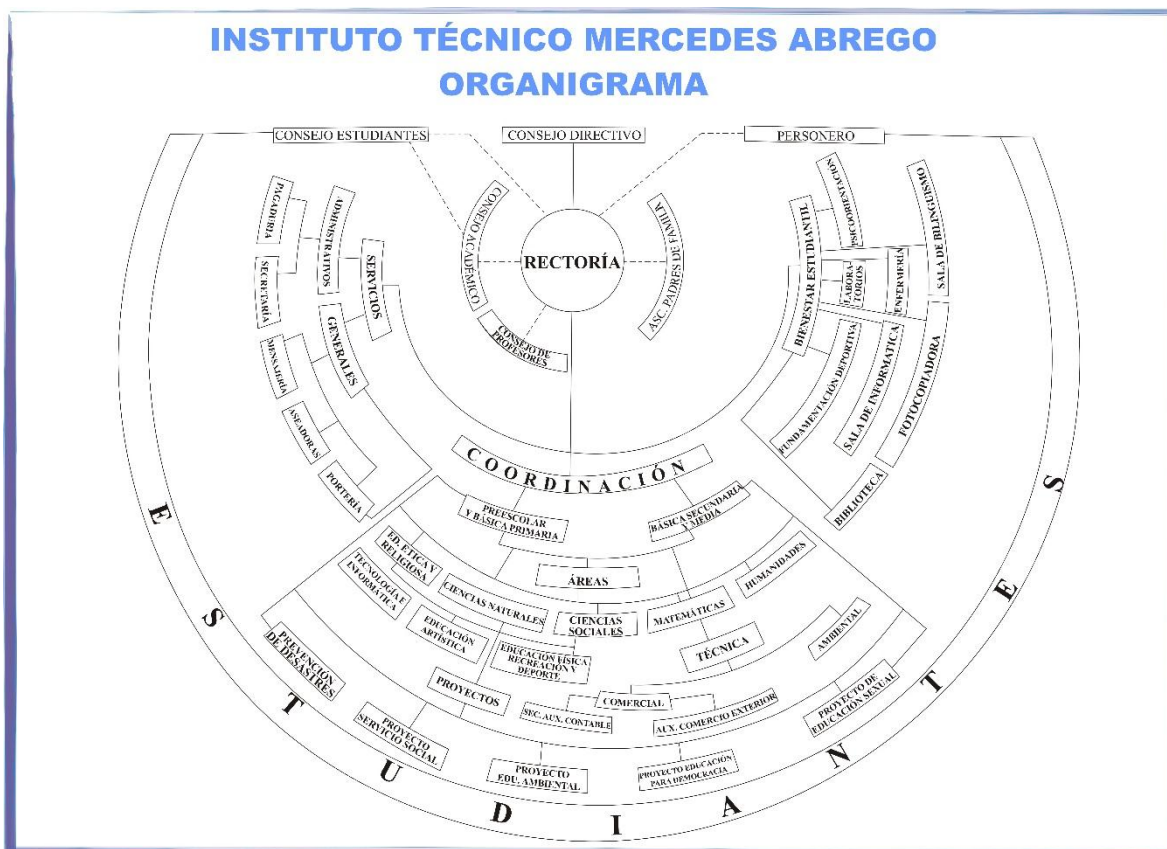


Figure 1. School organization chart

## Relevant students' rights and duties

Rights	Duties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Obtain at the beginning of the school year, the total and clear information about the norms and canons that this Handbook of Coexistence promotes, to abide by conviction and fully comply with what the law promotes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Fulfill timely in the delivery of work, presentation of tasks, reinforcement activities on scheduled dates, except in justified absence.</li> <li>✓ To have their own books, supplies and other necessary elements for</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To be respected in their integrity and personal dignity.</li> <li>✓ Not to be discriminated against because of physical limitations, race, sexual orientation or religion.</li> <li>✓ To know in a timely manner the evaluation criteria of each area / subject in each period.</li> <li>✓ To participate actively in the teaching-learning process and request clarifications and reinforcements when the topics have not been sufficiently clear.</li> <li>✓ To be recognized for his outstanding academic performance and his excellent attitude of coexistence through incentives and distinctions corresponding to achievements, merits and triumphs.</li> </ul>	<p>good school performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To attend punctually to class and other activities programmed by the institution.</li> <li>✓ To participate actively in the different academic activities and pedagogical projects programmed in the different areas of knowledge.</li> <li>✓ To claim in a timely manner, according to the calendar, the plans and schedules of recovery or curricular leveling.</li> <li>✓ To respect the notes and observations that are recorded in their workbooks, workshops, qualification templates, evaluations or any other document that belongs to the teaching staff and to the institution's file</li> </ul>
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*Table 2. Relevant students' rights and duties*

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## Organization chart of the educational institution

In this organizational chart, it is possible to find the curriculum of the educational institution.


 MUNICIPIO DE SAN JOSÉ DE CÚCUTA SECRETARÍA DE EDUCACIÓN MUNICIPAL INSTITUTO TÉCNICO MERCEDES ABREGO																		
PLAN DE ESTUDIOS 2018																		
NIVELES	PREES	BÁSICA PRIMARIA					BÁSICA SECUNDARIA					MEDIA						
ÁREAS / GRADOS	TRANSIC	1º	2º	3º	4º	5º	6º	7º	8º	9º	10º CI	10º CONT	10º AA	10º GA	11º CI	11º CONT	11º AA	11º GA
<b>HUMANIDADES</b>	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Lengua Castellana		6	6	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
L.O.C.				3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>INGLÉS</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>MATEMÁTICAS</b>	4	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Matemáticas/Álgebra		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Estadística		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Geometría		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1								
<b>CIENCIAS NATURALES</b>	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Biología							2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Química		3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Física							1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>CIENCIAS SOCIALES</b>	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Geografía, historia y democracia							4	4	4	4								
Ciencias políticas y económicas		3	3	3	3	3					2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>FILOSOFÍA</b>											2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>EDUCACIÓN RELIGIOSA</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>ÉTICA Y VALORES</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>EDUCACIÓN ARTÍSTICA</b>	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>EDUCACIÓN FÍSICA</b>	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>TECNOLOGÍA E INFORMÁTICA</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>TÉCNICA COMERCIAL</b>											8	8	8	0	8	8	8	0
COMERCIO INTERNACIONAL											8				8			
CONTABILIDAD												8				8		
ASISTENCIA ADMINISTRATIVA													8				8	
<b>TÉCNICA AMBIENTAL</b>											0	0	0	8	0	0	0	8
GESTIÓN AMBIENTAL														8				8
<b>TOTALES</b>	20	28	28	28	28	28	30	30	30	30	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

Figure 2. Syllabus

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 MUNICIPIO DE SAN JOSÉ DE CÚCUTA SECRETARÍA DE EDUCACIÓN MUNICIPAL INSTITUTO TÉCNICO MERCEDES ABREGO								
PLAN DE ESTUDIOS 2018 MEDIA TÉCNICA								
NIVEL	MEDIA							
ÁREAS / GRADOS	10° CONT	10° A.A.	10° CI	10°GA	11° CONT	11° A.A.	11° CI	11°GA
<b>MODALIDAD COMERCIAL</b>								
<b>CONTABILIDAD</b>	<b>8</b>				<b>8</b>			
Legislación	2				1			
Administración de documentos	1				0			
Administración de empresas	1				0			
Contabilización de operaciones	4				5			
Contabilidad sistematizada	0				2			
<b>ASISTENCIA ADMINISTRATIVA</b>		<b>8</b>				<b>8</b>		
Procesamiento de la información		0				2		
Producción de documentos		2				2		
Organización de eventos		0				1		
Organización de documentos		2				1		
Servicio al cliente		2				2		
Información contable		2				0		
<b>COMERCIO INTERNACIONAL</b>			<b>8</b>				<b>8</b>	
Transacciones comerciales			1				2	
Organización de procesos de importación y exportación			3				3	
Costos de la cadena de producción			2				0	
Diligenciamiento de documentos			0				2	
Procesamiento de la información			2				1	
<b>MODALIDAD AMBIENTAL</b>								
<b>GESTIÓN AMBIENTAL</b>				<b>8</b>				<b>8</b>
Ecología				2				2
Política y Legislación Ambiental				1				1
Desarrollo sostenible				1				1
Proyectos ambientales				1				1
Química I				2				2
Matemáticas I				1				1

Figure 3. Syllabus-technical media

## The supervisor's weekly schedule

The teacher in charge of the English course, Luz Stella Chinchilla, has a schedule according to the high school main calendar. She works with 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders who have a length of two or three institutional hours (55 min) per week with each one of them.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 6:00- 6:55	10 <sup>th</sup> grade A		11 <sup>th</sup> grade C		10 <sup>th</sup> grade C
2		Group	10 <sup>th</sup> grade A	10 <sup>th</sup> grade D	



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6 :55- 7 :50		Meeting			
3 7 :50 – 8 :45	11 <sup>th</sup> grade A	10 <sup>th</sup> grade C			11 <sup>th</sup> grade C
4 9 :15 – 10:10			11 <sup>th</sup> grade B	11 <sup>th</sup> grade D	
5 10:10 –11:05	10 <sup>th</sup> grade D	11 <sup>th</sup> grade D			10 <sup>th</sup> grade B
6 11:05-12 :00	10 <sup>th</sup> grade B	Attention to parents			
7 12:00-12:55		11 <sup>th</sup> grade A		11 <sup>th</sup> grade B	

Table 3. Supervisor's academic schedule

### Symbols of the institution

#### Mercedes Abrego School's flag



Figure 4. Mercedes Abrego School's flag

# IMPROVEMENT OF THE 10<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS' WRITTEN PRODUCTION

## Institutional shield



*Figure 5. Mercedes Abrego Institutional shield*

## Pedagogical aspects

| During the observation week, there were identified pedagogical aspects related to classrooms, discipline, planning lessons and significant support material for the course. The Mercedes Ábrego technical institute is in the process of applying the conceptual methodology, however, because this methodology is new, the teachers do not plan their classes taking into account this methodology. The institution makes use of the English book called "*Outsanding*" for all secondary school grades from sixth to eleventh grades. In the same way with respect to other areas such as Spanish class, the school has an agreement with the Alberto Merani Foundation for the management of the "competent readers" books. Similarly, English teachers require students to use an English-Spanish dictionary and carry out a continuous and detailed management of the activities of the "*Outstanding*" book.

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On the other hand, the teacher socializes all the exercises of the book done during the class, the methodology of the teacher is based on explaining the grammar topic and continuing with the exercises of the book, during the classes the teacher puts a stamp on the book of each student to review their work done and the student performance.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **Pedagogical Component**

#### **IMPROVEMENT OF THE WRITTEN PRODUCTION IN ENGLISH IN TENTH GRADERS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS SUCH AS SHORT STORIES AND AUTOBIOGRAPHIES**

##### **Introduction**

Writing is an integral and necessary skill when learning a second language. Often, writing is seen as the result of acquiring a second language rather than as a facilitating factor in learning that language. Writing allows students to express themselves in an open manner and apply their knowledge using grammatical structures and vocabulary of the language studied. According to Dekeyser (2007) written production can lead to the automation and consolidation of the knowledge of the second language. Writing is a manner for students to practice their language skills, as they write their texts, they are forced to notice certain grammar and vocabulary structures and reflect it on their correct uses.

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For this reason it is necessary to apply a strategy that allows students to express their ideas, their feelings and experiences through the foreign language. The short stories are suitable for teaching a foreign language since, in addition to facilitating the acquisition of new vocabulary, it also allows students to communicate their thoughts freely. In this regard, Kohan and Pourkalhor (2013) mention some advantages of teaching English through short stories: "they facilitate the task of reading students, help students to be more creative, increase cultural awareness, reduce the anxiety of students and help them feel more relaxed"(p. 3). The vocabulary used in these stories is commonly understood by students and facilitates their participation both in reading and at the time of writing; that is why it is important to first know the students' preferences in order to implement a genre of stories that motivate them to write.

Being aware of the difficulties that several students face when learn a second language, this action research attempts to promote the written production by means of the usage of creative writing workshops in tenth graders at Mercedes Abrego high school in Cucuta city. The information in this pedagogical component will be presented in six sections such as statement of the problem, justification, objectives, theoretical framework, literature review, methodology and results.

### **Problem**

The pedagogical model that guides the educational work of the Mercedes Ábrego School is the conceptual pedagogy (ITMA, 2014). This pedagogical model is formative, not educational, so the interest of the institution is not achieving the highest academic performance of students but developing in them the skills for them to be talented people, related to values such as happiness, love, expressiveness, supportiveness and competency.

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However, this pedagogical model has not been fully applied and handled in the institution, considering it is relatively "new" for the teaching staff; therefore, during the classes can be seen the importance given to the acquisition of vocabulary, the grammar acquisition in English and other contents more than the students' own interests, those that make them grow as people and express what they think.

The school has a team of teachers who work to improve the academic performance of the students every day, focusing on new strategies to learn in a meaningful way the different contents; hence, the English teacher divides her class into 4 stages implementing a game at the beginning and at the end of the class by using audiovisual media as well as the book that has been established for this area. Sometimes, the class becomes monotonous and students tend to get bored, generating little participation in the spaces established for the interaction.

In addition to this, to verify the need of carrying out a project in this school, it was necessary for the teacher-practitioner to conduct some classroom observations from which some concerns emerged regarding the written production of students. Despite the significant change in the design and execution of the classes by the teacher who uses technology during her classes and has implemented some games, students are not motivated to participate. The classes are limited to the grammar explanation and the review of topics that the students already know, leaving aside the production that plays an essential role in the learning of a second language since it puts into practice the linguistic competence, intellectual skills, intelligence and above all creativity. Most of the time students must use the book to do grammar exercises or oral comprehension exercises, but written production is not implemented, thus losing the opportunity for students to express themselves through

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it and apply their knowledge. Producing a text is a complex process that involves knowledge of the alphabetic and orthographic conventions that govern the language writing system, thus being a challenge for students as well as developing critical and selective thinking in them. As Tolchinsky (1993) said "Writing, as we pretend that students write (with the search for quality and variety) is difficult but can be learned, taught and enjoyed." To encourage students to write, it is necessary to plan activities and workshops that stimulate the writing process, that are interesting to them and that motivate them to explore. The statement of this problem helped to emerge some questions and set the guidelines to this research. The driving questions that appeared are:

### **Questions**

#### **Main question:**

- How does the implementation of creative writing workshops improve the written production in tenth graders?

#### **Sub-question:**

To start this study, the following questions were formulated:

- What do students like and not like writing?
- How can students be motivated to write?
- How can the written production be improved in tenth graders of Mercedes Abrego School?
- What obstacles appear when getting students interested in writing?

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## **Justification**

As teachers, our goal will always be to find the appropriate strategies to offer the best education to children and young people as well as identify the weaknesses that are presented in the classrooms and then try to overcome them and thus eliminate the limitations and deficiencies that our educational system presents. For this reason, it is necessary to look for the most effective methods to improve the educational quality of this population and to increase the interest and levels of participation of students, taking into account all the competences that the language implies and focusing on those that allow them put into practice their knowledge and skills. As a possible result from this, the improvement of written production in tenth graders seeks through creative writing workshops such as short stories and autobiographies, to express their ideas, develop critical thinking and communicate their lived experiences by applying the English language linguistic standards they already have.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

- To improve 10<sup>th</sup> graders written production in English through the implementation of creative writing workshops such as short stories and autobiographies.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To guide students to use writing as a means of expressing their ideas and thoughts, who they are and what they know about the world.
- To put into practice the linguistic knowledge that students have about the English language.

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- To design activities that promote writing practices to be implemented in the creative writing workshop.
- To develop a critical thinking in tenth graders by encouraging them to write and express their ideas.
- To create a creative portfolio using the short stories and autobiographies writing productions of the tenth graders.

### **Theoretical framework**

Owing to the main objective of this project is to make use of creative writing for the improvement of written production and the development of critical thinking of the tenth graders of the Mercedes Ábrego School, it is necessary to define the following theoretical terms: creative writing in the development of written production, autobiography, short story, critical thinking, written production, communicative competence, product-oriented Approach, teaching and learning a foreign language.

### **Creative writing**

Creative writing is seen as a game in which a better dexterity is acquired as this skill develops, creative writing far from limiting the learning of a second language, helps the student to expand their vocabulary, to know the structure and the form of the language that is being learned. On the other hand, Harmer (2004) makes a classification of writing activities: those that have a real purpose and those that have an invented purpose. Creative writing is found in the classification of those that have a purpose invented, but according to this author they help students to improve each day as they free the minds of students allowing them to express themselves more easily in the language they are learning.



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Moreover, Harmer (2004) says that although the application of creative writing is not an easy task, this will help them to be more risky when writing. It will also be motivating, to the extent that they can show their work to other people, not just the teacher and to compare what they write with their classmates works.

### **Short Story**

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a short story is an invented prose narrative shorter than a novel usually dealing with a few characters and aiming at unity of effect and often concentrating on the creation of mood rather than plot. It typically takes just a single sitting for reading. Short Story focuses on the incidents bigger or smaller and evokes strong feelings from its readers.

### **Autobiography**

This term is derived from three Greek words meaning "self," "life," and "write". Autobiography is one type of biography, which tells a life story of its author, meaning it is a written record of the author's life. Due to the age of this term, multiple authors throughout history have defined it in various ways. According to Anderson (2001), "it is a retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality". That indicates that an autobiography is written through the person's own pen, in his own words.

### **Critical thinking**

By using activities to improve critical thinking, students can better understand why something has happened instead of just understanding what has happened. This deeper understanding allows students to better analyze the circumstances surrounding the

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occurrence and the different points of view about the occurrence. (Tsai, P. & Chen, S. 2013)

### **Written production**

It is defined as one of the most important competences to develop when learning a foreign language and the first active skill to be developed since for many students, writing is a less stressful activity than speaking as the audience for any mistakes is more selective; on the other hand, written work is concrete and is therefore open to closer examination and correction (Bilash, 2009). Writing activities mark the beginning of the output information the students start to create in the FL learning process and the one that progresses the most in academic contexts.

### **Communicative competence**

The term communicative competence is one of the principles on which the methodology of the foreign language is based. Thus, communicative competence is a term coined by Dell Hymes in 1966 in reaction to Noam Chomsky's (1965) notion of "linguistic competence" and it is defined as the set of knowledge and capabilities that allow to produce and understand the messages in a contextually appropriate way.

Canale & Swain (1980) establish four dimensions of communicative competence:

- Grammatical competence: which is based on the correct use of the linguistic code.
- Discursive competence: which focuses on the correct combination of grammatical forms to form coherent texts.

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- Sociolinguistic competence: the proper use of language, taking into account the place, the participants and the different social conventions.
- Strategic competence: consists of the use of verbal and non-verbal strategies for more effective communication.

However, to these four competences can be added a last subcompetence, the so-called sociocultural competence, which implies the ability to become familiar and communicate in a specific social and cultural context (Canale & Swain, 1980).

### **Product-oriented Approach**

According to Harmer (2011) Product-oriented approaches to writing largely concern the forms of the written products that students compose. "When concentrating on the product, teachers are only interested in the aim of a task and in the end product."

Gabrielatos (2002) stated that a product approach is a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text which is usually presented and analyzed at an early stage. For instance, in a product approach-oriented classroom, students are supplied with a standard sample of text and they are expected to follow the standard to construct a new piece of writing.

Based on Pincas (1982), this approach focuses on linguistic knowledge as well as the appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax and cohesive devices. This approach is composed of four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. Being the goal of the first to make learners aware of certain features of a particular text. In the next two stages, controlled and guided writing, students learn how to organize the ideas until they are ready for the free writing section. The free writing stage is the end product of

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the learning process when students use their writing skills, structures and vocabulary that they have been taught to produce the product. Through this section students show that they can do as fluent and competent users of the language.

### **Literature review**

In order to implement creative writing to improve the written production of tenth grade students, it is necessary and indispensable to research and document about studies focused on this strategy. Therefore, in an attempt to identify this notion in other studies, three categories emerged: The use of creative writing as a tool to improve written production, creative writing as a means of motivation and students' writing skills development through short stories.

#### ***The use of creative writing in language learning***

Creative writing is a form of writing that expresses feelings, thoughts or ideas in an imaginative way. It provides the learners new ways to play with the language. Creative writing enhances not only the writing skills of the learners but also it helps learners to improve all the language skills. In an interview, Vishnu S. Rai (2018), a well-known doctor in Nepalese ELT claimed creative writing as an art which can be taught. This author stated that people who do creative writing in the classroom, the primary purpose is to help the learners develop their language skills without stress and with fun. While students are writing it should be enjoyable in this way, students should have opportunities to choose their own subjects and methods of writing as the goal of creative writing is to develop students' cognitive and communication skills.

On the other hand, Maley (2009) affirms that creative writing for learners has some benefits in the acquisition of a second language. Firstly, creative writing aids language

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development at all levels, such as grammatical, vocabulary, phonology and discourse.

Secondly, this tool encourages “playfulness” which encourages learners to take risks with the language, to explore it without fear of reproof. Also, it put emphasis on the right side of the brain, with a focus on feelings, physical sensations, intuition and musicality as well as it develops self-confidence and self-esteem among learners.

According to the study conducted by Smith (2013) entitled Creative writing as an important tool in second language acquisition and practice, the importance and the advantages of creative writing in terms of motivation are highlight. Students respond positively to creative writing tasks. While poems, stories and songs may begin as externally motivated tasks set by the teacher, the innate human drive to expression and playfulness in language, that is, to literary expression, frequently takes over. Applying this tool in classroom activities students write with more care, dedication and often far greater output. This author states that teachers should embrace this aspect of human nature. Instead of excessive and unwarranted concern about its usefulness, teachers should include more creative writing in the curricula.

### ***Students' writing skills development through short stories***

Learning and strengthening the learning of a second language requires the interest and motivation of the student. The goal of a language learning process is for students to learn to communicate. In this sense, Pardede (2010) argues: "Short stories can also be a powerful and motivating source for teaching to speak and write. Reading, recreation and discussion are more effective learning" (p 22). This author illustrates the importance of developing language skills in the classroom to strengthen students' self-confidence to form relationships through the use of language and thus be able to create writings where they express their experiences and communicate in the foreign language.

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During writing and reading activities, the teacher's role is important not only in planning activities, but also in providing appropriate comments that motivate the use of student language. Richards (2008) argues that feedback is necessary during or after activities to correct grammar, coherence and cohesion. This process also helps students create their own improvement plan, understanding that mistakes should not be an obstacle to communication, but rather a way of improving language use and developing optimal learning.

### ***Using Short Stories to Teach Language Skills***

The main objective of teaching English is to help students communicate fluently in the target language and literature, more specifically short stories are a model for students to familiarize themselves with different forms and observe the language from different contexts. . According to Savvidou (2004) By reading literary works, students learn to see a world through the eyes of others, observing human values and a different kind of life, and discovering that others live in very different societies.

On the other hand, according to the study Short stories use in language skills classes: Students' interest and perception conducted by Pardede (2010), short stories are very suitable for use in teaching English, the results of this study indicated that most respondents basically found interesting short stories to use both as materials for their own enjoyment and as components of language skills classes. Most of them also agreed that the incorporation of short stories in language skills classes will help students achieve a better command of language skills, also helping students to apply their previous language skills. Statistical analysis revealed that students' interest and perceptions correlated positively and significantly.

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## **Pedagogical Methodology**

These are elements that pre-service teacher is going to take into account to plan each one of the workshops:

### **Short Stories workshops**

This study encouraged reading and writing activities through short stories to improve the development of students' language skills. The researcher designed and applied three workshops, each based on a different story. The pre-service teacher was fully immersed in the student process to provide comments on pronunciation, correct documents and develop support guides (on conjugation, punctuation, use of connectors and expressions of who / where / when / what) to Help students improve their language use at the end of each workshop.

For the application of creative writing workshops taking into account the short stories, the following process was followed:

### ***Reading and writing process***

- 1. Pre-reading:*** Through projected images, related to the story, guess the central theme of the short story and discuss it.
- 2. During reading:*** Identification of unknown vocabulary as well as new expressions. The researcher asked questions about the story and asked them to predict what will happen next.
- 3. Post-reading:*** After answering questions about the central theme of the short story, the pre-service teacher gave students a list of vocabulary and phrases that they could use to write: students have the space to write their own short story, taking into account the topic that was discussed.

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## **Autobiography Workshop**

In this way, when planning written production activities, the sequence or stages that guide students towards the development of this skill must be taken into account. Rivers (1981), claimed that writing in the language becomes a complicated activity because writing involves meaningful segments of language: words, sentence, grammar, and how to transfer those segments into written forms. According to Richard and Renandya (2002) the writing process consists of planning, writing, review and editing. The autobiography workshop was designed taking into account the stages provided by these two authors as follows:

**1. Exploring:** The pre-service teacher show to the students the elements composing an autobiography, through slides the autobiography definition, its elements as well as the directions of the workshop are explained.

**2. Planning stage:** In this stage, students were encouraged to write, showing them the advantages of communicating their own experiences and demonstrating them that they have interesting stories to tell.

**3. Writing stage:** This stage focuses on the fluency of writing and is not occupied with grammatical precision or the neatness of the draft. The pre-service teacher is available to answer questions and guide the process of each student.

**4. Review stage:** At this stage, students rewrite their text based on the feedback given by the pre-service teacher in a response stage.

**5. Editing stage:** In this stage, are dedicated to ordering their texts while preparing the final draft to deliver their writing works to the pre-service teacher.



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On the other hand, on the teaching of writing, an evaluation should be done to measure or to know the students' ability in writing. According to Brown (2001), the categories for evaluating writing are:

- 1. Content:** It includes thesis statement, related ideas, development of ideas, and development of ideas through personal experience, illustration, facts, and opinions.
- 2. Organization:** It includes the effectiveness of introduction, logical sequence of ideas, conclusion and appropriate length.
- 3. Discourse:** It includes topic sentences, paragraph unity, transitions, discourse markers, cohesion, rhetorical conventions, reference, fluency, economy, variation.
- 4. Syntax**
- 5. Vocabulary**
- 6. Mechanics:** It includes spelling, punctuation, and citation of references, neatness and appearance.

Content	30
Organization	20
Vocabulary	20
Syntax	25

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Mechanics	5
<b>Total</b>	100

Table 4. Criteria of writing scoring according to Brown (2001)

The pre-service teacher took these Brown's elements into account for the creation of the following table of analysis of writings:

writing production

**EXERCISE 1** 10 points

	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5
<b>Can follow the instructions</b> You can match your production to the proposed situation.			X			
<b>Ability to count and describe</b> Can simply describe a sequence of events of a short horror story				X		
<b>Ability to give opinions</b> Can communicate briefly a short story that have happened to you or that you know about.				X		
<b>Lexicon/lexical spelling</b> Can use basic repertoire of words and expressions to related a horror story				X		

Table 5. Chronogram: Pedagogical Component

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## Cycles of the Pedagogical Methodology

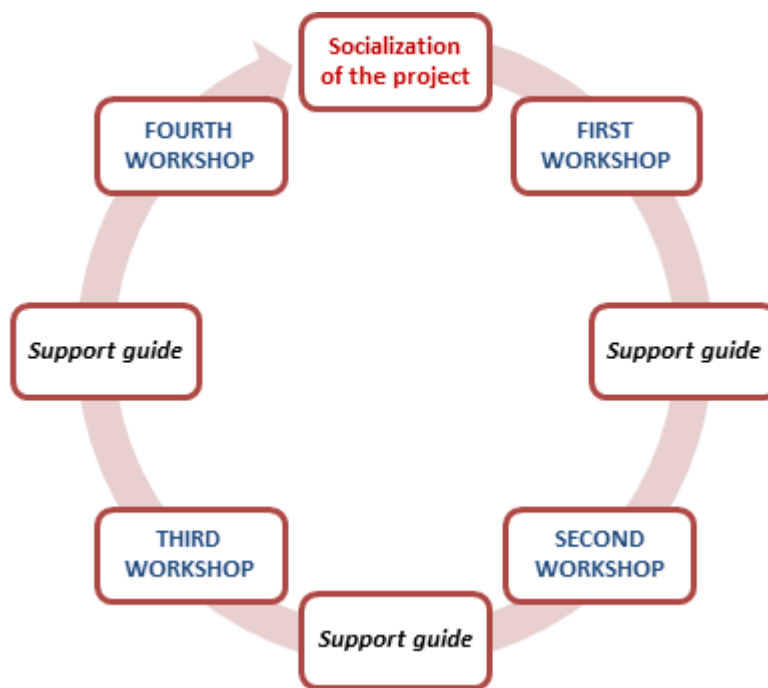


Figure 6. Cycles of the pedagogical methodology.

The application of four workshops based on short stories and the autobiography

### Timetable of pedagogical component

Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Presentation of project to students	Students make the first creative writing workshop		Planning of second workshop	The teacher implement the third creative writing workshop.	Planning of fourth workshop	The teacher implement the last creative writing workshop: my autobiography.	Meeting to the student to deliver the students' production in a newspaper version.
	Delivery of the letter of permission	20th May		3rd June		17 <sup>th</sup> May	20th June	
	13rd May	(Monday)		(Monday)	10th June	(Monday)	(Monday)	
	(Monday)			Feedback	(Monday)	Feedback		26 <sup>st</sup> June

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Planning of first workshop	The teacher gives the production with its corrections		Students write their short story about a legend or an experience lived by them or by someone else.		Students write their own short story about a horror anecdote.		
15th May (Wednesday)	22nd May (Wednesday)				19th May (Wednesday)		
Feedback			5 June (Wednesday)				

*Table 6. Chronogram: Pedagogical Component.*

### Methodology of the research

This study is focused on a qualitative research designed. This type of research refers to a method interested in the meaning and observation of a social phenomenon in a natural environment (Blasco & Pérez 2007 pag.25). When following this design, the researchers attempt to interpret and give a description of the issue observed during the observation week at the Mercedes Abrego school, regarding the natural conditions of the participants which are tenth graders, it is necessary to be in the real context avoiding to alter the results. In addition, the approach adopted in this study was an action research, this method aims to explore the writing students skills and the strategies that should be used to encourage students' written production. To this extent, according to Creswell (2012) an action research is a systematic procedure developed by educators to collect information about teaching and learning student data, becoming essential elements to develop the study precisely. This approach is relevant for the researches to carry out in education, since within its objectives are to improve educational programs and generate social changes

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involving researchers within the context, making them equal participants to the subjects of study, which promotes the participation of the two agents in situations of equality through mutual collaboration in the phases of the research.

### **Population**

The pre-service teacher developed her pedagogical practicum at the Mercedes Abrego Technical Institute high school in Cúcuta with students from four tenth grades (at about 150), aged between 14-17 years old, with an English level of A1.

### **Sample**

For the purpose of this study, only 10 students belonging to the 10<sup>o</sup>D grade (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P510) were selected as participants by purposeful sampling (see appendix 1) taking into account their active participation, their willingness as well as their interest shown towards the first creative writing workshop implemented.

### **Methods of data collection**

#### **Techniques and instruments to collect data**

The main purpose of this study is to improve written production through creative writing workshops, but it is necessary to go through a data collection process that gives validity to this research. Thus, the researcher administered a specific range of instruments. The following describes each one of the instruments used to carry out the research:

#### **Surveys**

Malhotra (2004) mentions that surveys are interviews with a large number of people using a predesigned questionnaire, and this method includes a structured questionnaire that is given to the respondents with the purpose of obtaining specific information.

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Furthermore, this instrument was carried out with the objective of characterizing the population, in terms of knowing the general information about them, such as age, socioeconomic stratum, job performance and academic record, as well as the identification of interests and preferences in learning foreign language: English. This instrument was used at the beginning of the study.

### **Participant observation**

The participant observations are a key instrument in qualitative research, in the collection of data, the observations allowed the researcher to describe, analyze and understand the nature of the students in a real environment. DeWalt & DeWalt (2002) defines Participant observation as the process that empowers researchers to learn about the people activities under study in their natural setting through observation and participating in their activities. The pre-service teacher organized the participant observations into a list of items that classifies the students' learning process as well as their attitude in carrying out the activities proposed by the pre-service teacher in each of her classes.

### **Semi-structured Interview**

Fontana and Frey (2005) mention that the qualitative interview allows the collection of detailed information in view of the fact that the participants share with the researcher all which concerns a specific topic or event that occurred in their lives with the purpose of obtaining specific information. In addition, this instrument was carried out with the objective of characterizing the population, in terms of knowing the general information about it, such as their ages, their interests and preferences in learning English.

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## **Journals**

According to Dunlap (2006) the use of reflective journals provides an opportunity for researchers to hear the voice of students teachers through the chance given to them to express the thoughts and changes they experience as a part of their learning experience. Phelps (2005) maintains that the journals not only are an important means for the collection of data in qualitative research about the students but also enable teachers who research their work to learn about themselves. Through this instrument, researchers could register all emotions, experiences, ideas and descriptions of the aspects seen or heard, as well as make self-reflections of their practice in order to self-evaluate and see if the objective that was raised at the beginning was achieved, journals are the basis for creating a concept of "reflective practice"

## **Document analysis**

Documents provided a valuable source of information in qualitative research. "Documents consist of public and private records that qualitative researchers obtain about a site or participants in a study, and they can include newspapers, minutes of meetings, personal journals, and letters" (Creswell J., 2012, p. 223).

To evaluate the written production, it is required that the students have developed the activities proposed in the creative writing workshop, the workshops that have been carried out so far are two: "my autobiography" and "a short horror story" . In addition, at the end of the project, all the productions and written activities will be included in a folder for each student and the best productions, that is, the favorite productions chosen by the rest of the students will be published in a page in Instagram and in Facebook. On the other

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hand, in order to evaluate them objectively, the pre-service teacher proposed a framework that evaluates the general aspects that students must follow in each written production.

### Scheduled data collection

For the correct and orderly collection of data, a calendar was proposed to follow the activities throughout the 8 weeks of practice.

Weeks/	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Instruments</b>								
Surveys		X						
Participant observation			X		X	X	X	
Document analysis (Written productions)				X				X
Journals			X		X	X	X	
Interviews								X

*Table 7. Data collection timetable. Pedagogical component*

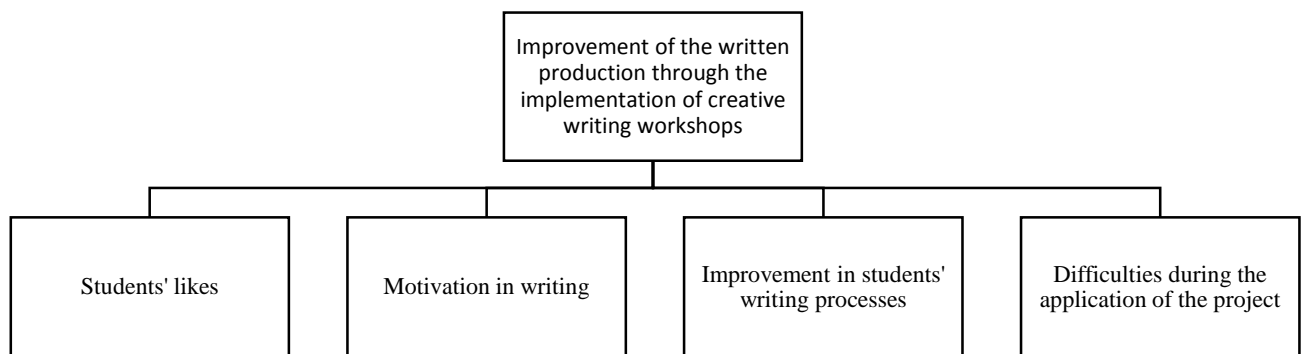


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## Findings

Five main categories emerged from the data collection process: a) Students' likes, b) Motivation in writing c) Improvement in students' writing processes, d) Difficulties during the application of the project.

These five main categories are supported by information taken from journals, interviews, observations and surveys. The analysis of five findings led the researchers to five categories as shown in the following diagram.



*Figure 7. Categories found as a result of data analysis*

## Students' likes

After analyzing the results and conclusions revealed by the survey, the researcher began to search and make reading and writing material that would attract the attention of the students. The surveys showed that the topics on which students prefer to write are those of the horror genre and paranormal stories. It could also be evidenced that although students write infrequently, they would like to have more spaces in which the writing skill is worked.

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The pre-service teacher began to select, develop and apply reading and writing activities, and the success that the students had was because they met many requirements that make a good writing exercise, such as the writers' interest, age, visual support, as well as the students' likes and activities they like to develop, which facilitated the process at the time of writing since the students felt interest in what they were going to produce. The writing process was centered on the student, which is why their preferences were of the utmost importance so that they feel free and inspired when writing. The pre-service teacher also tried to include the application of two writing techniques that guaranteed a better development of this skill: short stories and autobiographies.

Four guides were applied. The topics discussed were paranormal experiences, Halloween, nightmares and autobiography (see Appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4). When using these guides, the pre-service teacher realized that the students liked them a lot because all these readings and writing activities were related to their reality because most of them had lived a paranormal experience at some time in their life or had heard something similar. They had already had strange nightmares that deserved to be told, so they found it interesting to know how to communicate it in English. In addition, the genre of horror and mystery is one of the topics they prefer. The guides also included some questions that sought to obtain information about students and that addressed the topic seen in the book worked during English classes so in those classes where the time to implement the creative writing project was short, the pre-service teacher decided to make the classes a complement to the writing activities proposed by the book, in this way the students had a space to write about any subject.

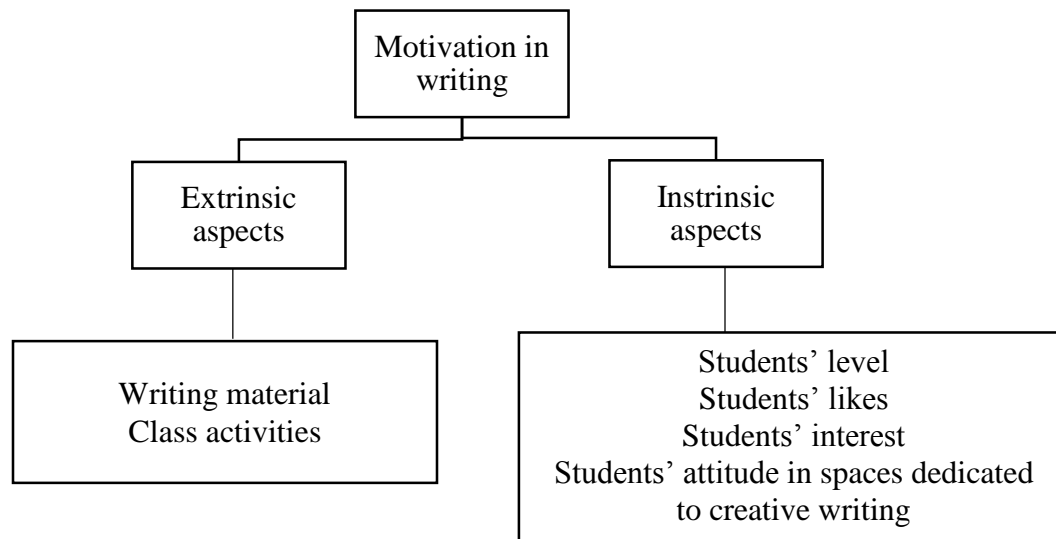
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Writing activities allow them to talk about their own reality. For example, they had to write about their paranormal anecdote or a lived paranormal experience; they had to describe a situation experienced on Halloween. In another case, they had the opportunity to describe themselves, following guidelines for the writing of their autobiography.

Based on what the students said after the implementation of the creative writing workshops, they learned to write and talk about other topics using the English language. This shows that teachers can get better results in the learning process when the activities are focused on the student.

### **Motivation in writing**

Throughout the process the researcher realized that there are aspects related to the motivation to write. These aspects are shown in the following diagram:



*Figure 8. Aspects related to motivation in writing.*

### ***Extrinsic aspects***

During the execution of the project, creative writing workshops were implemented based on students' likes and preferences regarding writing and reading material. The pre-

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service teacher related the students' likes to the topics addressed in the English book used in the institution to be able to design the work guides. This demonstrated a better performance of the students as it showed a continuity with the work done during the English class hours. For example, for approximately one unit of the book, the subject of the past simple, past perfect and past perfect continuous was being worked on, for the practice of these grammatical subjects the book carried reading activities related to sleeping problems and nightmares, the researcher made the socialization of reading activities proposed by the book and some proposed by her.

The pre-service teacher made sure that the material used caught the attention of the students; the material used was creative, clear and specific. The material was also designed with pre and post reading activities that ensured comprehension of the text and facilitated written production.

The proposed activities pointed to the reality of the students. These activities encouraged students to write about an aspect of their lives that not only made the learning process more meaningful, but also allowed students to reinforce the structures and vocabulary learned.

Regarding the management of the activities done in class, the pre-service teacher established a methodology that was based on the following: at the beginning of the work with the readings, the teacher asked the students to read aloud and the others had to follow the reading, after having finished reading the text, the students identified the unknown vocabulary, something that facilitated the good development of the activities was that the students mostly took the dictionary to the English classes and in the event that students did not have a dictionary, in the English laboratory there were several available for their free use. After searching for unknown words, verbal tenses and grammatical structures were

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identified in the text for better understanding, these activities showed that students learned new vocabulary effectively since they could observe its uses directly in the texts and thus knew the context in which those words were applied.

After working on reading comprehension, a space was dedicated to share student experiences about strange dreams or nightmares students had had. The discussions made after the reading activities showed that the students felt more inspired and motivated to write; when listening to their classmates' experiences, the students wanted to make their own experience known, letting their creativity flow at the time of writing. In this regard, the methodology used by the pre-service teacher was very helpful at the time of the students' written production since they applied the vocabulary that had already been worked on the readings and not only applied the new vocabulary but also they were facilitated to use the structures of past tenses.

### ***Intrinsic aspects***

At the beginning of the project, the supervisor showed the researcher a diagnostic test made recently, this helped not only to know the level of the students but also to know many of their personal aspects that influence the good development of the activities, aspects such as age, the students were aged between 14 and 17 years, aspects related to class attention, the supervisor gave a detailed description to the pre-service teacher about those students who presented some kind of concentration problem, pre-service teacher managed to identify them and confirmed that the descriptions given by the supervisor were totally true. For the complete development of the activities proposed in the creative writing workshops, the researcher allowed the participation of all students without any exception,

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she gave the work material to all students and guided all them with the same intensity and rigor.

On the other hand, according to Ríos & Valcárcel (2005) if the writing material is prepared taking into account the interests, age, tastes and level of the students, at least the attention of the students can be guaranteed. The survey carried out at the beginning of the project was very important for the design of the workshops, the students highlighted the importance of learning English without imposing a topic they do not like, and they made known their preference for the genre of horror, suspense, drama and adventures but mostly bowed for the horror genre. During the execution of the workshops, there was always a discussion before starting with the written productions, this was a kind of "warm-up" so that the students felt inspired and ready at the time of writing. The readings not only expanded the vocabulary of the students and reinforced the use of the structures more adequately, but also promoted the creativity and imagination of the student at the time of writing; they were encouraged to produce different speeches in the English language.

The attitude of the students varied a little during the execution of each workshop, during workshop No. 1 the students felt more motivated at the time of writing since it was the first time that the class had a specific time dedicated to written production, the students were interested in writing their nightmares or their dreams, they looked excited at the time of writing, there were even students who made drawings where they represented the theme of their stories, they used the dictionary and in most cases they asked the teacher for some words in which they had confusion about their application in different contexts. In workshop N ° 2 the attitude of the students was not the same, because the time they had left for the development of the activity was very short, they were mostly interested in finishing the workshop quickly, but they had not the same freedom as in the last workshop, they were

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a little worried about finishing and in some moments they did not know how to write their ideas, this showed that for the execution of creative writing workshops 35 minutes are not enough for the correct and total development of the workshops since they work under pressure and they do not have the same performance and freedom as when the workshops are held with more time.

In general, creative writing workshops promoted writing because the themes and activities were based on real situations. Some students realized that English was useful and meaningful and knew how to use it as a tool to communicate. Here are some comments that students made during interviews after project implementation:

***Participant 4:** "A mí personalmente me gustaría continuar con esta actividad en las clases de inglés con la profesora porque... porque entre más escribamos en inglés textos, historias y eso, más estamos avanzando..."*

"I personally would like to continue this activity in English classes with the teacher because ... because the more we write in English texts, stories and that, the more we are moving forward ..."

***Participant 7:** "Siento que estos talleres me hicieron como dar cuenta de que uno puede escribir en inglés sobre cualquier cosa y no solamente quedarse con los temas de la clase sino usar todo eso que aprendemos ... el vocabulario y esas cosas por el estilo, lo podemos usar para contar historias y experiencias que nos han pasado..."*

"I feel that these workshops made me realize that you can write in English about anything and not only stick with the topics of the class but use all that we learn ... vocabulary and things like that , we can use them to tell stories and experiences that have happened to us ..."

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### **Improvement in students' writing processes**

Regarding, students' performance in the four writing workshops developed, it's necessary to explain that these productions were made in class. In addition, the analysis of these productions was carried out in a qualitative way, since this allowed the researcher to verify if students had implemented the vocabulary and grammatical structures worked and reinforced on each reading workshop, based on this, it was taken into account the following criteria proposed by Council of Europe (2001): the respect for the instructions, ability to describe, lexicon/lexical spelling, morphosyntax grammatical spelling ;coherence and cohesion.

The creative writing workshops as well as the activities planned for each project session were designed with various activities that involved, in a certain way, the four language skills that are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading is a process to obtain information, students observed the texts and identified both structures that they already knew as new vocabulary which helped them produce more complete and structured texts. After each reading, the students were asked to write some paragraphs about the topics studied in the readings, and as mentioned earlier, the students were interested in making those short writings because they were encouraged to express ideas about themselves.

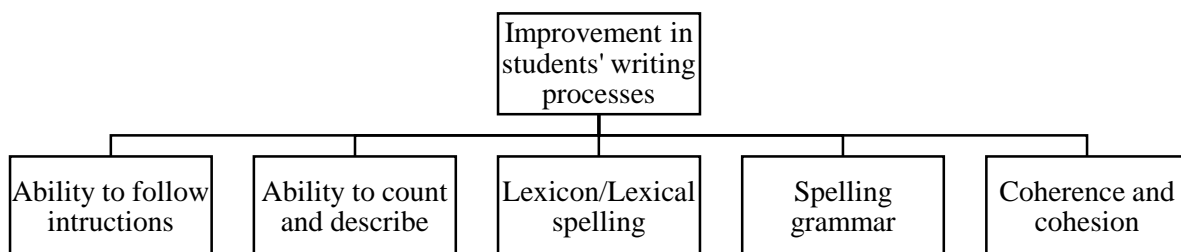
Activities designed for creative writing workshops, as well as the way they were developed, promoted the improvement of the ability to read and write. Some students really liked to participate by reading aloud, discussing, giving their point of view on the subject discussed or simply reading on their own. Others were very shy and preferred to be quiet, listen to others and repeat the pronunciation of some words when teacher asked to do so.



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In addition, the ability to listen was also promoted. Activities such as listening to the pronunciation of the pre-service teacher, listening to themselves or other students at the time of reading motivated the development of this skill. They had to listen to the explanations or instructions and in this way their understanding could also be assessed. The students really improved their pronunciation and in the last reading about "The origin story of Freddy Krueger" they felt more comfortable reading and participating. An important aspect was to see the students realize and correct the mistakes that their classmates made in the pronunciation. However, those students who did not participate much in reading because of their shyness or because they simply did not like it, continued to make some pronunciation errors.

With regard to writing, the students showed a significant advance at the time of writing their texts, the writing process had an incredible improvement, aspects such as the ability to follow instructions, the ability to count and describe, the lexicon, grammar, coherence and cohesion were elements that were taken into account when analyzing the students' written productions, in the same way these elements were divided as subcategories, as shown in the following scheme:



*Figure 9. Improvement in student's writing processes. Subcategories.*

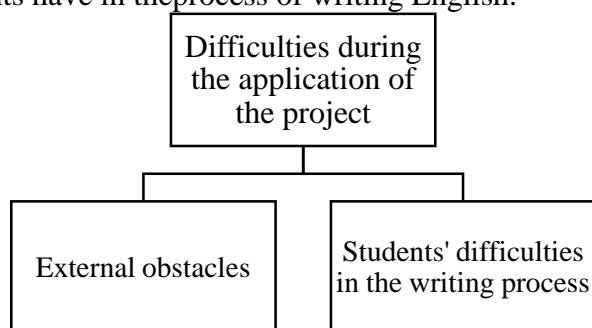
On the whole, post-reading activities allowed students to improve their writing skill and put into practice their grammar and lexical knowledge reinforced by the classes and

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readings in a real use context by describing the dream they liked the most or most strange nightmare they had had, a short story about an anecdote and an their autobiography.

### **Difficulties during the application of the project**

The researcher had some difficulties during the implementation of the project. To present them they were divided into two subcategories. The first refers to some external obstacles regarding problems in the institution and the second has to do with some difficulties that students have in the process of writing English.



*Figure 10. Difficulties during the application of the Project.*

### ***External obstacles***

The time was short because some activities at the school were scheduled at the same time that the English class was developed. Many English classes did not take place, so the application of creative writing workshops had to be postponed many times.

In addition, during the last three weeks of class, hours were cut in English classes due to the development of intensive activities related to the preparation of national tests, which affected the implementation of the project. On the other hand, due to the short time devoted to classes, grammar issues had to be explained and evaluated in order to obtain student grades, so the time devoted to the development of the project was very minimal.

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### *Students' difficulties in the writing process*

During the development of the workshops some students were very concentrated when they worked on their written productions, however some students did not stop bothering, disrupting the normal development of activities and creating some discipline problems. According to what was observed in the classes and to what students write in the surveys these students did not like English very much. They gave different reasons, which were recorded in surveys and interviews:

- English is very difficult.
- They do not understand.
- English is boring
- They are not interested in learning English.
- They do not have foreign language skills.

What could be observed at the beginning of the project is that some students expressed their likes for English only because their friends said they liked it but the reality was different. During the analysis of the written productions of the students it was observed that some students took the written productions from the internet, it was evident due to the writing style and the vocabulary used.

On the other hand, the confusion of the structures of the mother tongue with the structures of English was a very common problem in the students' written productions. Some of the difficulties encountered in the project were the following:

Word order: the students formed sentences based on the structures of Spanish: (noun + adjective + verb + complement).

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Some exercises were used to correct that common mistake. During the classes, exercises were made to order sentences and also exercises of description taking into account an image using certain adjectives.

Personal pronouns became a problem for most students. When they wrote their texts, they forgot to write the personal pronoun, they only wrote the verb perhaps because in Spanish this can be done. For example:

When they had to write several actions done on the same line, they wrote only the pronoun of the first verb and they forgot to write the subject for the rest of the verbs. Here are some examples of this difficulty:

The Deaid In my Window  
Remember when enter to my room In the night,  
I had dream, So I went to Sleep, after I woke up  
at 12 o'clock (a.m), I'd listened a noise  
and thought ...  
Will there be a thief In my house?  
or will my father be at the kitchen  
But, what will he be doing? it's very early  
I got up, I went to the kitchen and there wasn't  
Nothing, the light turned off.  
So, I came back to my room, closed the door and  
came up to my bed, and closed my eyes, 5 minutes  
later, I had heard other noise, I opened my eyes  
again, and I saw In my window: a shadow, and me

Figure 11. Sample 1. Participant 5 composition. Short story about a nightmare.

The pre-service teacher made a detailed explanation about the use of the personal pronouns and told them the importance of writing the subject in each verb used.

In some cases, the students had problems with the consistency and cohesion of their texts, their stories were very descriptive and original but at the time of writing their ideas at the end of the text there was confusion due to the structure the text had no coherence and that caused that the reader was losing the line of facts.

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My day started very normal, until the moment they blew in my ear. (It is important that they know that if you feel that they blow in your ear, it means that some being wants to communicate with you.) For me this was usual, so I did not give it much importance.

This happened to me repeatedly in the day, but I never gave it importance until ~~that~~ <sup>in the</sup> some night, I heard a great cry while I was in my room. I left terrified, scared ~~thinking~~ <sup>I was</sup> that my mom had screamed, but to my great surprise she was asleep...

I woke her up, and ~~asked~~ <sup>slept</sup> her if she had ~~shouted~~ <sup>Go to sleep</sup> but ~~between~~ <sup>I have</sup> sleeping she told me no ~~and that she had not heard anyone scream,~~ <sup>not</sup> she sent me to sleep and ~~I listened to her.~~ <sup>shouted</sup> ~~she said that~~

When I went back to my room, I turned off the light to go to sleep and ~~this~~ <sup>he</sup> happened. I hear a ~~my woman~~ <sup>When</sup> began ~~to speak~~ <sup>suddenly</sup> in my ear, I knew it was alone, so I went into shock and my mind became

Figure 12. Sample II. Participant 3. Short story about a paranormal experience.

### Conclusions

From the application of the project, it could be concluded that the writing activities should be selected according to the students' likes, their perceptions and their preferences. This means that writing activities should be focused on the student, should not be imposed. It could be shown that creative writing is an interesting way to motivate the process of learning English in students because they can learn in a more entertaining way while applying their previous knowledge when producing a text. This is also a very interesting project to be implemented by English teachers because other linguistic skills can be developed from writing activities.

Another relevant aspect to consider is to design the writing workshops properly in relation to the preferences, level, interests and above all the contexts of the students since the first step for the students to produce is that they feel comfortable, inspired and free at the time of writing. With better planning, time and writing resource design, there will be better results in the English language learning process. The application of these creative

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writing workshops not only reinforces vocabulary, grammar and other knowledge, but also motivates students to learn more about the world, to communicate in the English language, to listen to their peers, to be collaborative and autonomous too.

On the other hand, creative writing workshops allowed students to identify the use of the vocabulary they learned in class, in different everyday contexts, relating each topic to situations close to them, with their experiences and with stories created by themselves, such as writing about lived paranormal experiences, nightmares or dreams and describe themselves using the expressions and vocabulary seen. This meant that the level of vocabulary acquisition began to improve, that the quality and structures of their writings were more appropriate and advanced depending on each workshop that was developed. In this way, it can be said that creative writing workshops are fulfilling the purpose of this research, since students are improving their English through writing, applying their knowledge and correcting their grammatical errors, creating more coherent and understandable texts and involving new words in their lexicon. Therefore, some students began to communicate in English more clearly and consistently.

### **Recommendations**

For future research on the implementation of creative writing workshops with the aim of improving written production and applying prior knowledge of English, I would like to mention the following recommendations:

- To have enough time for the implementation of all the planned workshops in order to obtain abundant information for future analysis.

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- Use technological tools for a better student experience, such as recordings of their own stories told by themselves, creating animated videos that represent the stories written by students using their background voices. All these tools will serve not only to save and recognize the work done by the students but they will also be a great source of motivation for those who see English as a boring language.

### **Ethical considerations**

According to Martineau (2007) to have a good development of this research, it is necessary to ask permission to the teacher in charge of the course, through the delivery of a letter, to unfold the observation relevant to the project. Ethical aspects have been considered to guarantee, protect and respect the dignity of committed participants. In addition, the free and informed consent of the participants was one of the key pillars for the development of this research. In the same way, it is essential to take into account the rights of the authors of the reference documents that were used. Finally, the resulting information from the research process is made available to the academic community concerned.

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## **CHAPTER II**

### **Research Component**

#### **THE FORMATION OF REFLECTIVE SPIRIT IN PLEX PRACTICE TEACHERS, TRAINING TOOL TO QUALIFY PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE**

##### **Introduction**

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

Even though, there is a clear interest in the evident need to understand and to transform the pedagogical professional practicums, so is it a fact that a good part of the local studies focus especially on the problematic of learning more than teaching.

It has been considered pertinent to formulate a project that establishes a reflexive approach about professional practicums as a way to objectify knowledge, behaviors and attitudes over guiding the teaching work; also, as an internalization exercise of immersion and conscious exploration of the teacher's own subjectivity, through the formulation of questions and search of information for the solution of problems and for self-recognition.

##### **Statement of the Problem**

At school, the core aspects of the constitution of the subjects are assumed, of the institutional life without question, are seen as imprints, stable and invariable features that are part of the identity and the school culture. When the events unfold



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without major alteration, the teacher runs the risk of being installed in logic of action that does not allow the pedagogical evolution and the renovation of the school culture. A practice lacking in reflection does not lead to the emergence of problematic situations; these realities are ignored, invisible. In this way, the pedagogical practice is assumed from reproductive codes that install the teachers in a traditional way, of cultural reproduction becoming a barrier for the appearance of emerging practices tending to generate transformations of thought and knowledge, to respond to social needs.

Because of this situation, which affects teachers to a greater or lesser extent, it is required that the teacher training process, in the future teacher, encourage a critical and reflective spirit that contributes to the improvement of their pedagogical practices, so that these at the same time are essential elements that impact and transform their work and future professional performance.

In the case of the Degree in Foreign Languages of the University of Pamplona, the reflection is conceived as a fundamental exercise so that students who carry out their integral practice, self-evaluate, install a critical and constructive look at their work in the teaching role.

To start this study, the following guiding questions are formulated:

- How does the implementation of reflection contribute to the transformation of the pedagogical processes inherent to development of integral practice?

How does the exercise of reflection influence the development of the critical spirit of student-practitioners in the analysis of their pedagogical work?

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## **Justification**

The formulation of this project in the context of the Integral professional practicum of foreign language students, is part of the professional conception of practice as a spearhead to improve educational processes in the application centers where the professional practicum is executed. It is considered that giving importance to the role of reflection in the teaching process is the first step to understand the difficulties of the profession, the own actions and to be interested in the knowledge of the models and approaches to attend a problematic situation and to establish an analytical look on the fact.

In accordance with the statement by the philosopher of education Jhon Dewey, a forerunner in the field of reflective thought applied to teaching, we justify the need for this project to provide students with analysis and self-observation tools that allow them to distinguish between routine action and reflective action. We believe that a reflexive approach protects agents from the traditional context of inertia, and authority that permeate the school.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective:**

- To implement the reflection as a transforming tool of the pedagogical processes of the integral practice.
- To promote in Students-Practitioners the development of a critical spirit that allows them to analyze their pedagogical work.

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## Specific Objectives:

- To consolidate a group of teachers-practitioners with a critical spirit who reflects and presents proposals and alternative solutions to problems presented in their pedagogical practice.
- To socialize criteria, share ideas and guidelines to assume their pedagogical practice and insert themselves effectively in the institution.
- To identify and to analyze the strategies that the student uses in his / her pedagogical practice.
- To implement workshops for reflection and development of didactic units that guide the reflection of Students-Practitioners.
- To analyze one's own beliefs about the work of teachers and students.

## Theoretical Framework

The theory about the teaching profession, reflection, reflective practice and pedagogical practice, constitutes the conceptual framework of the present study. To have a greater degree of clarity about the concepts covered, in close relation with this research project, we present an approximation to each one of them.

### *The teaching Profession*

One of the fundamental members of any educational institution is the teacher, who has the function of imparting knowledge framed in a certain science or art, but who also has within his responsibilities the integral formation of the students.

The teaching profession requires a series of competences, which currently constitute a conceptualization and a way of operating in the planning and management of human

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resources aimed at facilitating an articulation between management, work and education. This is how we find that every teacher must comply with some competencies in the discipline that allow him to have mastery of a set of knowledge and skills in the specific area, since the first intellectual requirement of a professional is the level in which he develops his activity. Similarly, every teacher must have some skills in the organization of content, which is the pedagogical practice not only requires ordering its components to be learned by students, but forecasting for the conditions of teaching in the educational context or outside it. The most immediate function that teachers must develop is to design or forecast the practice of teaching.

### ***The Reflection***

Talking about reflection, implies addressing different conceptions about this notion. For this reason, to deepen its definition, two aspects will be taken into account: reflection as a process, and reflection as a theme. (Correa Molina et al 2010).

### ***The Reflection as a Process***

The reflection is made based on a series of stages that cyclically result in a process. According to Schön (1983) cited by Correa Molina et al (2010) reflecting on experience implies "a kind of reflective dialogue with the situation, where language would favor access to the individual's experiences, which would allow extracting a new structure of the situation". The stages of the process of reflection as a process are evidenced in the following scheme:

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*Figure 13. Reflection as a process*

### ***The Reflection as a Theme***

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

### ***The Reflective Practicum***

Updating and qualifying the academic proposals in the University and orienting the learners towards new ways of relating to the world, it is necessary that the teacher questions himself about his own practice and about the repercussion that it has generated; that it is

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able to objectify his behaviors, and to assume the different roles in the pedagogical relationship.

The teacher plays a central role in the current educational world; acts in a complex space subjected to a constant change determined by the interaction of various factors and conditions. The teaching profession demands that: "teachers develop their professional knowledge in relation to changing circumstances" (Ebutt and Elliot: 1986). In this context, the problem of practice and class space demands a particular treatment oriented towards understanding and social interaction.

The need of articulating the changing social reality to our pedagogical work, is evident in the existence of numerous attempts to try to explain school phenomena and in the search for ways to address these phenomena, to make school work effective.

This study will serve the participating professors to reflect on their methodological processes in the light of reflection as the only rational and ethical mode of intervention. (Sacristan 1999)

According to Van Manen (1997) there are different levels of reflexivity, in a first level in the classroom there is the effective application of skills and technical knowledge. the reflection is applied to the selection and appropriate use of the teaching strategies that the teacher will use.

On a second level, the reflection takes on the implicit assumptions in the specific classroom practices. The consequences of the adopted strategies, curricula, and practices are then analyzed. it is then opted for the application of educational criteria to the practice of teaching to make pedagogical decisions adapted to the institutional reality and to the

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contexts. In a third Van Manen establishes an exercise of critical reflection; at this level, he formulates the most elaborate reflection, a questioning of ethical, normative and moral criteria directly or indirectly related to the classroom.

### ***Pedagogical practicum***

For the analysis and reflection on the practicum it is considered appropriate to resort methodologically to a conceptual operation of classification of the practicum; for this purpose, the proposal of Zeichner is assumed, who has established several modalities of practice as follows:

### ***Academic Practicum***

It is aimed at preparing professors capable of reflecting on the courses they teach, so that they become structures understandable to students.

### ***Social Efficiency Practicum***

The aim is to achieve an effective teaching through the application of didactic techniques that are deduced from general principles to which pedagogical research has come. In this case, the reflection consists of a strategic decision: "select among the range of available techniques which is considered most effective".

This is the way of proceeding from technical rationality.

### ***Developmental***

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

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### *Social reconstruction*

The object of the reflection is the social, economic and political context, so as to promote truly democratic relations in the classroom, and fair and just in the social sphere.

### *Generic*

The programs allude to reflection in a generic way, but without specifying the pretensions of the programs or the contents on which they should reflect or the strategies to promote reflective learning.

### *Activators of reflection*

According to Schulman (1987), these triggers are the teacher's cognitive foundation on classroom life; they are essential because they constitute the element of reflective thought that contributes in the process of the own knowledge that a good teacher needs to make decisions in the classroom.

### *Critical element of reflective thinking*

This element of reflective thought relates to "the moral and ethical aspects of compassion and social justice" as proposed by Sparks-Langer and Colton 1991: 39. Interest in what concerns social justice and ethics in education.

These authors established classification categories of knowledge:

1. Knowledge of the content
2. General pedagogical knowledge
3. Curricular knowledge (materials, programs, etc.)
4. Teaching knowledge and proper professional configuration
5. Knowledge of the students and their characteristics



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6. Knowledge of educational contexts
7. Knowledge of fundamentals: philosophical, historical, and axiological

According to Georgea Spark-Langer and Amy Colton, the narrative element is another element of reflective thinking that is included in the present study as an instrument. This relates to the teacher's narratives, to encourage stories of their experiences in the classroom. They persist in many forms and fulfill diverse functions in subjectivity, and in the constitution of subjectivity. In this component are the teaching journals in which the writing triggers the elaboration of reflective thinking of the teacher, on their experiences of practice, objective and subjective and intersubjective.

### **Methodology**

The main objective of the proposed methodological strategy is the continuous reflection that additionally contemplates the holding of meetings to strengthen the practice collective as an initial space for tackling the educational and labor problems. The principles of organization are autonomy, planning and self-observation.

To review the incidence of the reflection proposal on this practice process, a process of socialization and systematization of the same will take place.

This study is part of the qualitative research approach, from the perspective of reflection as a professionalizing space that will contribute greatly to the description, identification and analysis of the pedagogical practice itself.

For the collection of data in this project, the application of the following instruments is proposed:

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### **Reflection workshops**

The fundamental purpose of the reflection workshops is to guide the process of reflection of the student-practitioners, but at the same time to socialize and share their own experiences in order to enrich their process and insert new tools to transform their pedagogical practices.

### **Objectives**

- To consolidate a group of teacher-practitioners with a critical spirit that reflects and presents proposals and alternative solutions to the educational problems of their pedagogical practice.
- To socialize criteria, share ideas and guidelines to assume their pedagogical practice.
- To qualify, facilitate and effectively insert the educational center.

### **Data collection**

#### ***Self-observation card***

The self-observation card has as main objective to allow the pre-service teacher to form a perspective of her own professional activity as a teacher does; this is feasible by playing such role in the classroom and in the educational community environment to which they belong.

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### *Narrative*

The reflection exercise will allow students to express their endeavor based on the narrative of their experience as a way to provide meaning to the teacher's everyday life.

### *Class Recording*

Having evidence of the students practitioners' performances in the classroom allows teacher-students to reflect upon different aspects in the foreign languages teaching/learning process that may have been taken into account or not by the pre-service teacher in his reflection process.

These recordings will allow having an external and constructive view of their pedagogical practices. In this practicum process, students have to record a class of themselves in order to analyze and reflect about how the process of teaching is advancing.

### **Chronogram**

*Table 8. Internal Activities: Calendar*

DESCRIPTION	DATE
Classroom Observation	29th April – 3th May

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Narratives	20 <sup>th</sup> May	24 <sup>th</sup> June
	27 <sup>th</sup> May	22 <sup>nd</sup> July
	3 <sup>rd</sup> June	29 <sup>th</sup> July
	10 <sup>th</sup> June	
	17 <sup>th</sup> June	
Reflective Workshops	9 <sup>th</sup> August	
Self-observation card	9 <sup>th</sup> August	

Table 9. This table presents the calendar for the internal activities.

Table 10. Narrative analysis

Main Topic of the narratives	Contributions to my pedagogical practicum
<b>1st week : students behavior</b>	Through this reflection, I realized that, as teachers, we can face different types of populations in the future, it is our duty as teachers to control the group, so it is necessary to look for different and effective strategies to combat indiscipline, such as group qualification and positive points.
<b>2nd week: teaching methodology</b>	This narrative allowed me to reflect on my teaching methodology through which I observed that students could easily understand the subject if I gave them a clear explanation and if I often used audiovisual material and, based on this, they could do the exercises and production activities.
<b>3rd week: Primary</b>	In this narrative, I focused mainly on the dissemination component, in which, through English classes in elementary

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<p><b>school classes</b></p>	<p>schools, I help students overcome their learning difficulties, this reflection made me look for useful strategies when trying some cases of misbehavior during these classrooms (rewards for active participation), Due to this situation, it affected the classroom environment and those students who really wanted to learn, despite that I realized that the students felt motivated and committed to all the proposed activities. When dealing with children in that second grade, the behavior management was heavy but at the same time the discipline in the classroom could be controlled since the students saw me as an authority.</p>
<p><b>4th week: Supervisor observations</b></p>	<p>During all the classes of my integral pact, I was observed by my supervisor who at the end of each class gave me a "feedback", although sometimes I felt frustrated, I felt that I had more negative points in my classes than positive points, I felt even more motivated to do my classes correctly, I learned a lot from my supervisor experience and I applied the advices she gave me.</p>
<p><b>5<sup>th</sup> week: Second video recording of the class</b></p>	<p>This second class in which they observed me allowed me to reflect in this narrative on the teaching aspects that I must improve to have a successful practice, to do so, I must take into account the suggestions of my tutor.</p>
<p><b>6th week: external factors that influence in students misbehaving</b></p>	<p>Through this narrative, I pointed out some external factors that might have a negative influence on students behaving such as: being in the last week of the school year and having the classes at the last hours of the school day, aspects that affect students' willingness towards the classes.</p>
<p><b>7<sup>th</sup> week: Process in the developing of the pedagogical project</b></p>	<p>This narrative allowed me to analyze the process that led to the development of my pedagogical project, I realized that for the correct execution of a project the complete organization of both the English classes and the time dedicated to the project is necessary, the teacher must do a relationship between the two things to be able to have the necessary time to do all the activities that had been planned.</p>
<p><b>8th week: General sensations of the end of this process</b></p>	<p>This narrative allowed to express the proud I felt when most of students approved English subject, but at the same time sadness because of some students who failed the subject and the school year. Moreover, in this narrative, I recognized that this pedagogical practicum made me live a very satisfactory experience, even though I faced some difficulties related to some students' misbehaving, during this process I could overcome them as well.</p>

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## Results

### **Reflection an essential tool for transforming our pedagogical practicum and our critical spirit.**

Reflecting is an essential part within the practicum process, because it allows us to analyze our performance every time we teach that is to say weaknesses or strengths presented in our pedagogical practicum. In this regard, it's important to highlight that by means of instruments such as: Self-observation, Tutor teacher observation, reflective workshops, class recording and especially the ten narratives the following aspects emerged: Teaching methodology and Class environment.

Teaching methodology was one of most relevant aspects that through reflection I analyzed, since having a good teaching methodology allow students to be engaged in the English learning process, that's why thorough this pedagogical practicum I tried to implement dynamic and didactic activities for aching the main goal mentioned above taking always into account the learning styles of the students; Based on this all along this reflection process I evaluated the way I planned my classes, how I put into practice these lesson plans and other situations as well as the recommendations given by my supervisor.

In this perspective, I could realize how students were motivated and engaged with the different activities proposed in each class by means of different didactic materials like the use of audiovisuals slides and workshops that caught their attention.

In general speaking, through reflection we can improve every day our teaching methodology by recognizing what are those positive and negative aspects to be analyzed

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and in this way change those aspects to be better in our profession and improve the teaching practice.

On the other hand, when talking about class environment, it's necessary to relate it with students behaving during the classes; this aspect was one of the most difficult situations every teacher has to face, that's why through the implementation of the reflection the pre-service teacher realized that she must look for proper strategies to change the indiscipline problematic; so that she implemented group grade and positive points, these strategies helped me significantly but sometimes these didn't work because of external factors that might had a negative influence on students behaving such as: being at the last hours of the school day , aspects that affect students' willingness towards the classes, nevertheless this part of our working life as teachers and with the experience acquired from day to day we will be able to overcoming them.

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of a reflective process allows the pre-service teacher to be aware of her pedagogical practicum that means the positive aspects as well as those she needed to improve while teaching thus she consider this was a key aspect of the practicum process. Besides, it helped her to reflect and change if needed when facing different situations such as: students 'behaving, needs and learning process, teaching methodology among others.

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## CHAPTER III: Outreach component

### “Awareness raising project to English language in primary schools in Pamplona, Colombia”

#### Introduction

The participation in the global policies in terms of culture and economics has motivate the Colombian government to promote the learning of a foreign language in all the country, in such a way that citizens have the opportunity to participate in cultural exchanges which allow them to more equitable conditions towards the personal and social development of the country.

Aiming at promoting the English learning in Colombia and make Colombian people more competitive, in 2004, the National Ministry of Education created the bilingual policy whose objective is: “Having citizens that can be able to communicate in English, with international standards which take the country deeper in the communicative and universal processes, in the global economy and in the cultural openness”. This is how the National Ministry of Education has been implemented a large variety of strategies in the different levels of education aiming at obtaining this goal. A clear example of this is the creation of the standards of quality in English for primary and secondary education, the implementation of a very coherent and complete system of an evaluation system and the description and development of several training plans.

This program has been implemented in the whole country and has integrated the work done by the Education secretary, the public and private universities and the language institutes, however, findings obtained until the moment have not been promising given that



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most of the educational institutions of the country have not been impacted by this.

Regarding primary school, the National Government pretends to expand the coverage of the English teaching to children, due to the fact that several times, most of these educational establishments do not have an English teacher who guides the teaching-learning processes, hence, the results of the nation-wide evaluations are not gratifying at all.

The University of Pamplona in Colombia, as a public institution pretends to educate trainers and more specifically in the foreign languages degree English and French which has approached to the reality in the primary schools of Pamplona with regard to the National bilingual policy; many institutions in this city do not have English teacher to contribute to the education of the primary school sector.

Facing this reality and the problems associated with it, the current proposal of social influence aims at meeting the needs in the English language, in the child population of the primary school in Pamplona city and integrating the formation of the foreign languages degree English and French students to the educational reality of this sector for trying to reduce the gap generated between the public and private schools in the foreign languages area.

The governmental policies identify the problem; however, normativity is not enough effective support is needed, to be more specific, more teachers in the foreign languages section, so that the results in the exams from the students are in accordance with the proposals of Colombia the most educated.

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## **Justification**

Nowadays, learning and acquiring a foreign language allows us to be at the vanguard of our own needs. It is for this reason that this process becomes necessary to implement and to work it from the beginnings of schooling of the children so that at the end of its cycle of basic education they will have foundations that allow them to continue this learning in the secondary education, vocational media and in the superior education, to get more people trained in this area. This project aims to raise consciousness of the English teaching process in primary schools in the city of Cúcuta, contributing to the basic training in foreign language that becomes necessary and primordial at these levels. For this reason, it is carried out as part of the community extension component of the comprehensive practice developed by the last semester students of the Foreign Languages Degree of the University of Pamplona, as a way to contribute to the consolidation of teaching of English in the primary basic sector. The implementation of this project favors both the institutions and the student population of the city of Cúcuta, as well as the Program of Foreign Languages and the students who develop their practicum. This benefit results in the possibility that primary school children may have contact with the foreign language, and at the same time, to the students who are finishing their university training process so that they know the realities and educational needs of the environment, so that they can contribute intervening in processes that impact on the improvement of those needs.

## **General objectives**

The implementation of this outreach project, from the foreign language degree English and French of the University of Pamplona seeks:

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- To serve the needs of English formation of children in primary schools in Cúcuta integrating the formation of the foreign languages English and French undergraduate students towards the educational reality of teaching English in primary schools in Cúcuta.

### **Specific objectives**

For a better understanding of the previous aspects, this proposal will aim at:

- Familiarizing children from primary schools in Cúcuta with the essential foundations in English
- Engaging students from the foreign languages program English and French in the teaching English processes in primary schools in Cúcuta city.
- Articulating the students from the foreign languages program English and French with the outreach projects proposed by the social interaction sector of the University of Pamplona.

### **Typology of the project**

This one is a formative project open to the institutions that offer primary education in which the pre-service teaching process will be carried out in Pamplona city. This project is part of the formation of the foreign languages program English and French. This proposal is articulated to the outreach which goes beyond the institutional space and allows the articulation of the bachelor of PLEX to the Pamplona community.

### **Contribution lines**

- Contribution to the academics formation in the foreign languages areas.

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- Civic education (focusing the attention on educational problems aiming at reducing the inequality of the educational system.)
- Outreach towards the educational community in terms of University and program.

### **Theoretical framework**

#### **Teaching languages**

*Languages international policies.* The UNESCO has been concerned since many years, for the role of the language in the world. In 1999, it adopted the term multilingual education to make reference to the use of three languages: mother tongue, regional or national language, and international. This emerged from the idea that the particular needs from communities with different cultures which speak different languages, they just can be understood through the multilingual education. Cruz M, Loyo G, & Mendez E, (2011).

The UNESCO (2003) considers that languages not only are ways of communication but they also represent the culture, identities and values of the world. For this reason, the UNESCO suggest enhance the diversity of languages, and at the same time to support the learning of international languages that offer access to the global communication and information exchange. To achieve this, the UNESCO proposes to foster the multilingualism and the intercultural dialogue, policy for translation, written and visual material aiming at promoting new ideas and works of art.

According to Lima M, (2006), nowadays, learning a foreign language is fairly important, but always taking into account the cultures they represent. All kind of learning is extremely important for the human being sociability, given that it allows him/her to function properly in different contexts; learning a foreign language involves as professional

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as personal life of a person allowing that this process can be successful and beneficial in his/her knowing and savoir-faire.

***National bilingual program.*** Colombia, as other countries in Latin-American and the world, has adopted academics policies addressed to foster the English language as a foreign language, through the National bilingual program created in 2004 with three specific guidelines:

institutions of basic, intermediate, higher education, educational programs for human development, the ethno-education and flexible models of education. This program aims at the formation of the competitive and productive human talent in a global setting in different fields of action. (MEN, 2006, p. 6).

***Bilingualism.*** Bilingualism refers to the different degree of domination by which a person can communicate in more than one single language and culture. This degree depends mainly on the context in which the individual is. Hence, based on how a different language is used, different from the native, these languages are considered second languages or foreign languages. MEN (2006)

***Teaching English in primary School.*** According to Yesser A, & Chacon C, (2011) the process of acquiring a foreign language is a complex process in which there are cognitive and educational factors including the curriculum, the methodology and the formation of the foreign language teacher, In such a way, the importance of understanding how the child learns and incorporates a foreign language, it becomes necessary to analyze the theoretical foundations which explain the learning process or acquisition of a second language (L2) or foreign language and how this process is related to the native language. From the previous statement Krashen (1991) cited by Yesser A and Chacon C, (2011) makes a distinction between acquisition and learning in terms of LE. “la

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adquisición del lenguaje se hace de manera natural e inconsciente en forma de input comprensible, el cual se procesa e internaliza, mientras que el aprendizaje implica aprender de manera consciente las reglas de la lengua” “Esta distinción ha sido cuestionada debido a que resulta complejo deslindar ambos términos los cuales forman parte de un proceso continuo entre lo inconsciente y consciente (Richard-Amato 1996)”. Authors show their point of view regarding the topic and they differ in saying that the terms ‘learn and acquire are too similar given that the foreign language can be learnt naturally but it also involves learning processes. It is important to highlight, however, that Krashen and Terrel (1983) contributions in terms of natural approach are relevant for the acquisition of a foreign language in children and they support the Total Physical Response method (TPR) proposed by Asher (1976). According to Krashen and Terrel (1983), the child acquires a language in three stages:

***Pre-Production***, is the phase in which the child develops the ability of listening and comprehending the language through gestures and actions; it is a period distinguished by the silence. Therefore, at this stage it is advisable to implement the Total Physical Response (TPR) method proposed by Asher (1976) for stimulating the development of a foreign language through psychomotor activities without stressing on oral production.

***Early production***, in this phase one or two words/ phrases are said. It is recommended to focus in the meaning omitting grammatical mistakes.

***Extended speech***, in this period, the child is able to say complete phrases and also to participate in conversations. Now, the teacher must help the boy to improve fluidity in the foreign language. To support the aforementioned about the acquisition process of a foreign language acquisition it is possible to say that according to Berko and Bernsteins (1999),

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children who can learn, comprehend, discover and formulate forms of communication in a foreign language, they do so because they need to integrate with the rest of society.

Consequently, children can learn a language throughout the sense they make of the world, they have their own judgment for every aspect they discover. For this reason, learning a foreign language must begin from the prior knowledge and the structure of the native language, given that these aspects give way to begin learning a foreign language Yesser A and Chacon C, (2011) cite Ausubel (1986) who state that in terms of the cognitive psychology are many differences among the cognitive skills of children and adults in relation to the cognition and affectivity which are presented in motivation, creativity, spontaneity and flexibility which differentiate children from adults, generally adults have more problems when talking in a foreign language. Consequently, it is possible to say that the age is a factor that affects learning English as FL.

### **Sub- Project: The implementation of didactic activities in the learning of English in primary education**

#### **Introduction**

The English teaching at an early age, both in Colombia and in the rest of the world, is a topical issue that has been approached from different perspectives and for different purposes, leading many educators and philosophers in the field of education to take the task of looking for different methods that facilitate and ensure the learning of English in the different grades.

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The most important role of the teacher during the development of the process of English learning, especially in primary education, is the motivation and maintenance of it intrinsically in children to work together in the proposed activities. Therefore it is necessary to develop interest in this language in children through didactic activities of both physical and creative expression; and thus achieve significant learning, and a lasting taste for English, in children from an early age.

Due to the need for an optimal learning because of the high level of interest shown by children in learning the language, it is necessary a relevant implementation of didactic activities, which makes more effective the development of the skills that the language implies: speaking, listening and writing; that is, activities that increase and maintain interest, taste, joy and motivation towards the foreign language within the educational environment.

### **Identification of the need**

In the curriculum of the Mercedes Abrego technical institute the English teaching area is established in all the grades from transition to fifth grades. However, due to there is only one teacher for each group, it is very complicated to prepare a comprehensive and integral class that contains varied topics addressing all areas of education. In addition, the institution does not have a specialized teacher to guide the teaching-learning English process in the second grade level therefore students do not have acquired the basic vocabulary of English that is learned at this age since at these ages is where children memorize the vocabulary quickly. On the other hand, although each classroom has TICs, these are not fully exploited since, in general, teachers work with books or limit learning to use it show videos concerning other areas, for this reason it is necessary to implement



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teaching strategies that motivate children to learn, for this reason it is necessary to implement teaching strategies that motivate children to learn, in this way they will not see to attend school as an obligation but instead, have fun and learn to work as a team.

### **Justification**

The English learning at early ages is considered an indispensable aspect to take into account in the intellectual development of children; since at that age the brain is very moldable and susceptible to new learning. It is important to bear in mind that learning a new language generates numerous benefits by improving communication skills, facilitating a globalized education promoting interculturality and fostering knowledge in sociocultural aspects of the language being studied. Educational institutions must offer children the English learning in a natural way, interiorizing structures and rules unconsciously; through activities and didactic materials that motivate them to learn avoiding monotonous and uninteractive classes. Some of these activities such as games, songs, rhymes, flashcards and use of technology will provide children with efficient support during the process of teaching and learning English; as well as, they will become a vehicle which will allow them to become familiar with the foreign language in a fun and spontaneous manner, encouraging them to participate in the classes and to develop meaningful learning.

### **Objectives**

#### ***General Objective***

- To strengthen the English language through didactic activities that allow students to acquire basic knowledge of the language.

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### *Specific objectives*

- To develop in children the motivation to learn English through games.
- To encourage the learning of vocabulary with the help of drawings and flashcards.
- To encourage students to take the initiative to learn English through songs.

### **Theoretical framework**

Learning and strengthening the learning of a second language requires the interest and motivation of the student. The goal of a language learning process is for students to learn to communicate. In this sense, Pardede (2010) argues: "Short stories can also be a powerful and motivating source for teaching to speak and write. Reading, recreation and discussion are more effective learning" (p 22). This author illustrates the importance of developing language skills in the classroom to strengthen students' self-confidence to form relationships through the use of language and thus be able to create writings where they express their experiences and communicate in the foreign language.

During writing and reading activities, the teacher's role is important not only in planning activities, but also in providing appropriate comments that motivate the use of student language. Richards (2008) argues that feedback is necessary during or after activities to correct grammar, coherence and cohesion. This process also helps students create their own improvement plan, understanding that mistakes should not be an obstacle to communication, but rather a way of improving language use and developing optimal learning.

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## Methodology

This component was developed by the Pre-service teacher in order to reinforce the knowledge of English and the development of skills of 2nd grade students by implementing different activities developed during English class hours. What the teacher basically did was provide support for students to put into practice their knowledge of English through classroom exercises. To do this, the pre-service teacher used tools such as games, videos, vocabulary card worksheets, among others to achieve her goal.

Based on the above, in order to help students overcome the difficulties presented in their learning process, the pre-service teacher developed workshops in class and sometimes in which the English teacher already had the planned classes, the pre-service teacher helped the teacher with the pronunciation of the vocabulary to the students and to grade some exams, the English classes were Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

It is important to highlight that only 8 two-hour class spaces were developed due to the weekly recess, national strikes, and deliveries of semiannual reports, among others.

The following schedule shows the topics worked, the pre-service teacher schedule for primary school, and the material implemented (see appendix 2)

<b>SECOND GRADE ENGLISH SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>Monday</b>	7:00- 7:50 7:50-8:40
<b>Wednesday</b>	6:10-7:10 7:00-7:50
<b>Thursday</b>	9:10-10:10 10:00-10:50 10:50-11:40

*Table 11. Schedule pre – service teacher in elementary grade*

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*Table 12. Primary school topics chronogram.*

WEEK	TOPIC	MATERIAL AND METHODOLOY USED
1	Verb to be (Affirmative form)	Videos/ matching / exercises
2	Verb to me (negative and interrogative form)	Videos/ worksheet / exercises
3	Verb have	Slides / exercises
4	The body parts	slides/ song / videos / worksheet
5	The animals	videos /song/ book exercises
6	The food	Flash cards/ book exercises
7	The clothes	song / coloring / book exercises
8	The prepositions of place	Slides/ work guide / explanation with objects

### Conclusion

The implementation of the songs and videos in class showed that the students are more receptive and memorize the work vocabulary more quickly. This is because visual aid allows retention and association of vocabulary. This learning becomes more effective since it is acquired in an entertaining and fun way for the students, generating a positive effect since the students are always open and interested in this type of activities.

The examples given to the students through real objects achieved a positive result, causing the students to assimilate the position of the objects with their meaning.

Being part of this process allowed me to help students overcome their learning difficulties during each class time since they not only worked on new subjects but also a review of the vocabulary seen above, was very satisfactory because most of The students were able to pass the subject, which reflects that these learning spaces had a very positive impact on them.

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## CHAPTER IV

### Administrative component

#### Introduction

As a pre-service teacher, one of the most important responsibilities is to be an active member of the educational community where we are, making part of the decisions that are taken by the members of the teaching and administrative staff as well as demonstrating and encouraging a culture of belonging to the educational institution where we work and relate to others. To be an active member of the educational center where we are located, we must be part of not only the decision making process but also the extracurricular events and activities that are planned during the academic period. It should be noted that the beliefs and practices of certain educational institutions may vary but this should not be an impediment for us as teachers to respect and act responsibly in the face of manifestation events whether religious or any other type, it is our duty to respect them and show interest for our work as educators.

#### Objectives

##### General Objectives

- To participate in all the extra activities the Mercedes Ábrego high school propose and integrate all these events to the experience of being a teacher.

##### Specific Objectives

- To attend to all the events responsibly and according to procedure.
- To make aware the students of the importance of every event the school organizes.

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- To organize performances and presentation for cultural acts in the school.
- To be part of all the extracurricular activities and events proposed in the school.

### Methodology

As a member of the Mercedes Abrego school community, I actively participated in all the activities proposed by the institution, whether they were cultural events, in the supervision of students throughout the day, among others. (See appendix 3). Thus as pre-service teacher I took part in the following activities:

*Table 13. Chronogram of activities and events developed at school.*

WEEK	NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	ROLE AND ACTIVITIES DEVELOPED BY TEACHER
1 <sup>st</sup> week	Flag-raising ceremony  Bingo event	To observe the students behavior and do something if someone misbehaves.
2 <sup>nd</sup> week	Exams	To do the exam: phrasal verbs
3 <sup>rd</sup> week	Register the notes to the platform of the institution	To enter the notes to the platform.
4 <sup>th</sup> week	Meeting of the evaluation commission.  Delivery of second term reports to parents.	To talk about the student performance throughout the process.  To talk to the students' parents about their performance inside the English class and to give out the students' reports.
7 <sup>th</sup> week	Trimestral exams	To do the exams for each group: 4 different exams

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<b>8<sup>th</sup> week</b>	Register the notes to the platform pf the institution  Recover workshops	To enter the notes to the platform.  To do the workshops for students to retrieve the notes they don't have.
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### Conclusion

Being a member of this community by participating in the activities implemented, made me much easier the adaption process to the institution because I was able to interact significantly with teachers, students, and parents and thus face what would be my work environment.

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