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EFL Student Case Study – Progress and improvement of a student's writing skills studying at a private institute – TEFL program portfolio

TRABAJO DE FIN DE MAESTRIA

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DEDICATION

Dedicated solely to my family.

Fabian Marcelo Paredes Zúñiga

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an analysis of an EFL student case study and a TEFL program portfolio. The purpose of this work was to evidence and analyze the progress and improvement of a student's writing skills in a private language institute. For this study a student starting to study English in a private institute in the city of Loja was selected. The study started with a pre-test, and then continued with the collection and analysis of several activities carried out in class. Finally, a post-test was administered to the student to determine the improvement of her writing skills.

In addition, this thesis includes an analysis of a portfolio. All the activities included in the portfolio are assignments carried out during the master´s program. The main objective of this portfolio was to analyze the activities and determine which TESOL / NCATE standards they were based upon. A rationale was developed for each of the activities.

As a general conclusion, it was determined that in fact good grammar skills are the foundation for writing. Moreover, the inclusion of standard-based activities influence positively in the development of writing skills.

KEY WORDS: Case study, TESOL / NCATE standards, writing skills, artifacts.

RESUMEN

Esta tesis consiste en el análisis de un estudio de caso de un estudiante de inglés como lengua extranjera. El propósito de este trabajo es evidenciar y analizar el progreso y mejora de la habilidad de escritura en una alumna que empieza a aprender inglés en un instituto de Inglés privado. El estudio de caso empieza con un pre-test, luego continúa la recolección y análisis de las actividades hechas en clase y termina con un post-test para determinar la mejoría en la habilidad de escritura.

Además se incluye el análisis de un portafolio. Todas las actividades que se incluyen en el portafolio fueron realizadas en el transcurso del estudio de la maestría. El propósito de este portafolio es analizar cada una de las actividades y determinar la relación o el uso de los estándares del TESOL / NCATE en cada una de ellas.

Como conclusión general fue posible evidenciar que la gramática es la base para la escritura correcta. Asimismo, el uso de actividades basadas en los estándares de TESOL / NCATE ayudan inmensamente al desarrollo de las habilidades de escritura.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Estudio de caso, TESOL / NCATE estándares, escritura.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, globalization has become more palpable in every aspect of our lives. Globalization can be summarized in one word "integration", which means that we are in a phase where we integrate and share ideas, technology, products, etc. The importance of this global integration has resulted in a need for communication, which has aroused the interest of learning a bridge language or lingua franca. English has risen to be this bridge language and so has the interest of learning it. This interest of learning English has created a wave on research to study and analyze different aspects of language learning. One of the many procedures to determine progress in L2 learners are the use of case studies, the use of specific standards and portfolios.

The present work has been divided in three parts. The first part of this thesis contains a case study that was carried out in a private language institute. The sample of this case study was a 12-year-old student studying the first level. The use of this case study enabled me to understand the progress of the student had in improving her writing skills. Moreover, the case study comprises the activities (Artifacts) carried out in class, and the analysis of the performance of the student doing these activities. In addition, this case study presents a test and a pre-test that show the progress made by the student.

The second part of the thesis reviews the TESOL / NCATE standards that were created for teachers involved in Language Learning. The standards established by the Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages and the National Council on the Accreditation of Teacher Education take into consideration five essential elements: language, culture, instruction assessment, and professionalism. Analyzing each of the domains with its standards will give understanding of the framework that prepares teachers for providing quality education and evaluation. These standards have been recognized worldwide and by adjusting to them teachers will successfully ensure the teaching-learning process.

The last part of this thesis corresponds to an analysis made to different assignments designed for different courses during the entire master's program. The assignments were developed based on the TESOL / NCATE standards. For this analysis five activities were chosen. During the analysis of the activities a rationale for each one of them was developed. The rationale explains the reason for using each of the activities based on implementing the standards mentioned already. Moreover, through the analysis it was possible to observe the main focus of the activity and the possible effect on the students' knowledge.

Furthermore, it is relevant to mention that the main objective for this work was to acquire profound knowledge in of the many elements that influence the teaching-learning process. In addition, this present work can benefit teachers and students that are eager to learn more about second language learning.

Finally, the development of this work did not have any methodological limitations and neither had limitations from the institution and the participant that willingly partook in the different activities established for this research.

METHOD

In order to carry out this case study, a private language institution was carefully chosen. After getting the permission to work in this prestigious place, a student from Level 1 was selected. The student was a 12 year old girl who attends to public school and also to a private language institute. It is important to note that the student received about four hours of English instruction in her school, but her parents have decided to enroll her in the language institute to further her knowledge of the language. Most important, this student was selected with the only purpose to study the progress she made in her writing skills and analyze the teaching- learning process.

Additionally, a research for relevant information was done. The information gathered was used to build the literature review for this study. The information was obtained mostly from books and a few reliable online sources. This information helped to cultivate knowledge to analyze all the elements collected in the case study.

To develop the standard based position paper it was necessary to find, read and analyze the standards established by the TESOL / NCATE. Once the information was analyzed a program portfolio was built. The portfolio included assignments carried out during the master's program. The assignments were carefully selected to meet the TESOL / NCATE standards and domains. Furthermore, a rationale was written to explain the relation of the assignments with the specific standard.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to develop this case study, the collection of meaningful information related to the acquirement of writing skills in an EFL class is essential. The information collected through research of various sources will develop the needed knowledge to analyze and understand the progress reflected on the artifacts collected from the EFL student.

1.1 Importance and factors that define writing

Writing is a powerful tool in terms of communication. Robitaille and Connelly (2007) state that writing can aid the person to think in a clear way, to express and share ideas better and even impress instructors and supervisors. Moreover, writing can help express the vision of the world to others. In sum, writing can definitely help you succeed in your personal life, work and school. In addition, Józef (2001) explains that writing can be cataloged as one of the most difficult human activities because it develops a design idea, demonstrations of knowledge and experience with subjects. Similarly, Rijlaarsdam, Bergh and Couzijn (2005) explain that writing is a complex activity that needs a lot of effort. Depending on the complexity of the text, the writer involves different sub-processes that generate content, structures information and translation of information into language.

Writing can also be defined as a structure that represents utterances used in spoken language through means of lasting and noticeable marks (Sampson 1985, p.5). In addition, written language is not a clear transcription of what is uttered since the message composed on paper may differ from the original spoken language.

To this respect Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001) state that writing text is a complicated task that needs to be implemented in a coordinated set of mental activities. Writers need to have a clear delimitation of what the nature and the goal of the written text is. Moreover, the writer has to be aware of the reader's characteristics and expectations in order to anticipate what can be expressed in the ideas written. The authors also state that the writers have to specify the most important ideas in the text. In order to delimit and adapt text, it is necessary to transfer the ideas into words by undergoing a writing process. Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001) explain that writing words is not just writing sentences that are isolated, but to creating sentences that are articulated without redundancy and without many thematic ruptures; overall the text has to have coherence. To meet the previous specifications, writers may choose the appropriate words for each idea; use very strict syntactic; grammar and orthography rules; correct punctuation and connection marks.

In addition to the previous statements, Paivi, Mason and Lonka (2001) advocate the view that the nature in the process of writing is a matter of deeply understanding problem solving-strategies where the role of social and interactive factors such as the familiarity of the writer with the type of writing, and the relationship with the readers is specified. Moreover, the authors observe Vygotsky's theory which states that in order for the discourse to take place between the writer and the reader, it has to share common knowledge. It is also pointed out that this negotiation is part of a social construction that has text as its connection.

1.2 Writing in ESL and EFL

Regarding beginner writing, Raimes (1983) explains that when learning a new language, the student is learning to communicate with others. This communication helps the learner to understand other people, talk to them and understand what they have written. Writing helps students by reinforcing their grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary taught in class. Writing can make the students more adventurous; therefore, they may go beyond to what they have learned and take risks. When writing, the students get involved with the new language and when they struggle with what to put on paper, they discover new things to write or new ways to express and idea. The relation that exists between writing and thinking makes writing relevant and valuable.

In addition, Peregoy and Boyle (2005) indicates that second language writers will develop skills during the process. In order to become effective writers, learners need to coordinate different skills such as clarity of thought and expression, knowledge of genre to be used according to different purposes, and the skill of using conventional spelling, grammar, and punctuation. All the elements listed before will depend on the proficiency, cognitive development and writing experience of the learner. Moreover, beginner writers experience the same difficulties as first language writers. This means that both writers find writing arduous, and this makes writers to produce very little at first. When learners produce a great deal of writing, it is certain that lack of logical organization will be present. One example of logical organization is the use of invented words that are based on the elements in the spelling system of the first language. Additionally, beginner L2 writers may not be aware of the conventional word order in the target language. Thus, learners will make mistakes in grammar, vocabulary and its usage.

Furthermore, Hyland (2003) explains L1 and L2 writing differences, and he divides them in two: Individual differences and Language and strategy differences. In the first difference, the author states that many of the adult language writers will not attain language proficiency due to a stall at some level, and the satisfaction the leaners get when their message is understood regardless of

the correctness of the message. In addition, linguistic, social and psychological factors play an important role in acquisition of a second language. Moreover, the author also states that no two learners have the same learning background and their personality will influence how well or how fast they will acquire skills in writing a second language. Having stated the previous factors, the learners are also influenced by different writing experiences, attitudes and levels of motivation.

In the second difference which relates to language and strategy, Hyland (2003) states that the factor that identifies the L2 writers is the difficulty in adequately express themselves in English. L2 learners have dissimilar linguistic knowledge than native English speakers. While L1 learners already have intuitive skills in grammar and a vast vocabulary when learning to write, L2 learners have to deal with learning to write and learning the language at the same time. Silva (as cited in Hyland, 2003) explains that because of the difference in language knowledge, L2 writers are less effective that their counterpart. Moreover, studies show that L2 writing is shorter, less cohesive, less fluent, and many mistakes can be found. Hyland (2003) also explains that L2 learners are aware of grammar mistakes and the lack of vocabulary they have, which frustrates them since they cannot communicate their ideas in English in a correct manner.

Likewise, Hinkel (2013) indicates that there is a difference in learning to write between L1 and L2 adult learners. Nonnative speakers have to deal with learning the language whereas native speakers have already a solid expertise in the language. In addition, research does not show precisely if nonnative speakers acquire native-like English proficiency at a university and college level. No matter the years of arduous study, language interaction, text and discourse nonnative speakers have had.

Regarding obstacles in writing in ESL, Kroll (2003) observes that no matter the instructional approach, it is very difficult to incorporate grammar in composition teaching; mainly because there are no sufficient instruction hours. The problem worsens because ESL writers at university levels need to think and read in a critical way, understand complex texts, synthesize information and perspectives from various sources, adequately and logically create and organize arguments.

Another obstacle observed by Kroll (2003) is the diverse level of proficiency in a class. Grammar teaching becomes difficult because students differ in different ways:

- Overall language proficiency and command of English syntax and grammar
- Familiarity with structures and vocabulary commonly used in academic writing

- Background in formal grammar instruction needed to successfully revise and edit written products.

(p. 141-142)

1.3 Sentence structure and the paragraph

Hogue (1996, p8) defines as sentence "A group of words that contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete sentence". In addition every sentence must contain at least one subject and one verb to form a sentence. Some sentences are made up of other parts to express a complete thought. By combining sentences, writers expand their sentence-writing skills. Also, when short sentences are put together, these become one larger sentence. The union of large sentences will create a paragraph.

Paragraphs are defined by Hogue and Oshima (1996) as an essential unit of organization in writing in which a gathering of related sentences creates one fundamental thought. A paragraph can be as short as one sentence or the length of ten sentences. The quantity of sentences is insignificant; be that as it may, the passage ought to be long enough to create the key thought in a clear way. Likewise, Sarada (2006) notes that a paragraph is a component of an essay or narration that focuses only on one topic (main idea) at once. The paragraph needs to be unified, coherent and organized. It is relevant that narrations are divided in paragraphs; this will allow the reader the proper understanding. Dividing narrations into paragraphs shows the writer´s clarity of thinking and organization.

Furthermore, paragraphs are shaped of different elements and as Hogue and Oshima (1996) indicates one of these elements is the Topic Sentence, which indicates the main thought of the paragraph. The topic sentence establishes the topics in the paragraph and also restricts one or two areas of discussion in the paragraph. This particular area is called the controlling idea. In addition, Sarada (2006) states that topic sentences can be recognized by asking yourself what the paragraph is about. The answer will be the topic sentence, which should not be two or three words; otherwise it would be a title. Finally, Lacie (2008, p.212) says that "The topic sentence reveals the writer's direction. It tells the reader where the idea of the paragraph is going. A topic sentence is the beginning, the jumping-off point of the paragraph".

The second key element of the paragraph is the Supporting Sentence, Hogue and Oshima (1996) state that this sentence develops the topic sentence because it complements it by giving facts, statistics, reasons, examples and quotations.

Also, Lacie (2008, p.213) states that:

"Support sentences do just that, support. These sentences provide the reader with more specific or concrete details about your topic sentence or main idea of the paragraph. Usually there are about three to five support sentences in a paragraph, depending on the topic. Support sentences help to explain the topic and provide interesting facts"

Moreover, Bombardó, Aguilar and Barahona (2010) explain that supporting sentences need to be well organized and they should rise in a natural way from the topic sentence that way the reader can easily process the information presented.

The third essential element that makes up a paragraph is the Concluding Sentence. Kucinski (2007, p.90) states "Just like your essay needs a conclusion, your paragraph needs a concluding sentence". The Concluding Sentence will condense the main ideas in the paragraph. In addition, the Concluding Sentence should tell the reader that you have finished with your thought. In this part of the paragraph there will not be an introduction to a new idea. Similarly, Nazario, Borches and Lewis (2012) points out that the concluding part of the paragraph is a link sentence. In this sentence the writer may restate the controlling idea, comment about the main idea or highlight on the insight you have arrived. The author also explains that if the writer wishes to use a restatement, he should avoid repeating the topic sentence; make use of diverse ways to state the main idea. Also if there is a need to make a final comment or express a vision about the main idea, the writer should go beyond what it has been stated in the topic sentence.

Similarly, Hogue and Oshima (1996) states that concluding sentences are not totally required in every paragraph in an essay made up of various paragraphs. Concluding sentences become helpful in single paragraphs and long paragraphs because it lets the reader note the end of the paragraph and also reminds the relevant points.

Additionally, Hogue and Oshima (1996) point out three purposes of the concluding sentence:

1. It signals the end of the paragraph
2. It summarizes the main points of the paragraph
3. It gives a final comment on the topic and leaves the reader with the most important ideas to think about.

Furthermore, Ingels (2006) indicates that not all the paragraphs have concluding sentences. Some paragraphs may have a sentence that indicates the reader that the paragraph has ended. As example the author explains that these sentences may recapitulate the main ideas or restate the topic sentence and comment about it. A concluding line may start with transition words such as: In conclusion, Briefly, In General, To summarize / conclude.

In addition, Ingels (2006, p.28) indicates a guideline for writing concluding sentences:

1. The conclusion should confirm what proceeded and/or point out what ought to be remembered.
2. Writers should never copy a (part of the) topic sentence literally.
3. A conclusion should never introduce new information.

Regarding Unity in a paragraph, Sarada (2006) indicates that unity is one of the most relevant qualities of a well-structured paragraph. In a paragraph that has unity, the writer only focuses on one topic, which has been established in the topic sentence. In a paragraph no two ideas will be discussed. If two ideas are discussed in one paragraph, it will lose its unity. In addition, Lepionka (2008, p.118) explains that "Unity is the quality of centrality and relevance, or belongings. That is, all the paragraphs is a section relate to the purpose of that section, and all the sentences in a paragraph relate to the print set out in the paragraph´s topic sentence or thesis statement"

Moreover, Hogue and Oshima (1996) indicates that the second element of unity is the supporting sentence which has to directly explain or show the main idea stated in topic sentence. Information that does not relate directly to topic sentence should not be included. When students write supporting sentences that do not relate to the topic, these sentences are called irrelevant sentences.

Adding to the structure of a good paragraph, the use of outlining becomes essential. Hogue and Oshima (1996) indicate that outlining can be compared with the architect planning of a house. In the same sense, paragraphs need to be planned in advance; therefore, all the ideas will fit in. Similarly, Nazario, Borchers, and Lewis (2012, p.137) states that the "outline helps you organize your ideas before you begin to write: it is your blueprint". Moreover, writing a good outline helps you avoid incoherence, determine the best order of ideas, and brakes extensive essays into manageable pieces. The outline will help the writers to keep the paragraph unified and will let them make decisions on the information to be used before start writing the first draft. The outline can be changed at any time if it is needed.

Furthermore, Hogue and Oshima (1996, p.35) indicates that outline will improve writing for three reasons:

First of all, it will help you organize your ideas. Specifically, an outline will ensure that you won't include any irrelevant ideas, that you won't leave out any important points, and that your supporting sentences will be in logical order. Second, learning to outline will help you write more quickly. It may take some practice at first, but once you become used to outlining your ideas

before you start to write, you will be surprised at how fast you will actually be able to write. Preparing an outline is 75 percent of the work. The actual writing becomes easier because you don't have to worry about what you are going to say, you already have a well-organized plan to follow. Finally, your grammar will improve because you will be able to concentrate on it, not on your thoughts or organization, speed, and grammar make learning to well worth effort.

Finally, Jia (2006) notes the importance of the outline. The outline helps students organize and record their ideas. This becomes important because students usually write and think at the same time which causes to block the ideas and make small mistakes. The author also states that students will be better off if they just write down their ideas without concentrating on writing. Thinking and writing are two processes that should not be carried out at the same time; therefore, if students have an outline, they can later on concentrate in writing paying attention to sentences, punctuation, grammar, etc. This way writing becomes easier and free of mistakes.

1.4 Coherence, cohesion and punctuation

Writing a good paragraph means that the writer has to take into account different essential elements. One of these elements is Coherence, Sarada (2006) states that beside unity, the paragraph has to be coherent. This means that a paragraph is coherent when the ideas are organized and run logically from one sentence to another. In addition, Hogue and Oshima (1996) explain that the origin of the word coherence comes from the Latin verb cohere, which means "hold together. The authors also state that paragraphs and longer texts must be rational and smoothly connect between sentences.

Furthermore, Hogue and Oshima (1996) explain four ways to have a coherent text. The first way refers to the use of key nouns, which have to be repeated in the paragraph replacing pronouns when the meaning is not clear. The second way refers to the use of consistent pronouns. When the pronouns are to be used, it is necessary that they use the same person throughout the paragraph. The third way is the use of transition signals such as first, second, next, finally, therefore and however, or phrases like in conclusion, on the other hand, and as a result. The use of transition words helps the reader to follow the ideas and makes the paragraph coherent. The last way refers to the use of logical order in the sentences; the order of the sentences will depend on the theme and purpose of the writing. It is relevant to note that the order of the sentences is logical to the reader´s knowledge of written English.

In addition, Valli, Chanock, and Lakshmi (2007) refer to coherence as the glue that holds together the essay. The authors explain that all the elements of the essay are coherently

connected: the supporting sentences support the topic sentences in the paragraph; topic sentences support issues / sections / headings, which at the end helps build the introduction and later on expanding the thesis. Ultimately, coherence guarantees the essay to be focused and has a clear point of view.

Another essential element of good writing is cohesion. Halliday and Hasan (2013) define cohesion as the group of possibilities in a language that keep the text together. In addition, the authors explain that cohesion refers to the meaning of the text and what states the text. Similarly, Mather, Wendling and Robert (2009) indicate that cohesion creates a relation between the words and phrases, making them clear. The authors also refer to cohesion as the glue that keeps the text together and that even though the text becomes coherent, it does not ensure it.

Additionally, Blanpain (2006) refers to cohesion as a phenomenon, which is involved in the grammatical and lexical characteristics that links sentences by using lexical repetition, link words and the use of pronouns. Also, it is explained that the lack of cohesion makes the text choppy and unconnected style. As a general advice the author explains that the writer must always have in mind the reader and should always try to convey the message as clear as possible.

The final essential element of respectable writing is punctuation. Calkins, Fletcher, and Murray (as cited in Angelillo, 2002) state that "Punctuation is part of a repertoire of good writing skills. It is one of many tools writers use for communicating meaning, along with word choice, thoughtful organization, a gripping lead, a satisfying ending, tension for pulling the reader along, and a host of others". In addition, the author explains that punctuation gives form to the way readers read and because of this it is necessary to use a set of symbols. Punctuation can set the pace and flow of the words in the text making punctuation a very important tool.

In addition, the American Psychological Association (2010) explains that punctuation sets the tempo and tells the readers where to pause, stop, and take a bypass. Punctuation consists of commas, semicolons, colon, period and question marks, dashes, parentheses and brackets. These symbols will determine the extent of different pauses. Similarly, O'Brien (2012) states that punctuation is a set of symbols that determine the organization of written language and understanding the role each of the symbols plays should strengthen the writer´s knowledge of grammar. Therefore, the use of punctuation should be used consistently in the entire writing.

1.5 The Essay

Hogue and Oshima (1996) indicate that the essay is a made up of several paragraphs. The reason for the essay being several paragraphs long is too difficult to discuss in one or two

paragraphs. Nonetheless, the essay is as important as writing a paragraph, they both focus on a topic. The paragraph is structured in three parts: The introductory paragraph, the body, and the concluding paragraph.

Regarding the introductory paragraph Hogue and Oshima (1996) state that it is important to note four elements of this paragraph: The introductory paragraph introduces the topic of the essay, it gives a general background of the topic, it often indicates the overall plan of the essay, and it should arouse the reader's interest in the topic. In addition, Sharon and Ira (2005) state that the introductory paragraph should provide background for the main idea and that this has to clearly indicate the thesis or your point. Moreover, Hogue and Oshima (1996) also indicate two relevant parts of the introductory paragraph, which are the general statement and the thesis statement.

In this respect, Swales and Feak (2009) explain that general statements can include statements that are extensive and that may not be always true. It is important that after the general statement, support information is provided; therefore, the statement will go from general to specific. Similarly, Hogue and Oshima (1996) explain that general statements should give information about the topic as an introduction, which catches the attention of the reader. The sentences that follow the general statement need to become more specific than the previous ones; therefore, leading the reader into the thesis statement.

Contrary to the general statement, Hogue and Oshima (1996) refer to the thesis statement as the most important sentence in the introduction. The subtopics of the essay are listed in this sentence. An organization of the ideas is indicated in the thesis statement.

In addition, Aquino (2001, p.98-99) states that the sentence that contains the main idea of the essay is called the thesis statement. It is important to note the following points about the thesis statement:

1. The thesis statement should be expressed in a complete sentence. Since the thesis statement is the main statement of the entire essay, it should express a complete thought; therefore, it should be expressed in a complete sentence. And since it makes a statement, it should not be written as a question.

2. A thesis statement expressed an opinion, attitude, or ideas; it does not simply announce the topic the essay will develop.

3. A thesis statement should express an opinion; it should not express a fact. Since the thesis statement expresses and attitude, opinion, or idea about a topic, the thesis statement is really a

statement that someone could disagree with. The thesis statement, therefore, is a statement that needs to be explained or proved.

4. A thesis statement should express only one idea toward one topic; if a thesis statement contains two or more ideas, the essay runs the risk of lacking unity and coherence.

The end of the essay has to finish strong with a concluding paragraph. Hogue and Oshima (1996) state that this paragraph signals the end of the essay. This paragraph must include a summary of the ideas discussed in the body of the essay and the thesis statement written in different words. Additionally, Nazario and Lewis (2012) state that the concluding paragraph must show a conclusion to the narration. The authors also point out that the concluding is not only a summary of the ideas expressed in the essay or the thesis statement restated. The concluding paragraph provides the reader with your last opinion; therefore, it is relevant that the conclusion is significant to the reader.

Furthermore, Brandon and Brandon (2013) notes that the structure of the introductory paragraph and the concluding paragraph is similar since both have a specific function. The author states that the concluding paragraph is often three to six sentences long. Brandon and Brandon (2013) also advices that if the writer is not sure of what to write in the concluding paragraph, the writer can go back to the introductory paragraph and see what is in there. For example if the writer started with a question in the introductory paragraph, the author must give answer to that question in the concluding paragraph. It is important to remember that the concluding paragraph must not include complaints, apologies or introduction to a new topic or support.

1.6 Assessing writing

Peregoy and Boyle (2005) state that when evaluating beginner writers, teachers need to find what the students do well. Even though mistakes will be easy to spot, it is important to understand that it is not possible to compare their work to the work done by someone with better skills. Therefore, it is relevant to praise the work beginners do while telling the areas that need improvement.

Primarily, assessing writing is essential. Agustin (2011) explains that writing can be seen as an indicator of writing expertise in academic backgrounds. Universities around the globe include writing tests as part of their skill tests. Similarly, institutions such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), Cambridge among others include writing tests, which are a big part of the test final score. Therefore, the process of testing writing must be carried out accurately and fair. In addition, the author points out two major elements in assessing writing: reliability and validity.

Cherry and Mayer (1993) (as cited in Agustin 2011 p.51) define reliability as follows:

Reliability is the consistency with which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. A test will be said to be highly reliable if a rater obtains similar results at two or more different measuring times (intrarater reliability), if two or more raters obtain similar results using the same assessing instrument (interrater reliability) or if a subject displays similar performance on different writing tasks (instrument reliability)

Regarding validity, Hamp-Lyons (as cited in Agustin 2001 p.51) states that "A test is considered to be valid if it actually tests what it claims to be testing. In order to search for validity, the particular writing test is examined using other testing instruments known to measure the same construct".

Furthermore, Agustin (2001) states that writing can be tested by using three different types of tests, which are multiple choice testing, timed impromptu writing tests and portfolio assessment. The Multiple choice test construction takes a lot more time than the other tests, but it assesses writing through indirect measures of grammar and vocabulary ability. Moreover, this type of test is easier to administer and mark. Unfortunately, this type of test lacks of validity because it evaluates the writer in an indirect manner by using other linguistic methods. In contrast to multiple choice testing and its indirect measures, timed essay test and portfolio assessment use direct testing. Direct testing refers to the productions of written test directly; therefore, they asses actual writing. Moreover, composition is considered to be valid because it directly tests writing performance. The setback for these two types of tests is that direct testing shows lower reliability because scorers often do not agree with the scores given. Even though, scorers have been previously trained.

In addition, other authors also comment about testing the ability to write. Hughes (2003) comments about testing only the ability to write, and other factors such as the creativeness, imagination, intelligence and opinions should not be part of tasks to be measure. Moreover, the author points out reading, which interferes with writing; therefore, instructions for writing should not be long and should go straight to the point. Finally, the tasks that are set to do for the students have to be authentic, but always keeping in mind that some tasks may be authentic for one group of students and not for the other.

Furthermore, Brown (2010) explains four types of written performance:

1. Imitative. In order for the writer to produce, the learner needs to acquire basic skills in writing letters, words, punctuation and to understand phoneme-graphene correspondences in English. In this stage, the only focus of the task is form.

2. Intensive (controlled). Here the writer produces vocabulary that is suitable within a context, collocations and idioms, and correct use of grammatical structures in a sentence. Also, in this stage meaning and correctness are not that important as form.

3. Responsive. In this task, writers are set to write longer texts. The writer should be able to connect different sentences to produce several paragraphs. Genres in this type of writing may include brief narrations, short reports, lab reports, summaries, brief responses to reading, and interpretation of graphs and charts. In addition, the writer has the freedom to make choices on how to present and express ideas. At this stage, the writer knows the essentials of grammar and focuses on discourse.

4. Extensive. At this level supposedly, the writer has the skills and strategies to develop essays, term papers, research reports and even a thesis. Also, at this level, writer should be able to organize and support their ideas in a correct manner, demonstrate expertise in syntax and lexical variety. In order to accomplish their task, writers can engage in various drafts. This will allow the writer to focus on grammatical forms, editing and proof reading.

In addition, Brown (2010 p.274) explains three assessment issues:

1. Authenticity. Authenticity is a trait that is given special attention: if test-takers are being asked to perform a task, its face and content validity need to be assured in order to bring out the best in the writer. A good deal of writing performance in academic contexts is constrained by the pedagogical necessities of establishing the basic building blocks of writing.

Offering that freedom to learners requires the setting of authentic real-world contexts in which to write. The teachers become less of an instructor and more of a coach of facilitator. Assessment therefore is typically formative, not summative, and positive washback is more important than practicality and reliability.

2. Scoring. Scoring is the thorniest issue at these final two stages or writing. With so many options available to a learner, each evaluation by test administrator needs to be finely attuned not just how the writers strings words together (the form) but also what the writer is saying (the function of the text). The quality of writing (its impact and effectiveness) becomes as important, if not more important, than all the nuts and bolts that hold it together.

3. Timing. Yet another assessment issue surrounds the unique nature of writing. It is the only skill in which the language producer is not necessarily constrained by time, which implies the freedom to process multiple drafts before the text becomes a finished product. Like a sculptor creating an image, the writer can take an initial rough conception of a text and continue to refine it until it is deemed presentable to the public eye. Virtually all the real writing of prose texts for the revising and editing process are implied. Responsive writing, along with the next category of extensive writing, often relies on this essential drafting process for its ultimate success.

1.7 TESOL / NCATE standards

According to TESOL, Inc. (2013), the Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and the National Council on the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) have merged to create a set of standards to guide teaching education principles. Moreover TESOL / NCATE Standards have been divided in five different domains with their own standards. Each of the standards takes considerations of language, culture, instruction, assessment and professionalism.

The following are the standards established by TESOL / NCATE:

1.7.1 Domain 1. Language.

Candidates know, understand, and use the major theories and research related to the structure and acquisition of language to help English language learners' (ELLs') develop language and literacy and achieve in the content areas.

Issues of language structure and language acquisition development are interrelated. The divisions of the standards into 1.a. language as a system, and 1.b. language acquisition and development do not prescribe an order.

1.7.1.1 *Standard 1.a. Language as a system*

Candidates demonstrate understanding of language as a system, including phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics and semantics, and support ELLs as they acquire English language and literacy in order to achieve in the content areas.

1.7.1.2 *Standard 1.b. Language acquisition and development*

Candidates understand and apply theories and research in language acquisition and development to support their ELLs' English language and literacy learning and content-area achievement.

1.7.2 Domain 2. Culture

Candidates know, understand, and use major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to the nature and role of culture and cultural groups to construct supportive learning environments for ELLs.

1.7.2.1 *Culture as it affects student learning*

Candidates know, understand, and use major theories and research related to the nature and role of culture in their instruction. They demonstrate understanding of how cultural groups and individual cultural identities affect language learning and school achievement.

1.7.3 Domain 3. Planning, implementing, and managing instruction

Candidates know, understand, and use evidence based practices and strategies related to planning, implementing, and managing standards based ESL and content instruction. Candidates are knowledgeable about program models and skilled in teaching strategies for developing and integrating language skills. They integrate technology as well as choose and adapt classroom resources appropriate for their ELLs.

1.7.3.1 *Standard 3.a. Planning for standards-based ESL and content instruction*

Candidates know, understand, and apply concepts, research, and best practices to plan classroom instruction in a supportive learning environment for ELLs. They plan for multilevel classrooms with learners from diverse backgrounds using standards-based ESL and content curriculum.

1.7.3.2 *Standard 3.b. Implementing and managing standards-based ESL and content instruction*

Candidates know, manage, and implement a variety of standards-based teaching strategies and techniques for developing and integrating English listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Candidates support ELLs' access to the core curriculum by teaching language through academic content.

1.7.3.3 *Standard 3.c. Using resources and technology effectively in ESL and content instruction*

Candidates are familiar with a wide range of standards-based materials, resources, and technologies, and choose, adapt, and use them in effective ESL and content teaching.

1.7.4 Domain 4. Assessment

Candidates demonstrate understanding of issues and concepts of assessment and use standards-based procedures with ELLs.

1.7.4.1 *Standard 4.a. Issues of assessment for English language learners*

Candidates demonstrate understanding of various assessment issues as they affect ELLs, such as accountability, bias, special education testing, language proficiency, and accommodations in formal testing situations.

1.7.4.2 *Standard 4.b. Language proficiency assessment*

Candidates know and can use a variety of standards based language proficiency instruments to show language growth and to inform their instruction. They demonstrate understanding of their uses for identification, placement, and reclassification of ELLs.

1.7.4.3 *Standard 4.c. Classroom-based assessment for ESL*

Candidates know and can use a variety of performance-based assessment tools and techniques to inform instruction for in the classroom.

1.7.5 **Domain 5. Professionalism**

Candidates keep current with new instructional techniques, research results, advances in the ESL field, and education policy issues and demonstrate knowledge of the history of ESL teaching. They use such information to reflect on and improve their instruction and assessment practices. Candidates work collaboratively with school staff and the community to improve the learning environment, provide support, and advocate for ELLs and their families.

1.7.5.1 *Standard 5.a. Research and history.*

Candidates demonstrate knowledge of history, research, educational public policy, and current practice in the field of ESL teaching and apply this knowledge to inform teaching and learning.

1.7.5.2 *Standard 5.b. Professional development, partnerships, and advocacy*

Candidates take advantage of professional growth opportunities and demonstrate the ability to build partnerships with colleagues and students' families, serve as community resources, and advocate for ELLs.

CHAPTER II. EFL STUDENT CASE STUDY

2.1 Description of student and setting

In order to build this case study, a student from a private institute in the city of Loja was chosen. The age of the student who participated in this study was twelve years old. This student was chosen because she was starting to learn English and it was of interest to document how her language skills gradually improved.

It is important to note that the student chosen, and her classmates were undergoing level 1 and they all came from public schools. Thus, their knowledge of English was very limited. In addition, it is relevant to mention that public schools in the city of Loja have about four hours of English instruction, which is half the hours a private school would have. Moreover, public schools do not divide students into different proficiency levels. Therefore, the entire class has to study the same topics regardless of what the students really know. Most of the students' parents are aware of this situation and they have enrolled their kids to private institutes to study English.

As it was mentioned before the student had basic knowledge of the language and knew limited vocabulary about animals, colors, adjectives and professions. In addition, the student knew some basic structures and the verb "to be". It has also been evident that the student had difficulties understanding spoken English.

In order to witness the student's progress, it was necessary to collect the activities done by her in the first eight weeks of the course. The textbook used in her class is called "awesome" and it is the first book of a series of four. The textbook "awesome 1" is designed for students who are starting to learn English and it addresses topics that are up to date and appealing for young students.

2.2 Pre-test

2.2.1 Pre-test analysis

For the Pre-test the student was asked to write about her using the grammar structures and the vocabulary they knew. As it was evident in the small paragraph, the grammar structures were very basic, but she did not have problems using the verb to be. I could also observe that she had had previous knowledge of telling age and the use of the verb like. Also, she was able to tell about her favorite color.

Some of the mistakes the student made in the paragraph were the use of incorrect punctuation and the omission of an article. She did not include any period after a sentence, but used capital

letters at the beginning of each sentence. Also, I could observe that the student missed an article and also used plural when she was referring only to one of her favorite colors.

Later on in the course, the student would do a series of activities where she would learn the correct use of articles. In addition, the student would learn new vocabulary and would reinforce her knowledge of the verb to be when used in more complex sentences.
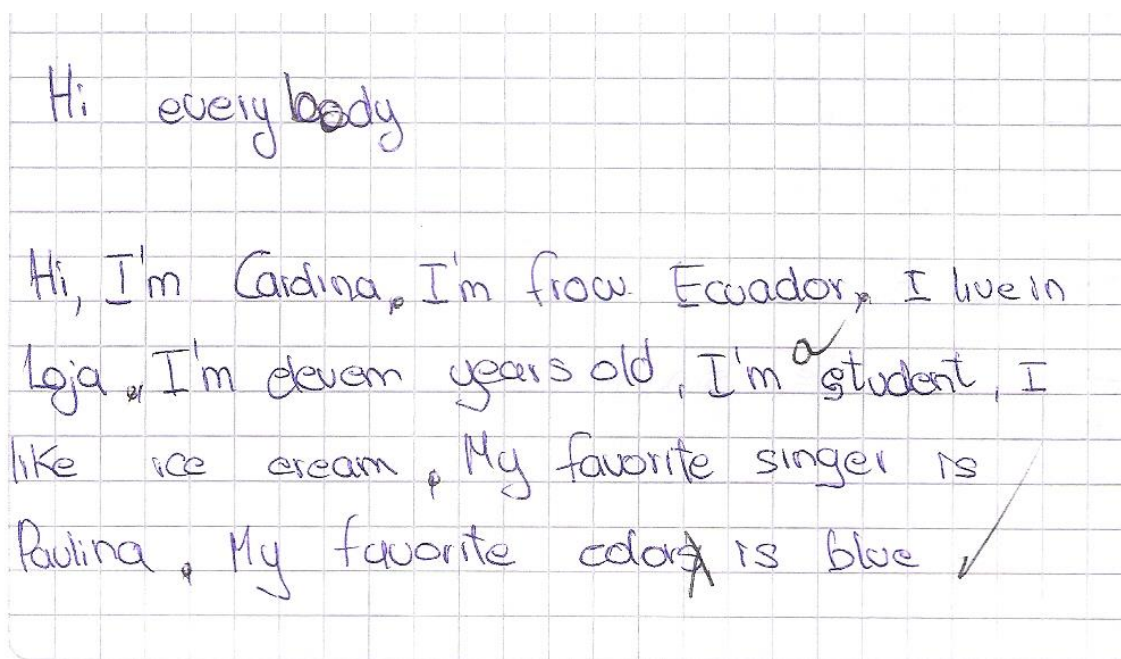
2.3 Sample of student work
2.3.1   Artifact #1.

③ Complete the chat.

Lucyanne: Hi! What (a) 's your name?

NYGirl: I (b) m Sandy. What (c) 's your name?

Lucyanne: My name (d) is Lucy.

NYGirl: Where (e) are you from?

Lucyanne: I (f) m from California.
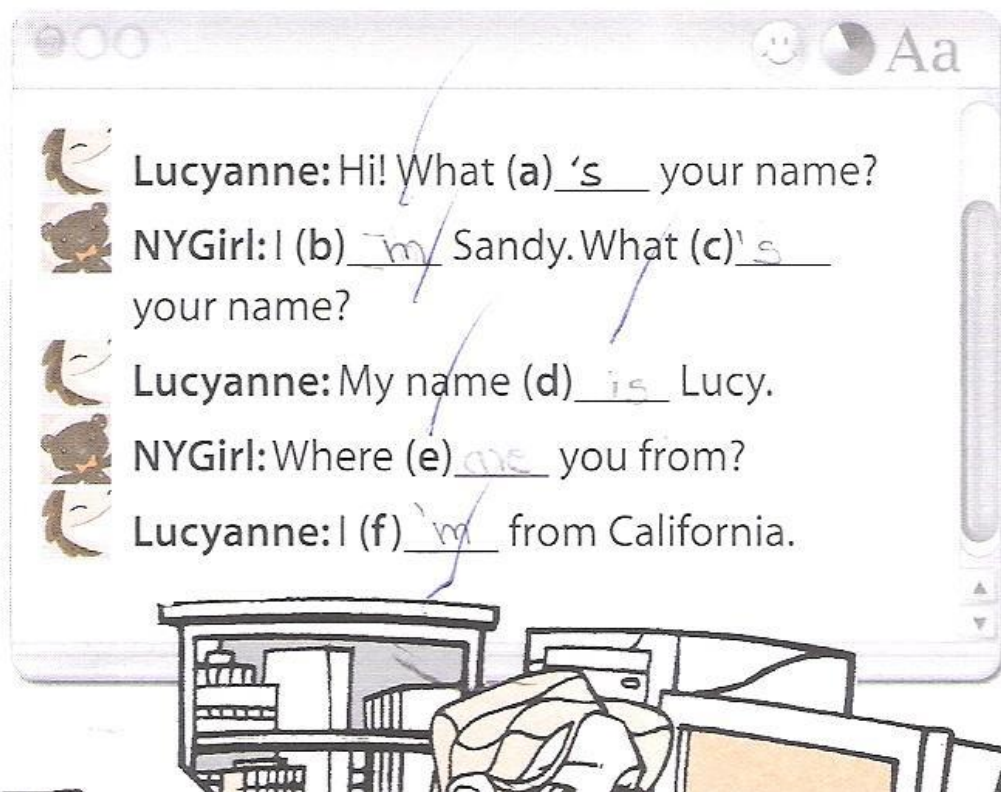
② Write *a* or *an*.

a What is it? It's _an_ apple.

b What's your profession? I'm _a_ taxi driver.

c Who's he? He's _an_ actor. He's famous.

d That's _a_ cool cell phone.

3 Answer the questions.

a What's your best friend's name?

She's Yessica

b How old is he / she?

She's eleven years old

c Where is he / she from?

She's from loja in Ecuador

d Is he / she in the same class as you?

Yes, she is

6/6

Artifact 1 dealt with the correct use of the verb to be, the use of articles and answering of basic questions. Before applying this artifact, the teacher explained these three grammatical points and at the end of the lesson the students were asked to develop the activities. As it is evident, the student did very well on the activities proposed. One of the reasons for the student to have done the activity correctly is that she had previous knowledge of the topics studied in this lesson. The teacher's explanation served as reinforcement for the student. As we could see in the pre-test, the student did not make many mistakes when writing about her because she already knew the grammar involved in the activity. In the pre-test the student made a mistake in one of the articles, but in the artifact she did not make the same mistake. This artifact proved that the student understood the correct use of articles and also strengthened her knowledge of the verb to be.

2.3.2   Artifact #2.

Country	Nationality
Germany	German
The United States	American
Japan	Japanese
Britain	Brithis
Brazil	Brazilian

```
        Margaret        Edward
Rosa        Ben        David        Silvia
Laura        Joel        Roberto        Sonia
```
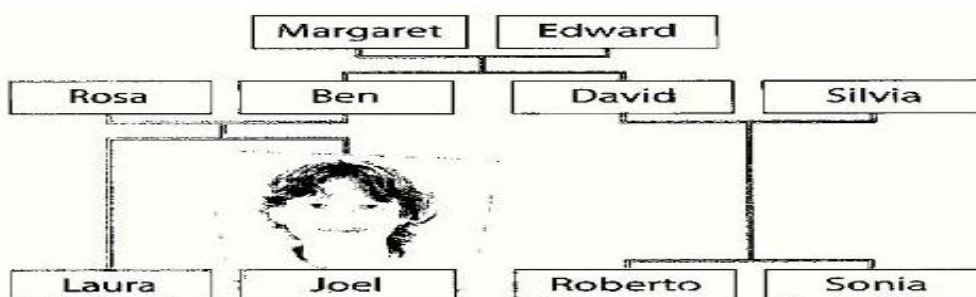
a   Margaret ⟶ Joel and Laura
    Margaret is their grandmother .

b   Sonia ⟶ Laura
    Sonia is her cousin .

c   David ⟶ Joel
    David is his uncle .

d   Edward ⟶ Roberto
    Edward is his grand father .

e   Ben ⟶ Laura and Joel
    Ben is father

▢ Reference Guide page 8.

a Harry Potter's Canadian.

_He isn't Canadian. He's British_____.

b Hilary Duff and Kirsten Dunst are French.

_they are American_____.

c Heidi Klum's a singer.

_She is a ~~mother~~ model_____.

d _The Simpsons_ are real.

_They are fictional_____.

This artifact consisted of three activities that the students had to complete. In that lesson the teacher introduced nationalities and taught possessive adjectives. In the activities done by the students, it was possible to evidence that she learned some nationalities. It is important to note that the teacher taught more nationalities than the ones found in the exercise. The student completed the activity successfully.

In the second activity, the student used possessive adjectives to write sentences based on the family tree. As it is seen in the artifact, the student completed the task with only one mistake in the last sentence. The student forgot to use the correct adjective.

In the last activity, the student had to correct some statements. In that activity the student completed only part of the exercise. Even though, she got the part of the sentence correctly, she failed to do the first part where they had to negate the statement. That mistake may have occurred due to the lack of attention at the time the teacher was explaining the exercise or she failed to understand the exercise that was modeled in the book. Finally, there was a spelling mistake, she wrote "mother" instead of "model".

2.3.3   Artifact #3.

1 Circle and correct eight mistakes.

a ___favorite___
b ___a___ ✓
c ___an___
d ___mother___
e ___his___
f ___is___
g ___brother___
h ___British___

My ~~favorit~~ star is Chris Martin. He's ~~an~~ singer in the group Coldplay. He is british. ~~His~~ mother is a teacher and ~~her~~ father is ~~an~~ accountant. He ~~has~~ 30 years. He has one ~~brothers~~ and three sisters. My favorite Coldplay song is "Clocks".

2 Look at the information and answer the questions.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL

Dr. Chris Potter

chrisp@yahoo.com

Passport **CANADA**

Name
Chris Potter

Passport No.
703278385

Nationality
CANADIAN

Sex
M

Date of birth
18 SEPTEMBER 1982

P<CANPOTTER<<CHRIS<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<
703278385CAN5324158020<<<<<<<<<<<06
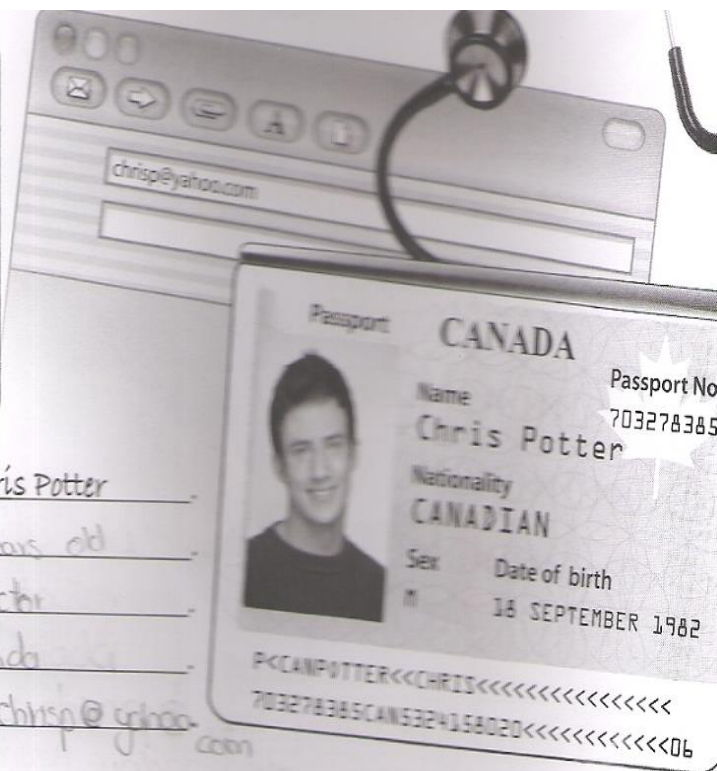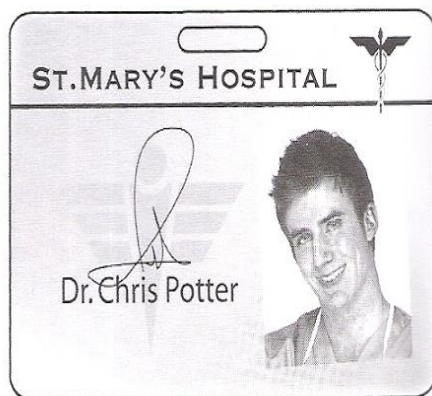
a What's his name? ___His name's Chris Potter___.
b How old is he? ___He's twenty ninegears old___.
c What's his profession? ___He's a doctor___.
d Where's he from? ___He's from canada___.
e What's his e-mail? ___His e-mail is chrisp @ yahoo.com___.

In this artifact the student applied what she had learned so far. In the first activity, she was asked to identify and circle the mistakes in the text and then list the correct words in the column provided on the right. The student was able to identify all the mistakes because she had already learned how to tell the age and differentiate singular from plural. Also, it was easy to appreciate that she identified a spelling mistake in the word favorite.

Furthermore, in the second activity, the student had to read information about a person. This type of activity was great because it gave the students the opportunity to read and carefully analyze all the information presented. After the student finished reading all the information, she answered questions about the person in the exercise. The student looked for and found the information needed to answer the questions. We could observe that the student knew how to use basic grammatical structures and the possessive pronouns correctly.

2.3.4   Artifact #4.
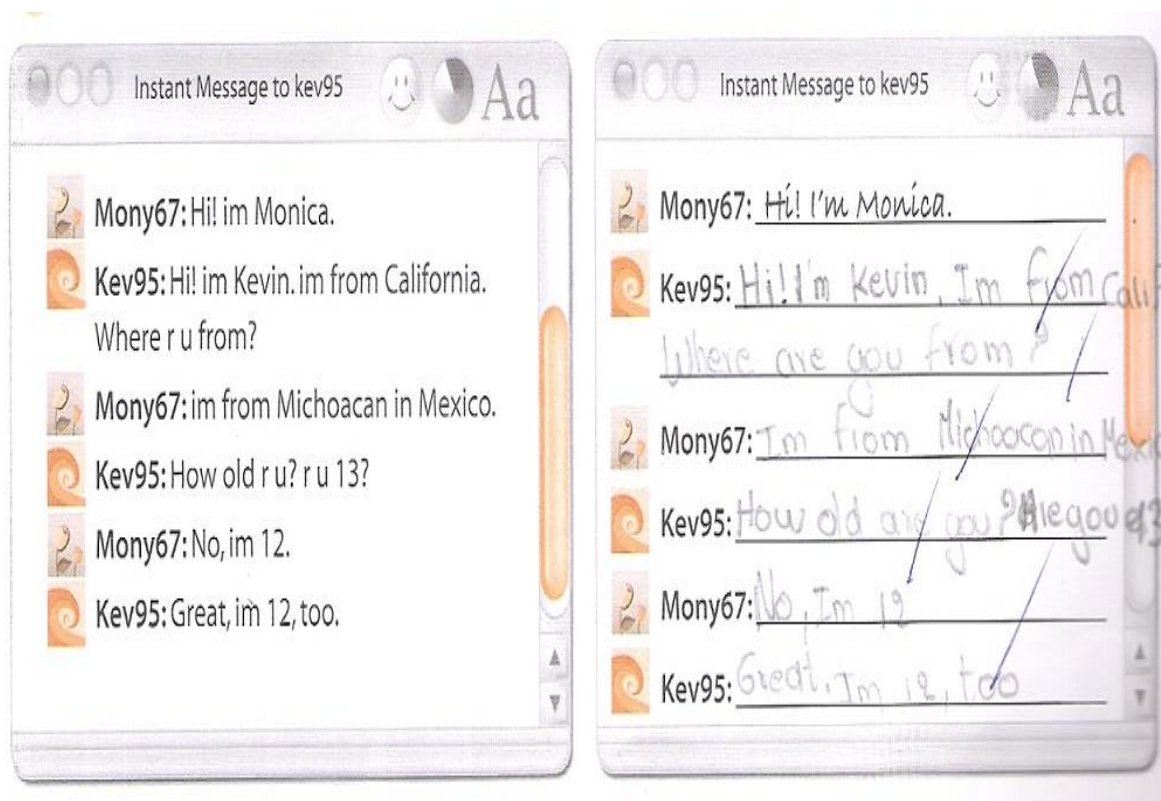
In this artifact, the student was asked to rewrite the messaging session and complete the form on the left. The student finished the activity successfully. The student was able to understand

each of the parts of the message which allowed her to put the sentences in order. The student was also able to figure out some slang found in the chat.

In addition, it was possible to observe that there were parts of the questions where the person messaging wrote Where r u from, How old r u? r u13? The student rewrote this part in the correct form Where are you from? How old are you? Are you 13? This exercise showed that the student was relating the sound of the vowel "u" and the letter "r" with "you" and "are".

2.3.5 Artifact #5.

The purpose of this artifact was to test the knowledge of the student regarding the topics learned so far. In the first part of the test, the student had to read the dialogue and choose the right verb to complete the blanks. The student did not have any mistakes in this exercise; she understood the use of the verb "to be" and differentiated sentences structures from question structures.

In the second activity, the student had to read the dialogue and think of the missing word. The book gave her a hint by writing the first letter of the word she needed to find. This activity was not difficult for the student because she was very familiar with this common dialogue.

Furthermore, Activity 3 in the test was a little bit more challenging for the student because she had to build two sentences using the information given. The student did very well and completed the activity. It is important to note that in this activity, the student understood what she had to do and did not omit the first part of the answer as she did in activity 3 of artifact 2. The last activity had the purpose of testing the correct use of the possessive adjective. The student did not have problems doing the activity and circled the correct choice. The student got a perfect score which means that the student is acquiring knowledge and can do exercises designed to test what has been learned.

2.3.6   Artifact #6.
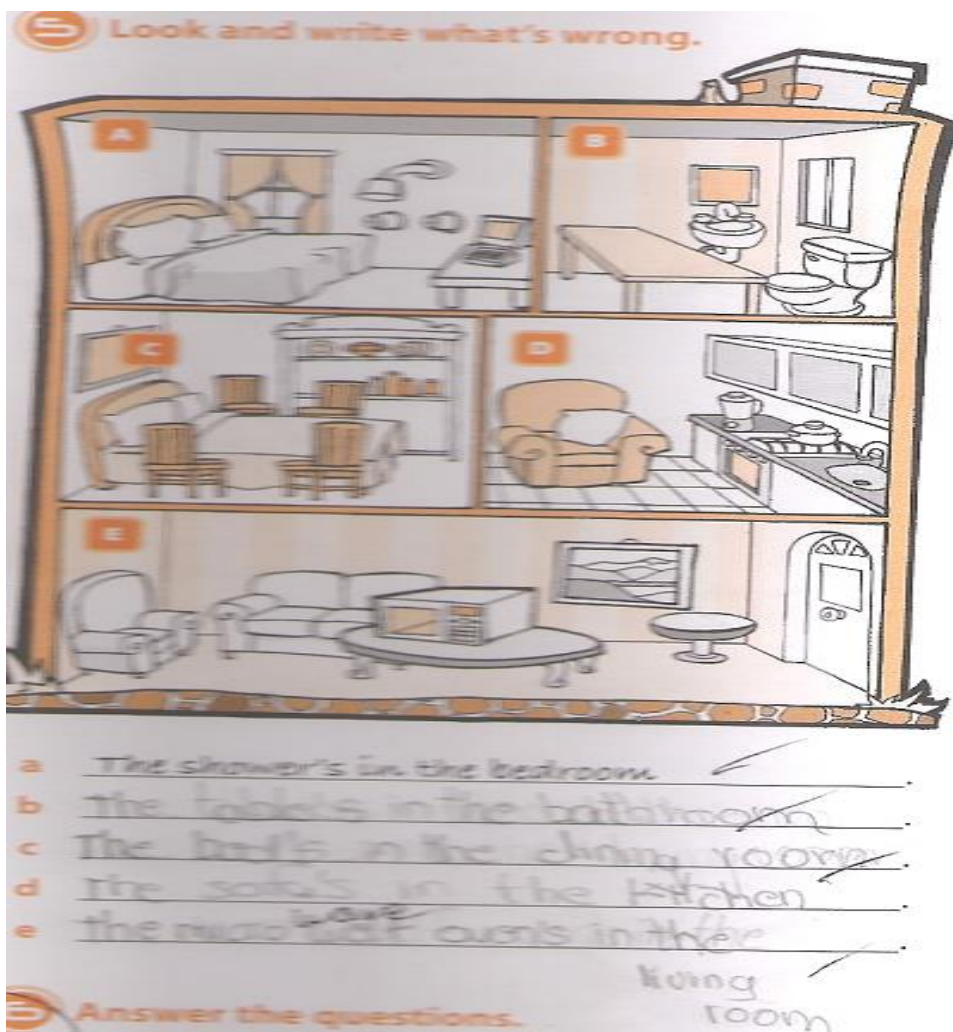
In the first part of this artifact, the student was asked to match items with the rooms. Before this activity, the teacher explained the new vocabulary using flash cards and objects from the classroom. In order to check understanding of the new vocabulary, the teacher asked different students to name and write the name of the item shown in the flash card. Activity 1 showed that the student learned the name of the different items and was capable to relate them to the different rooms. Students also learned the names of the rooms in the house.

In the second activity, the students had to write sentences explaining what was wrong in the picture. The student wrote sentences using the new vocabulary. The only mistake that could be found in the exercise was that she did not remember the word microwave and only wrote half of the word. In that lesson and in that activity in particular, the student practiced the new

vocabulary and she was ready to use the new words when talking or writing about items in different rooms.

2.3.7 **Artifact #7.**

2 Now complete the sentences.

a ___There's___ / a bridge.
b ___There's___ a church.
c ___There are___ any movie theaters.
d ___there is___ a mall.
e ___there are___ any supermarkets.

5 Now complete the questions and answers about the picture you checked.

a ___Is___ there an armchair? ___Yes, there is___ .
b ___Are there___ any chairs? ___Yes, there are___ .
c ___Is there___ a stereo? ___Yes, there is___ .
d ___Are there___ any desks? ___Yes, there are___ .
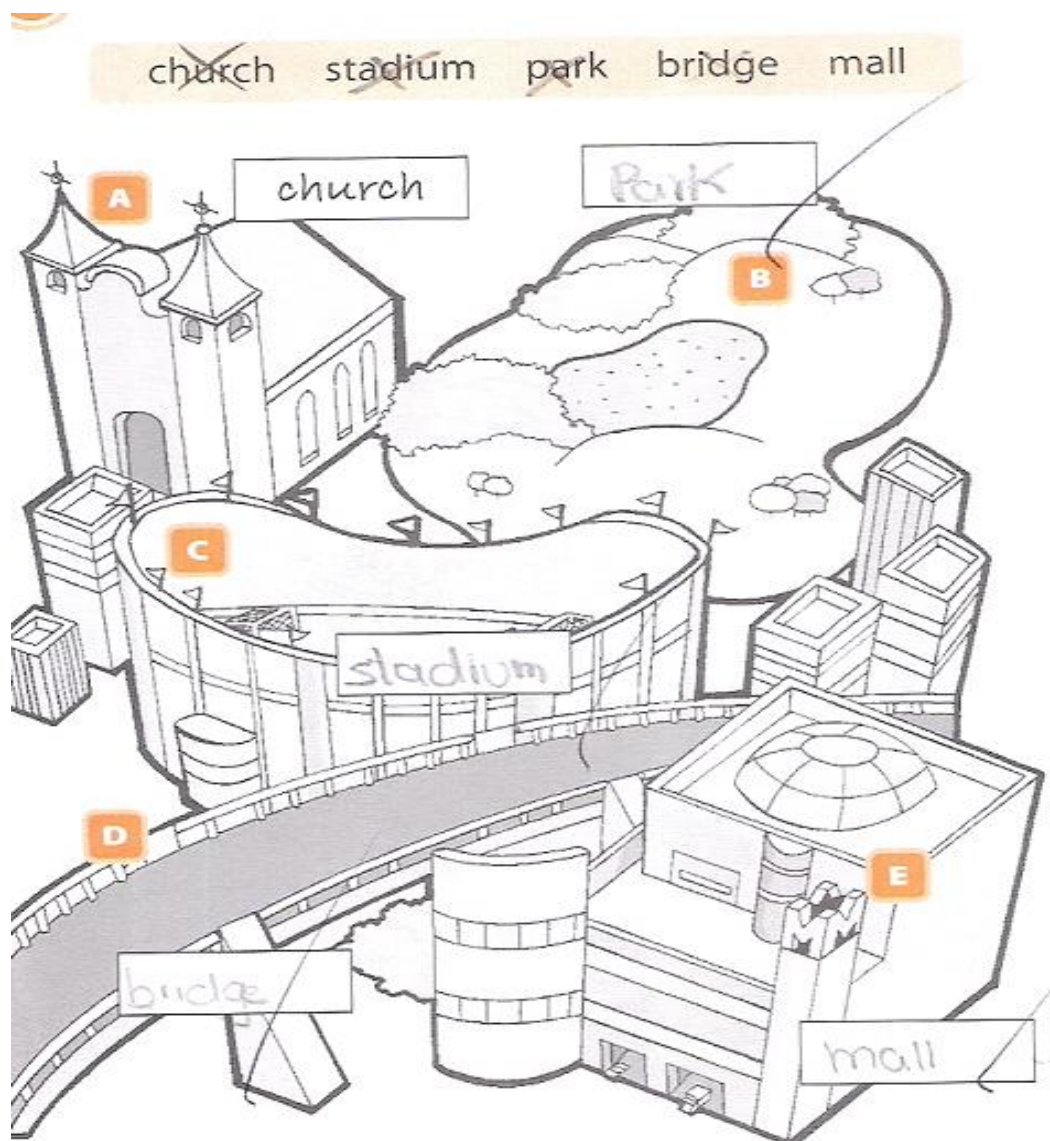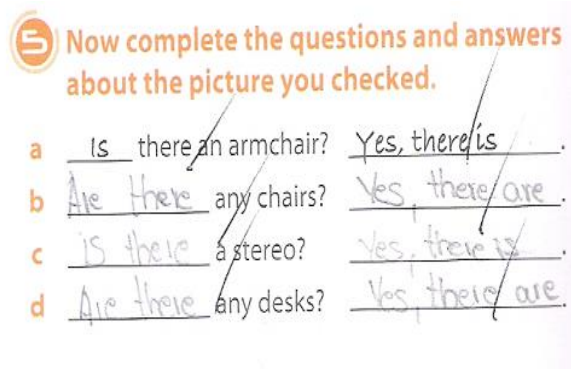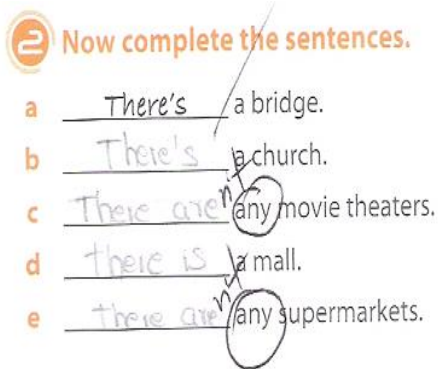
In this artifact, the students were evaluated on new vocabulary and the use of there is and there are. In the lesson, the teacher used the textbook to teach the new vocabulary. The book contained a picture of a city with the name of different buildings. In Activity 1, the student had to name the buildings as a practice of the vocabulary learned. As it is shown in the artifact, the student completed the task easily since the vocabulary was known to her.

In the second part of the lesson, the teacher explained *there is* and *there are.* In order for the students to understand better, the teacher did a quick a review about the singular and plural of nouns. After that the teacher used different things in the classroom and structured basic sentences using there is and there are. The students did not have problems understanding because they translated there is and there are to the Spanish word "hay". After the students completed the task and did not have any problems with the sentences, the teacher began explaining questions with *there is* and *there are.* Activity 2 and 5 showed the exercise done by the student. In the first activity, the student did not understand the use of "any" and did not write it the negative form.

2.3.8   Artifact #8.

2 Answer the questions about your town.

a Are there any parks?

Yes, there are _____ .

b Is there a famous soccer team?

Yes, there is _____ .

c Are there any bridges?

Yes, there are _____ .

d Are there any malls?

Yes, there are _____ .

e Is there an amusement park?

No, there isn't _____ .

f Is there a stadium?

Yes, there is _____ .

Total: _5_ / 5

This artifact was an exercise where the student had to answer the questions using there is or there are. In order to develop the activity, the student had to apply what she had learned in grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, the student had to analyze how the question was structured in order to answer correctly. The student did very well in the activity and would apply her knowledge in the post-test.

2.4 Student self-evaluation

Draw faces.

Yes, I can do this.   I need more practice.   I need help with this.

Can you introduce yourself and others?

Can you talk about where people are from?

Can you say the alphabet and spell words?

Can you count from 1 to 30?

Can you say hello and good-bye?

Can you talk about professions?

Can you talk about families?

Yes, I can do this. I need more practice. I need help with this.

Can you name things in the house?

Can you name town and city places?

Can you talk about your town?

Can you name different clothes?

Can you say where things are?

Can you talk about your belongings?

Can you name places at school?

Can you talk about your school?

From the results of the self-evaluation, it was evident that the student was aware of her progress. The student was very honest when filling this evaluation, and she marked the topics that are still difficult for her. The teacher will do reinforcement on the topics where the student is having problems.

2.5 Post-test

2.5.1   Post-test analysis

Hello, She's Beatriz, She's fiow Ecuador,
She lives in loja, She ~~has~~ thirty nine years
old, She's a house wife, She likes french
fries, Her favorite singer is Julio Iglesias
Her favorite colors is to red.

He's José, He's fiow Ecuador, He's
lives in loja, He ~~has~~ forty two years
old, He's a police officer, He. likes pizza
His favorite singer is Enrique Iglesias, His
favorite colors is purple.

Write a paragraph about Loja
Loja's located in the South West of Ecuador
Loja is gorgeus
There is a small stadium
There is a cine movie theater. There aren't any beaches.
in Loja. There are parks big and small
There are schools', There are churches, There are
two interactive museums, Loja is most famous
for the gate door of the city, There is a Bus Teminal
There are supermarkets, There are many Banks.
There are Drugstores, There are Bakearys Bokeries.
and There are hotels.

5.5
6

For the post-test the teacher asked to write a small paragraph about the students' parents. This activity was conducted in class. In addition, the teacher asked the students to write about Loja. The second activity was homework. Therefore, the students had more time to write their paragraph.

In the first task, we could evidence the improvement the student had in her writing skills. Comparing the pre-test with this activity, it was possible to observe that the student used punctuation, but not in the correct form. She used commas instead of periods. It is relevant to note that correct punctuation was not taught to the student. In the paragraph, the student included information about the place the person is from, her age, her favorite singer and colors. After checking the paragraph, two mistakes were found that relate to the topic of telling age. It was evident that there is some interference from Spanish because we use the verb "tener" ("have" in English) when telling the age.

For the second paragraph the student had to write about Loja. In this activity, the progress the student has made from the beginning of the course eight weeks ago is evident. The mistakes found in the paragraph were the incorrect use of adjectives. The teacher gave her the full score because the student tried to use adjectives to describe a place in the city. Adjectives were never taught in class. Therefore, the student did not know that the adjectives in this case were positioned before the noun. Other than that, the student had two spelling mistakes in words that were not taught in the class. The student mistakenly translated "puerta de la ciudad" to "door the city" when the correct translation should have been "city gate".

Finally, the student did very well in her post-test and she showed improvement in her writing. After analyzing each of the artifacts, it is evident that the student understood the teacher's explanation and examples.

CHAPTER III. EFL STUDENT PROGRAM PORTFOLIO

During the master's program, various activities were carried out taking into account the TESOL / NCATE standards. Each of the activities addressed have been carefully selected to show the different standards that are involved when teaching a foreign language.

3.1 Standard 1.b. Language acquisition and development

Candidates understand and apply theories and research in language acquisition and development to support their ELL's English language and literacy learning and content-area achievement.

Artifact for Standard 1.b: Language Acquisition and Development

Name of Artifact: Reflections from Motivation, Styles and Strategies

Date: November 2010

Course: Applied Linguistics

find important to create a good relationship with the students and being supportive when the students need help about the topics learned; this will definitely motivate the students because they will not feel neglected in the classroom and their self-esteem and self-confidence will increase. This way, students know that if they need help in order to understand or learn certain topics of the target language, they will get the assistance of the teacher and classmates. It is also very important to set goals, because after the students accomplish one of these goals, they will feel motivated in accomplishing more and more. I would like to add that most of the students that I had the chance to work with were already motivated. Students are motivated by the need to understand English because there is a big influence from the American culture. With the developing of new technologies here in Ecuador, students have more access to music, information and TV in the target language. Thus, the students need to understand the target language in order to be up to date in what is going on around the world. Also, I noticed that if the students are adults, they are often not that interested in learning much about other countries' believes and customs. For adults the main motivation is not learning about the famous singer or the best TV show in North America, but the benefit they can get from understanding and speaking English in their professional field.

In order to learn a different language people may use different strategies. In most of the cases the students will practice dialogues and act out everyday situations in class. The students are always encouraged to start a conversation with native speakers. Unfortunately, we Ecuadorians are very self conscious and it is very difficult to strike up a conversation with a stranger. Therefore, there is the need of teachers who are native speakers, especially to teach listening and speaking classes. Another strategy that I have noticed is very helpful is the involvement of music and movie activities. These activities are very interesting for young learners and they do not get bored. Once the

students are motivated, they would start a conversation with native speakers that are not strangers to them. When the students start a conversation, most of the time they speak in basic English because the interaction with a native speaker is not too often. Regarding reading strategies I always try to find readings that are of interest of the student, this way they will feel interested and focused on the topic. I also encouraged students to use new vocabulary in their writings and when speaking in the target language. The topics for writing need to be also of interest for the student. Students don't like to write much; therefore they need to be extra motivated, and the teacher has to explain how to write essays and paragraphs. In my case when students have a writing activity, they need to hand in a draft, so I can check some of the mistakes and then they can continue with the final draft.

As it was mentioned before the motivation, styles and strategies can also apply to us, since we are still studying in order to obtain our master's degree. It was very interesting developing the hands on activity in this chapter because it gives an opportunity to know and understand a little bit more our learning styles. After doing the activity and analyzing the results I tend to write down information that will help me understand certain topic also discussing topics with someone helps me understand better. I believe that discussion among peers will also be helpful because this way the students will have the chance to give opinions and ask questions on the topic that is being discussed. In addition, I am a person that don't like sitting for long periods of time; therefore, moving around helps me study. I am not the person that likes studying with other people because I can lose concentration very easily, I preffer working on my own in a quiet surrounding. When I have questions or difficulties I do not hesitate asking for help or explanation.

Moreover, when I handle possibilities I tend to analyze the situation carefully and I proffer to do solving step by step. I never jump to conclusion nor take shortcuts in order to achieve something. For example when I have to do assignments, I like to read the entire information and write down or highlight important ideas that will help me finish an assignment successfully. Unfortunately because of the lack of free time I can't plan ahead of time my assignments and deadlines are a big problem for me.

Finally, when I am studying a topic that are not familiar with, I like to analyze examples, so I can be sure of what I am doing or learning. I think that this hands on activity would be of great help if we applied it to our students, this way they can know what is more convenient for them at the time of studying.

References

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Rationale:

This assignment was chosen as an artifact since it relates to the Standard 1b Language Acquisition and Development because it deals with the way students learn. The purpose of the assignment was to analyze the different factors that allow students acquire a second language successfully. The factors addressed in this assignment were motivation, styles and strategies.

Doing this assignment helped me differentiate the way adolescents and adults learn. Working as a teacher has given me the opportunity to work with both groups, and I did not have too much success when teaching adults. I understood that motivation was a key factor in teaching adults. Most of the time teachers tend to use the same motivation for adolescents and adults, and this does not work as we would like to. We need to use different approaches for different groups. Teachers need to find and analyze what the group interests are, and from there start designing activities that relate to their age.

A few years ago, I taught a course for the Tourism career and I had to look for activities that were related to their field. Before assigning activities to my students, I took into consideration their level, their interest and the goals for the course. Thus, students would find the activities helpful and motivating. One of the strategies I used in the course was to include extra

information such as videos about tourism, pictures and information about different places, this way students would not have to depend on the book as their only source of information.

Moreover, this assignment also helped me understand the importance of communication among peers because we could exchange ideas about the best strategies and methods to use for the course.

3.2 Standard 2. Culture as it affects student learning

Candidates know, understand, and use major theories and research related to the nature and role of culture in their instruction. They demonstrate understanding of how cultural groups and individual cultural identities affect language learning and school achievement.

Artifact for Standard 2: Culture as It Affects Student Learning

Name of Artifact: Lesson Plan (Ecuadorian people, places, food and customs)

Date: January 2011

Course: Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

LESSON PLAN 1

Topic: Ecuadorian people, places, food and cutoms.

Date: 22-01-2011

1) Grade level: teenagers
2) Student ESOL classification level: Beginners.

ESOL strategies and codes used:

Methodology: A3 Cognitive Academic Learning

Strategies:

B5: Pictures

B13: Videos

B14: Demonstrations

C3: Pairs and Threes

E6: Explain Key Concepts.

G6: Student self-rating and Evaluation

G10: Observation / Anecdotal

3) Objectives
   A. Language: Student will be able to recognize nouns and adjectives.
   B. Students will be able to use nouns and adjectives in basic sentences.

4) Anticipatory Set:
   Instructor will present information about Ecuadorian people, places and food, explaining key concepts (E6), show pictures (B5), show video (B13)

5) Main Teaching input:
   Teacher will explain concepts- pictures (B5)
   Show video (B13)

6) Modeling
   Teacher shows how to use adjectives and nouns (B14)

7) Guided practice
   Underline adjectives and nouns in a reading. Handouts (C3)

8) Independence practice
   Students write their own sentences about Ecuadorian people, places and food using adjectives and nouns.

9) Assessment
   Students will assess their classmate's sentences on the board. (G6)

10) Closing
   Summarizing and provide observations (G10)

In 1830, Ecuador took its name from the Spanish word for the equator, which crosses the entire northern sector. The three mainland regions are referred to as the Coast, the Sierra, and Amazonia, or the Oriente ("east"). A constitutional democracy, Ecuador is a multicultural, multiethnic nation–state that many consider multinational. It has one of the highest representations of indigenous cultures in South America and two distinct Afro–Ecuadorian cultures. The dominant populace is descended primarily from Spanish colonists and settlers and to a lesser extent from German, Italian, Lebanese, and Asian immigrants. Spanish is the national language; thirteen indigenous languages are spoken, of which the principal ones are Quichua in the Sierra and the Oriente and Jivaroan in the Oriente.

The citizens take great pride in being Ecuadorian and refer to themselves as *ecuatorianos(-as)* and *gente* (people). Despite continuing discrimination, indigenous and black citizens identify themselves as Ecuadorians as well as native people or black people.

http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Ecuador.html

PLACES

Guayaquil.

Quito

Cuenca

Loja

Galapagos

Tena

Atacames

Baños

Mindo

Food

Ceviche

Baked plantain

Empanadas

Guinea Pig

Menestra

Fanesca

VIDEOS

Noun song

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tc-yk N$RvbB

Adjective song

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYzGLtFuwxI

HANDOUT

Read the article about Saraguro and underline all the adjectives and nouns you find.

Saraguro

Arriving in Saraguro is a one-of-a-kind experience; there is literally no place like it in the world. What makes this small city so unique are the inhabitants, the Saraguros. The Saraguros are distinctive in their dress, traditions, and history, and are unlike any other indigenous group in Ecuador.

Originally from the Lake Titicaca region in Peru, the Saraguros were moved to their present location by the Incas as part of the Mitimae system. As a result, the Saraguros have maintained their age-old traditions and have become leaders in the indigenous movement, both in Ecuador and internationally.

Saraguro is famous for its beautiful weaving and jewelry, which can immediately be observed upon arrival. The typical dress of the women includes a black, outer-skirt which covers a more colorful embroidered one, together with a black shawl held closed by an intricately designed metal tupu, or pin. Around their waists are brightly woven belts and their colorful, beaded necklaces are often so large that they hang over their shoulders. The dress of the men is most notable for the calf length black pants and ponchos. Both men and women wear white felt hats with flat wide brims and their hair in one long braid.

To really get a feel for Saraguro it is worth it to have a guide take you not only through the city, but to the surrounding towns, which hold just as much Saraguran culture. A great place to start is at Fundacion Kawsay, whose goal is community ecotourism and revitalization of the indigenous culture and ethnicity of Saraguro.

With them you can take tours of weavers' workshops, medicinal plant projects, as well as take hikes to sacred waterfalls where traditional ritual cleansings are still performed. The profits of this organization go directly to the different communities visited, so you know exactly where your money is going. And if you have a hankering to pick up some Kichwa, this is the place to do it, as most people in the area, especially in the surrounding towns, speak this native language.

At 64 kilometers North of Loja, there are not very many places to stay the night in Saraguro, although Fundacion Kawsay has the most comfortable hostel just outside of town with beautiful views. There are also the Hotels Samana Wasi, Sara Allpa, and Saraguro, all budget and adequate. The best place to eat is Mama Cuchara, serving typical meals on the main plaza and run by the indigenous federation.

A trip to Saraguro is truly eye-opening and refreshing; there are very few tourists and it is home to beautiful countryside and a fascinating culture.

http://www.vivatravelguides.com/south-america/ecuador/ecuador-articles/saraguro/

Rationale

This artifact was chosen as an example of the standard Culture as It Affects Student Learning. First of all in order to develop this artifact, we had to put in practice what we had learned about the parts needed in a lesson plan. Then, the cultural factor was included in the lesson plan in order to provide the students with meaningful information that will help them learn the target language. For this plan, we decided to include information that was familiar for our students. The topic chosen for this plan was about Ecuadorian people, places, food, and customs. We considered relevant to use topics that students were familiar with, and we used this information to create activities that would help them acquire knowledge of the target language. In the lesson plan students had the opportunity to learn the use of nouns and adjectives through teacher's explanation and the use of pictures of our country and food. Also, we added a text with information about Ecuador, which the students had to read and find the adjectives and nouns.

In the course Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, I learned to include cultural facts in the lesson plans. Learning about our culture or other cultures is interesting and keeps the students motivated to learn more. Moreover, activities that include culture help students develop intercultural communication that will help them interact in real scenarios in this

globalized world. In order to include culture in the classroom, we needed to provide students with all sorts of information by using videos, pictures, CDs, songs, stories etc.

3.3 Standard 3.b. Implementing and managing standards-based ESL and content instruction

Candidates know, manage, and implement a variety of standards-based teaching strategies and techniques for developing, and integrating English listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Candidates support ELLs' access to the core curriculum by teaching language through academic content.

Artifact for Standard 3.b: Implementing and Managing Standards-Based ESL and Content Instruction

Name of Artifact: ESP course outline

Date: November 2011

Course: Teaching English for Specific Purposes

Assignment 3

ESP course outline

By
Elsa Morocho C.
Franklin Espinosa J.
F. Marcelo Paredes Z.

Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja
November, 2011

ESP course outline

Pre-course information

Course duration:	5 days
Course length:	10 hours
Size of group:	11 students
Resources:	videos, reading material
Participants:	Seniors students in the Hotel Management and Tourism program
Assessment:	formative assessment
Course Objectives:	students will be able to:

- Realize the importance of English in the Hotel Management and Tourism field through videos that show how language is used in real settings
- Improve their reading skills and vocabulary by providing them updated articles or journals containing topics and vocabulary related to the field
- Improve pronunciation and fluency through intensive interactive pair and group work activities.
- Practice their communicative skills by participating in projects that will involve them in real scenarios

Background

Nowadays, English has become a tool of communication that has to be learned in order to successfully perform in a globalized world. As an international language, English has become a means of communication in many different countries, and in many different

fields, such as: Business, Science, Technology, Hotel management and Tourism Industry, among others. In Ecuador, English is taught in most of the educational institutions at different levels as a foreign language. At UTPL, different courses have been designed to teach students the language at a general level. Additionally, there are specific English courses designed to meet the needs of students studying different programs.

Need analysis procedure

The actual needs analysis was carried out in the Hotel Management and Tourism program. In order to find information it was necessary to design a survey for eleven senior students and an interview for the teacher in charge of the subject. The survey contained twelve questions related to the textbook, number of hours, skills practiced, the students' thoughts on how to improve their knowledge.

After analyzing the answers from the survey, we established the weaknesses the students have at this level. First of all, senior students at this level are not really aware of the importance and benefits of English in their professional field. Moreover, the survey shows that there is lack of motivation in students at the time of learning a second language. Students somehow feel as if they have to take English because it is part of the program and there is no other option. Most of them place themselves at an average level when they are supposed to be at an advance level after passing all the previous English courses. Additionally, students feel that the four skills are not equally applied during the learning process; consequently, some skills are practiced more than others. Students identify the reading and listening skills as the most practiced in the classroom and the least practiced are writing and listening.

Even though the participants practice writing and listening skills, sometimes those activities are not focused on topics related to the field; therefore, there is a need of well

planned activities that give them opportunities to integrate all language skills. At the same time, they state that they do not have enough opportunities to practice what they have learned. Finally, the survey was the means for them to express some of the activities they are interested in doing during the class such as: more practice using the vocabulary and expressions used in the tourism field and practice at hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, and tourist places.

In addition, the results from the survey applied to the professionals working at Howard Johnson Hotel, it was possible to see that they had similar needs as the students. They agree that there is a need to focus on the development of the speaking skill. The speaking activities could be done by having students interact with native speakers. On the contrary, it was evident that professionals understand the importance of having a good command of English that help them perform more effectively in their everyday activities. Therefore, the teacher should work on activities that make them realize about the importance of a second language in their field.

Course outline

Goal: Increase awareness of the importance of English in the Hotel Management and Tourism field

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of the English language through activities like doing projects, watch videos, and role plays.

Goal: Develop abilities that integrate the four skills to be used effectively in real work places.

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Improve their reading skills and vocabulary by providing them updated articles and journals containing topics and vocabulary related to the field
- Improve their pronunciation and fluency through intensive interactive pair and group work activities.
- Practice their communicative skills by participating in projects that will involve them in real scenarios.

Rationale

Since the students from Hotel Management and Tourism at UTPL feel that they take the English courses because it is a requirement from the curriculum of their study program, they do not know the importance of English in their future profession. Therefore, it has been necessary to design an outline that will start with activities that will help them be aware of the importance and advantages of learning English, then activities that will improve their language proficiency, after that, participants will develop activities which involve them in real communicative settings.

Course outline

Day 1:

- Play two videos that show interactions and real scenarios.
- Develop their own real scenarios based on the videos they have watched.
- Assignment: Look for an article related to the tourism and hotel industry in South America, read it and prepare a summary to further presentation.

Day 2:

- Presentation of the article that they have read sharing the new vocabulary found.
- Discussion about the most interesting articles.

Day 3:

- Interview native speakers from the speakeasy center at the UTPL to gather information about important tourist places from their country of origin and design a brochure.

Day 4:

- Visit different hotels and restaurants in Loja. Get information and take pictures in order to create a tourist guide that shows popular places in Loja.
  Assignment: Identify the most important and popular places in Loja and provide an oral description about these places.

Day 5:

- Have students work in groups and record a video, which will be uploaded in YouTube, about the most popular hotels, sightseeings, restaurants in Loja.

Evaluation

Learning will be evaluated through a formative assessment in which students will demonstrate their progress through systematic observation, students' participation, written and oral assignments, and projects that involve group work. The results of these evaluating tools will show the effectiveness of the course.

References

Dudley-Evans & St John (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes.* United

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Graves, K. (2000). *Designing language courses: A guide for teachers.* Boston, MA:

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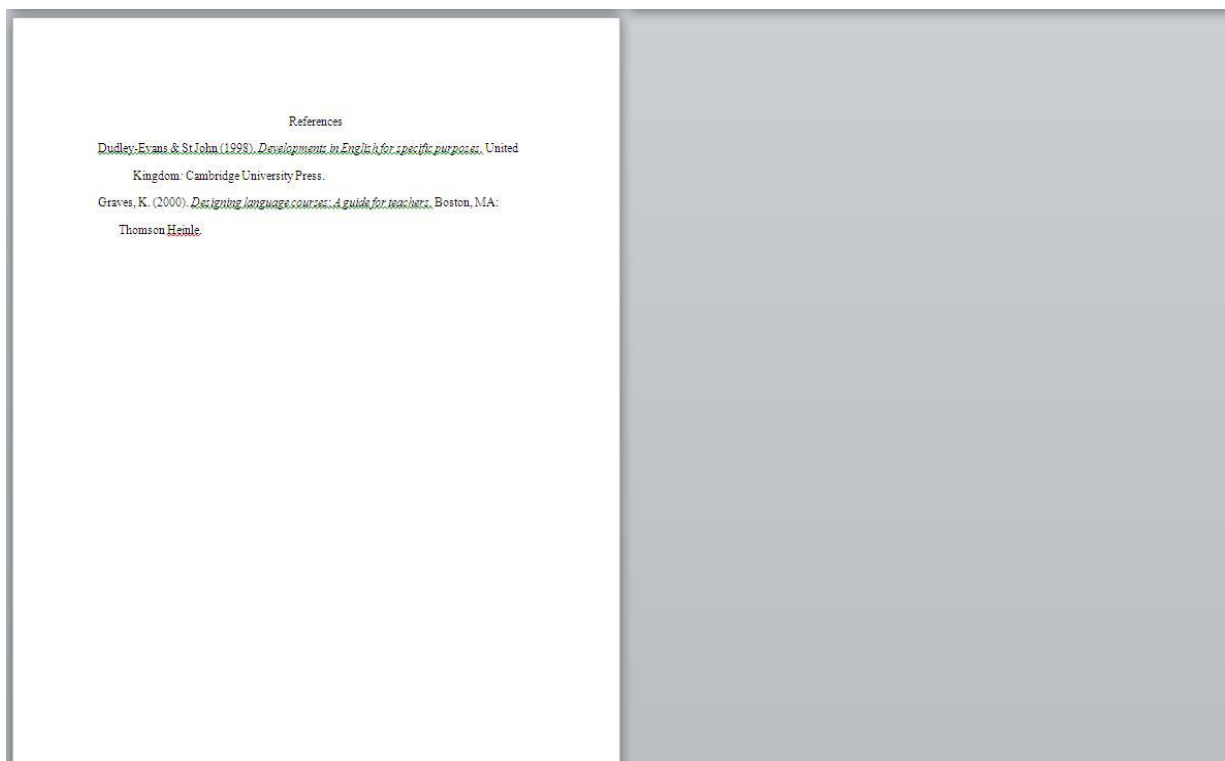
Rationale

The artifact chosen is a lesson plan that we designed while taking the course Teaching English for Specific Purposes. For this assignment we had to create a lesson plan based on the needs and interests of the students. We chose to design a plan for students that were taking English in the Hotel Management and Tourism career at UTPL. Before designing this lesson plan, we surveyed a group of students and their teacher. We analyzed their needs and then we chose to base the lesson plan on having the students develop listening, reading and speaking skills.

By doing this assignment, I learned that before creating a lesson plan we should analyze what the students need to learn. It is important to provide students with knowledge that is going to be useful in their field. Nowadays when I design a lesson plan or a syllabus I first do a needs analysis, and from there I establish the objectives for the course or the lesson. When I understand what the students really need to learn, I choose meaningful activities where they can improve their skills. Some of the activities that I have done with the students from the Tourism career are reading articles and journals containing relevant information related to their field and projects where they have to apply their speaking skills.

Furthermore, the knowledge acquired in this course could also be applied in the future. I will be able to construct better lesson plans and meaningful activities for courses in any of the careers offered at the UTPL.

3.4 Standard 3.c Using resources and technology effectively in ESL and content instruction.

Candidates are familiar with a wide range of standards-based materials, resources, and technologies, and choose, adapt, and use them in effective ESL and content teaching.

Artifact for Standard 3.c: Using Resources and Technology Effectively in ESL and Content Instruction.

Name of Artifact: Wiki for Ventures 4

Date: January 2012

Course: Technology in TEFL

Ventures4

☆ About the course

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Nowadays, English is a language that is used in various professional fields such as; business, tourism, medicine and also in education.The knowledge of this language is very important for the developmentof the students' professional profile. English in education contains a great deal of information that is necessary to function in a more dynamic way in this Globalized world. As stated above, it is essential to provide students with the opportunity to study the subject of General English as a tool that will allow them to be prepared to understand the information found in English, and also provide them with the opportunity to communicate with more people in their personal and professional field.

Objectives:

- Use the language in real situations.
- Express opinions.
- Use the language to describe educational objectives.
- Describe actions in the past and present
- Use the language correctly to discuss preferences
- Use the language to give advice and make suggestions
- Describe possible situations and future actions

Ventures4

☆ YouTube

Editar   ✐ 0   💬 0   ⊕ 5   ...

NOUN CLAUSES

USE OF ADJECTIVES

🌱 Ventures4

☆ Helpful Links

| 📝 Editar | 📎 0 | 💬 0 | 🕐 6 | ... |

IMPORTANT: By clicking on the link you will be directed to a diferent web page where you will find the information needed.

List of Adjectives ↗

List of Adverbs ↗

Active voice and Passive Voice ↗

🌱 Ventures4

☆ Some Explanation

| 📝 Editar | 📎 0 | 💬 0 | 🕐 5 | ... |

you do not have permission to edit this page

Passive Voice

For this type of grammar you need to understand what subject and object are.

Example: Marco fixes the car.
Subject : Marco
Object: the car.

In the passive voice the Object goes first. The car is fixed by Marco.

Remember to use the structure of the passive: to be + verb (past participle) : is fixed

Indirect Questions

It is important that you know how to write or structure Wh-questions otherwise you will get confused when writing indirect Wh-questions.
Something that you need to know:
Who = quien
What = que
When = cuando
Where = donde
Which = cual
Whose = de quien
Why = por que
How = como

In the book you have examples like these:

Where **did** you go?
When **did** they leave?

did: is an auxiliary used for the past. The questions above are in the past tense.

http://ventures4.wikispaces.com/Some+Explanation#

Ventures4

☆ Twitter

For this course everyone is going to open a Twitter account where you will answer questions posted by me or your classmates, post comments and also information that you think is important for this course.

How to use Twitter

Inicio del wiki
Pages and Files
Miembros
Cambios Recientes
Administrar wiki
Buscar wiki

About the course
YouTube
Helpful Links
Some Explanation
Twitter
Your comments
Podcasts

Ventures4

☆ Your comments

Subject	Author	Replies	Views	Last Message
Comment added: I don't understand!	lojano1974	0	4	Feb 23, 2012 1:38 pm by lojano1974
Adjectives and Adverbs	lojano1974	1	8	Feb 23, 2012 1:37 pm by lojano1974

Inicio del wiki
Pages and Files
Miembros
Cambios Recientes
Administrar wiki
Buscar wiki

About the course
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Twitter
Your comments
Podcasts

Rationale:

The artifact chosen for this standard was a Wiki that I created in the Technology in TEFL course. In this course we learned to apply technology to help students learn the target language. For me this was a great opportunity to learn more about the use of different web pages and educational resources found on the internet.

In one of the activities in the course, we had to learn about wikis and its use for educational purposes. I designed a wiki where I included information for one of the courses I am in teaching. In the wiki I included information about the course, videos, explanation about grammar topics and podcasts.

In the future I will be able to create wikis in order to provide my students with extra information about the subject. Also, these kinds of tools are very appealing for students and it will keep them motivated. By using wikis students will have the opportunity to interact with the teacher and the rest of the students in the course. Another tool that I found useful was the podcast. I can use podcasts to provide information or explanation about different topics in audio format where the students will have to listen and not just read. I believe that podcasts can be a great tool for students to develop their listening skills.

Moreover, I will be creating social groups for my students by using Google plus. This will allow them to post comments, share ideas and opinions about different matters related to the course. Students will also have the opportunity to provide information that they find relevant for their learning.

The use of new technologies will definitely help students learn in a more interesting and interactive way.

3.5 Standard 4.a. Issues of assessment for English language learning

Candidates demonstrate understanding of various assessment issues as they affect ELLs, such as accountability, bias, special education testing, language proficiency, and accommodations in formal testing situations.

Artifact for Standard 4.a: Issues of Assessment for English Language Learning

Name of Artifact: Compare and Contrast Test Techniques of Assessment

Date: October 2011

Course: Testing and Evaluation in TEFL
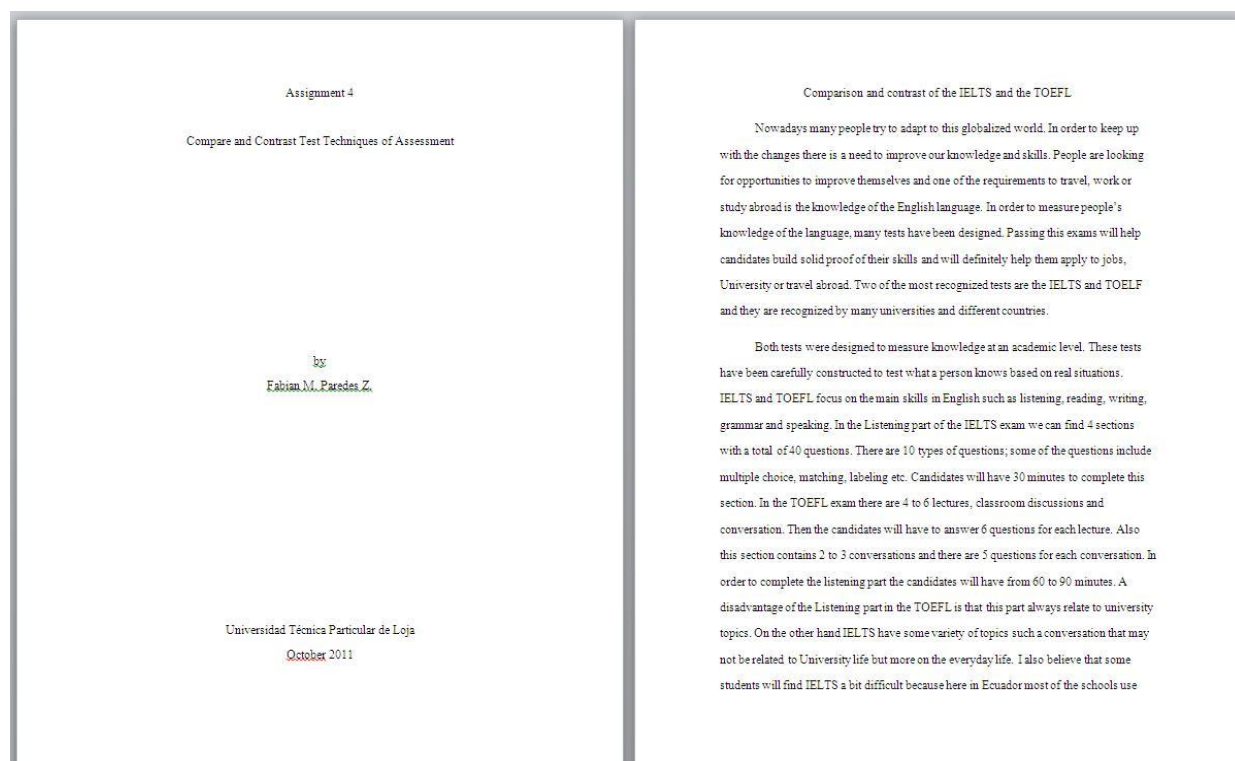
American books. Therefore, most of the candidates taking the listening exam will have difficulties understanding British English.

In the reading part of the test IELTS candidates will find three reading texts that come from books, magazines, journals and newspapers which are not written for a specialist audience. There are a total of 40 questions which include multiple choice, identifying information, matching information and headings etc. The candidates have 40 minutes to complete the reading part. In the TOEFL, candidates will have to read 3 to 5 passages academic texts and then they will answer from 12 to 14 questions each. For this activity, there is a time limit of 60 to 100 minutes. In the reading part the IELTS have an advantage because they use different types of text as the ones mentioned at the beginning. The TOEFL uses only academic tests. Moreover, TOEFL uses multiple choice questions for this activity while IELTS use at least 5 different question types.

For the writing part of the IELTS there are two parts that need to be completed by the candidates. In the first part the candidates have to describe visual information from graphs, tables or charts. The essay has to be 150 words or more and there is a time limit for the activity of 20 minutes. In the second part the candidates have to give their opinion about a problem or an argument. This activity must be completed in about 40 minutes and has to be at least 250 words long. In the TOEFL exam there are 2 tasks that are based on the reading and listening tasks. For these activities, candidates have 50 minutes. It is important to mention that Grammar testing is including in this part. This part is very similar in the IELTS and TOEFL. Both exams require the candidates to summarize, synthesize, compare, and contrast information.

Finally, for the speaking section of the IELTS, candidates have a face to face interaction with another candidate and an interviewer. This section of the test is divided in three parts. In the first part candidates introduce themselves and answer general questions from the interviewer. In the second part the candidate has to speak about a particular topic. And in the third part the candidate and the interviewer discuss about the topic covered in the second part. For speaking part of the IELTS candidates have 15 minutes. Now for the speaking part of the TOEFL, the candidates will record their answers in the computer. This section requires the candidates to answer two questions on familiar topics. Then, the candidates will be asked to summarize information from a text and a conversation. Both IELTS and TOEFL have some difficult parts here. For instances the candidates taking the IELTS may feel nervous to speak to an interviewer and candidates taking the TOEFL may feel bored or tired to speak about University topics which have been the main topic for the other parts in the test.

Points	IELTS	TOEFL
Sections of the tests	The IELTS is divided in the following sections: Listening, Academic Reading, General Training Reading, Academic Writing, General Training Writing, Speaking	The TOEFL is divided in the following sections: Reading, Listening, Speaking, Writing
Testing Listening	• Candidates have approximately 30 minutes to complete this part. • The difficulty increases as the test progresses.	• Candidates have from 60 to 90 minutes to complete this part. • This part is designed to test the candidate's ability to understand spoken English.

	IELTS	TOEFL
	• The listening part contains monologues and conversations. • The first two sections of the listening part are about social needs. • The last two sections deals with educational contexts.	• This part contains lectures that last about 3 to 5 minutes and they are evaluated through multiple choice questions. • Also, there are 3 conversations that are 3 minutes long and it is evaluated through multiple choice questions. • In this part the candidate will be tested in Listening for basic comprehension, connecting and synthesizing information.
Testing Reading	• Candidates have 60 minutes to complete this part. • There are 3 reading passages. • The texts used in this part are taken from magazines, journals and newspapers. • In this section there are 10 different types of questions. - Multiple choice - Identifying information (True / false / not given) - Identifying writer's views / claims (True / false / not given) - Matching Information - Matching headings - Matching features - Matching sentence	• Candidates have from 60 to 100 minutes to complete this part. • This section measures the candidate's ability to understand university-level academic texts. • This section contains from 3-5 reading passages. • Each passage has from 12 to 14 questions. • In this section candidates read to find information, basic comprehension and reading to learn. • There are three questions formats in this section - Questions with four choices

	IELTS	TOEFL
	- endings - Sentence completion - Summary, note, table, flow chart completion - Diagram label completion	and a single answer in traditional multiple-choice format. - Questions with four choices and a single answer that ask candidates to insert a sentence in a passage. - "Reading to learn" questions with more than four choices and also with more than one possible answer.
Testing writing and grammar	• Candidates have 60 minutes to complete this part. • There are two tasks in this section. • In the first task the candidates have to write a description of at least 150 words in 20 minutes. This description is based on information found in a chart, table, graph or diagram. • In the second task candidates need to write a 250 word essay in 40 minutes. This essay will be a response of a question or statement.	• Candidates have 50 minutes to complete this part. • This section measures the candidate's ability to write in an academic setting. • In this section candidates will find two tasks. The first one is to write based on a reading and a listening. The second task is to support an opinion on a topic.
Testing speaking and vocabulary	• Candidates have from 11 to 14 minutes to complete this section.	• Candidates have 20 minutes to complete this section. • This section measures the

| Testing overall ability | • This section has the form of a face to face interview
• In this section candidates need to answer short questions, speak on a topic and also interact with the examiner. | candidate's ability to speak in academic settings.
• There are two tasks to express an opinion on a familiar topic and four tasks to speak on what is read and listened to.
• In this section candidates use a microphone to record their answers in the computer. |
| Testing overall ability | • Scoring high in this test will show that the candidate can easily use English in an English-speaking country.
• A good score in this test will help the candidates get jobs that require knowledge of the English language.
• Candidates who got high scores demonstrate that they can understand everything they hear read. Also, candidates are able to summarize information, express themselves, and speak fluently and precisely. | • Scoring high in this test will show that the candidate can easily use English in an English-speaking country.
• Also candidate who has passed the exam will prove that they have the knowledge to start studying at University level. |

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Rationale

This artifact was included as evidence of issues of assessment. This assignment was done in the Testing and Evaluation in TEFL course. For this assignment we had to learn all about the IELTS and TOEFL exams and then do a comparison between them.

By doing this assignment I could learn about different means to assess students. In here we could see how they used different activities and types of questions to test the student`s proficiency of the target language. Some of these activities included reading texts, answering questions and participating in conversations.

All this knowledge of different proficiency exams helped design tests and exams that will assess the students in a more reliable way. Also the proficiency exams helped as examples for different types of questions that could be used in our own exams. Some of the types of questions that proficiency tests use are multiple choice, matching, labeling etc.

It is important to note that here at the UTPL, we have our own platform for the distance students. In the last two years, the platform has undergone through different improvements in order to make the learning experience more interactive. Teachers have to designed their exams and then

upload them into the system. The platform now allows us to create different types of questions such as drag and drop, matching, multiple choice, completion and also labeling. These changes have helped us design better exams for our students and they can carry out different activities and not just multiple choice activities as they did before.

CONCLUSIONS

- The use of pre-tests at the beginning of the course allows the teacher to evidence the level of knowledge the student has. Thus, appropriate course of action is taken to improve the students writing skills.

- Grammar is the foundation of writing. The grammar activities given by teacher and carried out by the student directly influenced the improvement of her writing skills.

- The use, collection and analysis of artifacts in case studies benefits instructors. This gives a more profound understanding of the students' strengths, and weaknesses.

- The TESOL / NCATE standards are the basis for instructors involved in teaching a foreign language. The standards guide the instructor through the different aspects that need to be involved in social and academic aspects of the language.

- Activities based on TESOL / NCATE standards help differentiate the way students learn according to their age.

- Including cultural facts and activities based on the TESOL / NCATE standards arouse the students´ attention and motivation.

- The inclusion of standard-based materials and technology in class influence positively in the students understanding of a topic, interaction among peers and interaction among students and teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Teachers should study in depth and apply TESOL / NCATE standards in order to produce classes that are most beneficial to students.
- Every teacher should test students´ knowledge at the beginning of a course to establish student needs and objectives for future classes.
- Language instructors should always try to implement technology in their classroom to make classes more appealing and motivating
- Teachers should always give feedback and extra explanation about mistakes made by the students.

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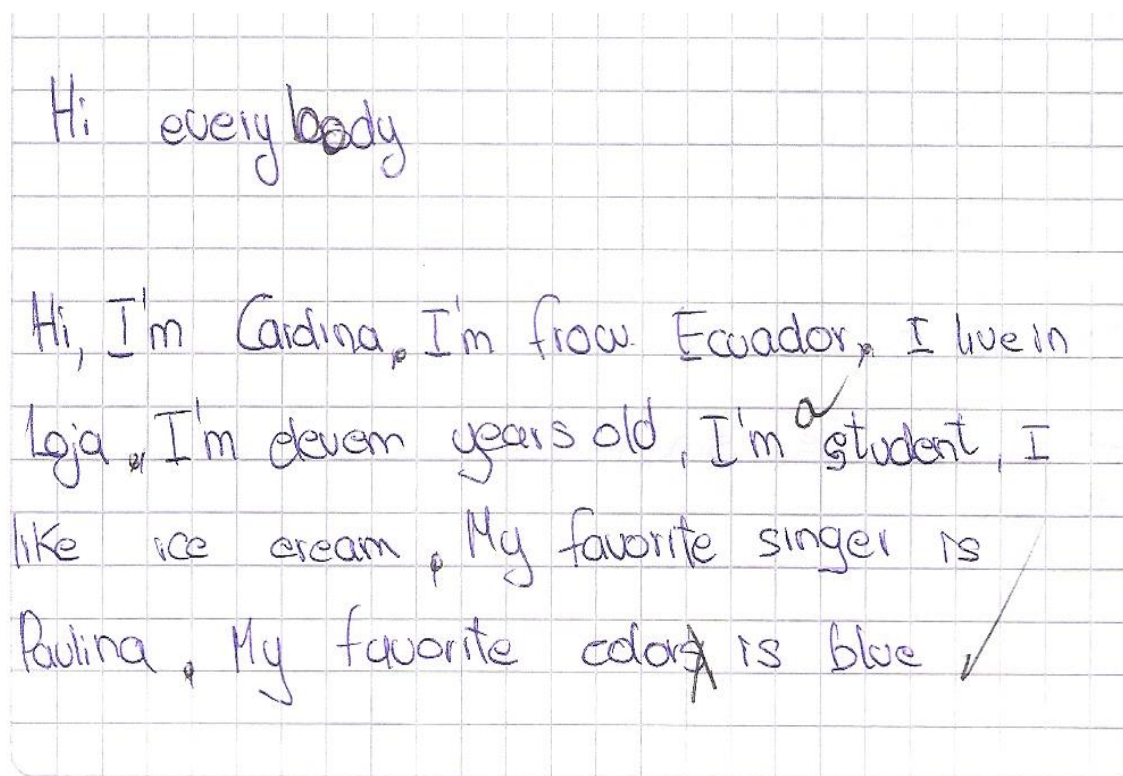Sarada, M. (2006). *Paragraph to essay writing.* New Delhi: Sterling Publishers.

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ANNEXES

Sample of pre-test

Hi everybody

Hi, I'm Cardina, I'm from Ecuador, I live in Loja, I'm eleven years old, I'm a student, I like ice cream, My favorite singer is Paulina, My favorite colors is blue

Sample of student self-evaluation

Yes, I can do this.	I need more practice.	I need help with this.

Can you name things in the house?

Can you name town and city places?

Can you talk about your town?

Can you name different clothes?

Can you say where things are?

Can you talk about your belongings?

Can you name places at school?

Can you talk about your school?

Sample of post-test

Hello, She's Beatriz, She's from Ecuador,
She lives in loja, She ~~has~~ is thirty nine years
old, She's a house wife, She likes french
fries, Her favorite singer is Julio Iglesias
Her favorite colors is to red.

He's Jose, He's from Ecuador, He's
lives in loja, He ~~has~~ is forty two years
old, He's a police officer, He likes pizza
His favorite singer is Enrique / Iglesias, His
favorite colors is purple.

Write a paragraph abut Loja

Loja's located in the South West of Ecuador

Loja is gorgeus

There is a small stadium
                                movie theater
There, is a cine, There aren't any beaches.
                                                        small
in Loja. There are parks big and smallgs

There are schools, There are churches, There are
                                              ✗
two interactive museums, Loja is most famous
              Gate   of the
for the door the city, There is a Bus Taminal
                                          many
There are supermarkets, There are men Banks.

There are Drugstores, There are Bakearys
                                              Bokerties
and There are hotels,

5.5
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6