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**EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTS OF STORYTELLING AS
A STRATEGY TO ENHANCE THE OUTPUT SKILLS IN
ENGLISH AT BETHABA SCHOOL**

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor in English with Concentration in Teaching

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Dedication

To my family that helped during this process. To my dear friend Jennifer who was there when I thought I could not make it. To my tutor Dinier, who was there guiding me through the whole process.

To all my teachers who directly and indirectly helped me to complete this study. Thank you.

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Abstract

This research wanted to evaluate the effects of storytelling used as a strategy to enhance the output skills. The study was developed at Bethaba School in Curridabat, in a classroom of nine students. The study was conducted during the month of June, 2019.

The researcher used qualitative instruments to collect the data. Among the instruments were: observations, rubrics, and surveys. All of them with the objective of evaluating the phenomenon presented while working with storytelling.

At the end of the study, the researcher was able to see that storytelling had raised the interest of students towards the development of the output skills. Not only did storytelling raised the interest, but also the knowledge the students had about their own learning. They were more able to identify the sub skills, and were more prone to work towards an specific objective. The researcher was able to conclude that to use storytelling as a strategy, it must be accurately structured.

Resumen

Esta investigación quería evaluar los efectos de la narración de historias utilizada como estrategia para mejorar las habilidades de salida. El estudio se desarrolló en la escuela Bethaba en Curridabat, en un aula de nueve estudiantes. El estudio se realizó durante el mes de junio de 2019.

El investigador utilizó instrumentos cualitativos para recopilar los datos. Entre los instrumentos estaban: observaciones, rúbricas y encuestas. Todos ellos con el objetivo de evaluar el fenómeno presentado mientras se trabaja con la narración.

Al final del estudio, el investigador pudo ver que la narración de historias había despertado el interés de los estudiantes hacia el desarrollo de las habilidades de salida. No solo la narración de historias despertó el interés, sino también el conocimiento que los estudiantes tenían sobre su propio aprendizaje. Eran más capaces de identificar las habilidades secundarias y eran más propensos a trabajar hacia un objetivo específico. El investigador pudo concluir que para usar la narración de cuentos como una estrategia, debe estructurarse con precisión.

Chapter I

Introductory Framework

English language is highly popular in many countries today. An individual does not necessarily must speak the native language of every foreign language, but by being able to express thoughts in the English language, it should be enough to have a pleasant cultural experience.

Even in Costa Rica, English is part of what many recruiters are looking for in an applicant. Not every individual has a desire to develop in a bilingual job, but these types of occupations guarantee a secure salary that will help to obtain better opportunities in life.

Communicating one's thoughts and ideas, it is what everyone does in their native language. Somehow, when an individual learns a foreign language, it is expectable for this person to develop mainly the comprehensive skills of the language. However, this is totally inaccurate. When a child learns the native language, they listen a lot; yet, they do not fully understand everything they listen. Despite that, they start talking thanks to daily life situations where they feel motivated to communicate an idea.

Input and output skills are part of a parallel process of learning. As basic as this might sound, output skills are often forgotten in places where English is taught as a foreign language. Apparently, productive skills are harder to polish. Therefore, the present investigation will go further about the use of storytelling as a teaching strategy in the foreign language classroom.

The research presented will focus on how to enhance productive skills such as speaking and writing. The skills mentioned are and can be, if wanted, highly related to

storytelling activities. Throughout the chapter, it will be important to define the specific objectives that are destined to explore topics such as the problems a teacher may encounter while using storytelling, and the explanation of storytelling techniques that can be used for developing output skills.

The research in progress aims to contribute for Costa Rican teachers that are looking for dynamic and creative options; therefore, this will be also addressed within the justification section.

1.1 Problem Statement

English teaching, in Costa Rica, is one of the most important subjects in education as it is needed by almost every grown up to obtain a job. Therefore, last year some changes were starting to be made to the curricula to improve the outcome of English teaching in schools and high schools. Output skills, such as speaking and writing, are typically the ones that are used to measure how much an individual can express himself in a foreign language. In private schools, the interest on reinforcing these two skills has increased over the last decade.

Teachers know that students need to be stimulated as a way to have a desire for learning. Creative activities, that allow them to put their thoughts and even feelings on the table, are a promising option for the foreign language teacher.

Therefore, this research looks for an evaluation of the effects of storytelling for the development of speaking and writing. Once these points have been stated, it is important to mention that if achievable, at the end of the investigation, the researcher will build a brief

manual with storytelling strategies that can be used by English teachers. Since private schools in Costa Rica do have an increased interest in output skills, creative strategies, and have many resources available, this research will take place in one of the institutions mentioned before.

The researcher will explore as many storytelling strategies and resources as possible to apply them in a fourth-grade class of a private school. Observations and notations will be required to make an analysis at the end of the investigation. Finally, as stated before, the main objective will be to evaluate the effects of storytelling as a strategy to enhance productive skills, more specifically writing and speaking.

1.2 Objectives of the Investigation

In Costa Rica, storytelling has always been a part of cultural events and celebration as form of art and entertainment. Nowadays, it is even common to find it in many school festivals to encourage students to unleash their creativity. In addition, some teachers, mainly Spanish teachers, use it as a tool to cultivate the interest in reading.

To say that storytelling as teaching strategy is completely innovative in the Costa Rican educational system, would not be accurate. However, the use of storytelling in the teaching of English as a second language, it is a field that has not been yet fully explored. Storytelling can be structured and linked to digital applications and websites that could make of it a promising tool to help students gain practice when expressing themselves in this foreign language.

Therefore, these objectives will look for understanding of what storytelling is and how it works when is applied in a classroom where students learn English as a foreign language.

1.2.1 General Objective

To evaluate the effects of storytelling as a tool to enhance productive skills such as writing and speaking while learning English as a foreign language in a Costa Rican classroom.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

- I. To identify most common obstacles a teacher might have when using storytelling as a strategy in 6th grade students at a private school in San José.
- II. To define which digital tools can be used for storytelling purposes in and the English classroom.
- III. To apply storytelling strategies to enhance output skills in the classroom.
- IV. To evaluate the performance of the students while they work with storytelling strategies.

1.3 Justification

Language is the most persuasive and powerful cultural artifact that humans possess to mediate their connection to the world, to each other, and to themselves (Lantolf & Thorn, 2006). Language is indeed, a highly elaborated tool that allows human beings to understand each other better. Foreign language learners have a huge challenge ahead of themselves.

According to Vygotsky and his sociocultural theory, humans acquire language and many other cognitive skills during the earliest stage. In which, children practically absorb every behavior and linguistic manner that surrounds them. Therefore, it is understandable that foreign language learners have a difficult period trying to express themselves in a

natural manner using other than their native language. A teacher cannot be outside of the learning time with the pupils for them to keep in touch with the foreign language, nor can he assure that students will aim to use the foreign language in their everyday routine. However, teachers can build up an environment for students that will allow them to absorb as much as possible.

In 2014, Education First stated that Costa Rica had come down six places in the chart of English Proficiency Rating (*The reasons why English Teaching is bad in the Country*, 2015). However, this is a clear result of the lack of acculturation some Costa Rican students go through during English classes. Students need a promising strategy that if structured well, can help students in the process of acculturation with the foreign language. Since storytelling can involve cognitive factors such as: the decision making of accurate words, the appropriate tone of voice, or the reflective thinking to organize events in a story; for this reason, it seems like an opportunity to engage foreign language students into a meaningful communicative exercise.

Any teacher that struggles with the development of output skills, or that has a major interest in building them up can consider the present investigation as relevant. As mentioned before, the purpose of the research is to create a manual as final product in which the instructor can find structured storytelling strategies that can motivate the students to work in their communicative process using English as a foreign language.

Institutes that focus more on the productive side of the foreign language could also benefit from the approach to storytelling that this research looks for. Because these institutions often promote results that will allow pupils to speak reasonably well enough to get a bilingual job, the research can present theory and exercises teachers might find useful

to reinforce the management of the productive skills. Now, the practical application of the research will first take place in a fourth grade English classroom to experiment and make the required observations, but this is only a reference.

In fact, it should be possible to adapt these strategies for foreign language learners of any age. If the results are adequate, the practical application of this research should solve the lack of acculturation Costa Rican foreign language learners typically have to struggle with. It should enable them to break a barrier and feel that they can truly express their identity in the foreign language. As it is well known by second language acquisition researchers, most of the pupils keep using their mother tongue during foreign language classes. In addition, they hardly try to involve themselves with the foreign language outside of classes. This issue could be resolved using digital applications as they can be accessed from any place, whether it is the student's home, extracurricular facilities, or even workplace in the case of adult learners. In fact, there are several digital applications directed to users of different ages that can allow the student to engage more with the English language.

Finally, a projection of this investigation is to increase the level of interest students have for the foreign language. In the case of young middle school students, they do not usually choose to learn English; therefore, motivation is an important factor that teacher must reinforce. For those learners, storytelling should be presented as a game. Young learners, in this case fourth graders, can feel that learning is more a challenge than a joyful experience. Therefore, figures, characters, music, any scenario that these learners find amusing, or fun, can be appropriate to set the environment for the storytelling strategies. As for the more adult learners, they usually enjoy talking about their own interests or lives.

Consequently, the instructors can present storytelling as a way of empty themselves and share their identity progressively with their classmates. Another option is to give scenarios where storytelling is used as a content-based technique. For instance, an adult learner that wants to speak the English language to work as stewardess can play with storytelling in scenarios related to that occupation.

As previously stated, the investigation aims to use the ancient art of storytelling as an innovative and structured engaging strategy for the output skills in foreign language students.

1.4 Antecedents

Storytelling was originated by visual stories, such as cave drawings, and then shifted to oral traditions, in which stories were passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth (The Evolution of Storytelling, Mendoza). In this website article, the author tries to illustrate how ancient storytelling is. It shows how even in early times, humans had a strong need to express their thoughts. In fact, this is the first step to understand the key difference between expressing and communication.

As an important fact, to express something is to manifest a feeling, a thought, and an event that unleashed something inside the individual, whereas to communicate is an action that addresses a more specific purpose. So, how are these self-expressions of the early humans related to speaking a foreign language? Before, for learning to communicate, an individual must be confident enough to express his thoughts with his social peers. Therefore, if teachers expect their students to be able to go outside-of-the-class contexts

and deal with more formal and objective situations in which they will need to communicate, it is highly important to start teaching the confidence, and the art of expressing ideas.

Storytelling through oral tradition dates back to different points in history, depending on the culture. These traditions use songs, chants and epic poetry to tell stories that had been handed down from generation to generation and eventually written and published (The Evolution of Storytelling, Mendoza). These sentences provide a hint on how remarkable support resources are when referring to storytelling. Songs, poetry, and chants can be deeply related to linguistic aspects such as: intonation, pronunciation, cohesion, and coherence. In the foreign English classroom, the student should use these types of resources while working on the speaking and written output. Storytelling is clearly conformed by several factors that can be linked to the foreign language teaching in the present.

There are many different types of digital stories. Nevertheless, it is possible to categorize the major types into the following three major groups: 1) personal narratives - stories that contain accounts of significant incidents in one's life; 2) historical documentaries – stories that examine dramatic events that help us understand the past, and 3) stories designed to inform or instruct the viewer on a particular concept or practice. (Robin, 2006). This document suggests several uses that can be given to storytelling. In fact, this portion can be helpful at the time of categorizing storytelling strategies for the English classroom. Depending on the students' profile, the teacher could play with a personal narrative to make them talk about their surroundings and background, or a story designed to inform as a more task-approached technique. In addition, students who

participate in the creation of digital stories may develop enhanced communications skills by learning to organize their ideas, ask questions, express opinions, and construct narratives. (Robin, 2006). In here, this author supports the previous statement that storytelling can serve as an integrated tool to enhance many of the skills that students need for their development for the foreign language. It is the whole process behind the storytelling what makes it such a complete exercise.

As most active users of any foreign language know, speaking and writing are in reciprocal relationship (Golkova&Hubackova, 2014). Pressure and focus are always on these output skills as they are the reflection of the true knowledge an individual has of a language. This is applicable to native and foreign language. The relation among speaking and writing relays on how well an individual can connect ideas and how much vocabulary the person possesses to present these thoughts. Of course, with each skill there are factors that are evaluated in an English lesson, but the connection between is irrevocable. Productive skills would not exist without the support of receptive ones (Golkova&Hubackova, 2014). Output skills are deeply supported by passive skills such as listening and reading. An individual will not be able to improve in pronunciation if he never listens to native language speakers.

On the other hand, there will always be a gap in writing for the individual that does not spend time acquiring vocabulary and comprehension through reading. Although this research will stress the enhancing of the output skills, passive skills should be mentioned as well. Even in storytelling as a strategy, a skill such as listening is part of the dynamic when the teacher asks a portion of the students to pay attention to the individual who is telling the

story. They will need to listen closely to the intonation and pronunciation to evaluate their own learning or simply understand the plot of the story told.

According to Moitra (2014), stories can be appealing educational tools because they engage students, are believable and entertaining, and enable students to easily recall facts from the story. The author also mentions the several steps went through while working with storytelling. For instance, the writer explains how to determine goals and objectives, how to build the narrative framework, how to add visual resources, and how to do test-drive on the story. This shows that storytelling is more than improvising a fictional story.

When storytelling is used as an educative strategy, there must be a structure to follow. Foreign language students will always require understanding on what they are doing and why are they doing it. Moitra (2014) also includes a survey made to the students to find out how they felt during the application of storytelling for their class. Seven out of nine students stated that they found the content of the stories interesting, and eight of them said that the stories were informative. More than half of the students stated that they were more engaged in the lesson with storytelling. This fact supports the engaging factor of the usage of this strategy. It must be remarked that in this example, the author Moitra mentioned she did storytelling herself, and students enjoyed that first contact they had with storytelling. The teacher must be present and apply the strategy in a way that students find enjoyable.

TPR Storytelling is a method to teach English (and other languages) as a foreign language invented by Blaine Raine. This man was a Spanish teacher in Bakersfield, California in 1990 concerned that his students were not very interested in the learning process a language with few exciting shapes by means of a textbook (TPR Storytelling o

Contar Cuentosen la Enseñanza del Inglés, 2015). This article links storytelling to a well-known method called Total Physical Response. This method can be highly useful when a teacher encounters himself to the challenge of getting the attention of young learners. It also adds value to the structure of a storytelling dynamic, as it must include several elements such as the physical participation of the students, which engages to the lesson at a deeper level.

When students are required to move their body and give physical response, they are committing to the current moment. This represents a huge improvement in the engagement with the lesson.

1.5 Scope

- A. To explain the practical application of storytelling as a tool for enhancing foreign language. The research wants to expose concrete steps for an effective and clear application of storytelling as a tool more than just a way of entertaining.
- B. To expose storytelling as a structured strategy with supportive resources for the enhancing of output skills. The investigation will include as many resources as possible to ensure a successful experience during the learning process of the students. Some of the resources the teacher can include are visuals, physical dynamics, and music.
- C. To build up a strategy that helps solving the lack of mastery certain students have of the output skills of the English language. This section tries to remark the interest this research has in improving the output skills of Costa Rican students, as it is well known, pupils will be required to have these skills as refined as possible in the future.

- D. To apply storytelling activities in a middle school class of English as foreign language. In addition, to increase the engagement of students towards the development of output skills. The teacher applying the method will communicate the students how important productive skills are for the development of their use of foreign language. Through small discussions with the group of students, these activities will take place.
- E. To analyze the effects of storytelling while reinforcing certain subskills of writing and speaking. Subskills will not be left out of the research. The purpose is not to address all of them, but to include them to make the study more reliable and competent.
- F. To work with digital applications for storytelling in order to increase the level of enthusiasm and interest of the students. Digital applications will be a tool to make students stay in contact with the foreign language outside of the class and to feel that storytelling is an approachable exercise to practice English.
- G. To deal with possible obstacles while trying to apply storytelling in the foreign language class. The identification of possible difficulties during the application of this strategy will be addressed and examined during the study.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

This chapter focuses on to explore the different strategies and points of consideration a teacher can have while working with speaking and writing. In addition, the chapter points on the role that storytelling can have to teach these productive skills.

Speaking and writing are, as mentioned before, productive skills. They measure how much, and how well can the student produce his own speech in the target language. As it is with any other skill, teachers must undeniably search for the best strategies to develop speaking and writing.

Writing is a highly complex skill that very often seems dull for students, but it has to be addressed with consistency in order to see results. In this chapter, writing will have the cognitive theory as a pillar. The cognitive theory sees writing as a process, not just a product. Finally, for the writing section, the process writing technique will be carried in a more detailed level since this is the focus that will be used to work with the testing group.

Next, some aspects of the speaking skills should be also explained. The cognitive theory is also very interested in how the process of thinking affects the ultimate speaking performance that a student can deliver. The sociocultural theory supports the fact that speaking is much more cultural skill than any other is; and as such, the teacher must bring more elements to table and help student familiarized with the target language culture.

At the end, there is a section dedicated only to storytelling. Storytelling can be used as a tool to develop productive skills; therefore, the section will start by discussing briefly

some of the strengths of storytelling. Then, it will continue by explaining the relationship between speaking and writing with storytelling.

2.1. Cognitive Theory in Writing

The four features to be discussed in detail are: writing consists in distinct processes, writing processes are highly embedded, writing is goal directed, and writing stimulates the discovery of new goals. (Flowers & Hayes, 1981). The cognitive theory of writing relies in these four pillars. This theory clearly treats writing as a more complex process than something that is just present to be corrected and judged as right or wrong. Furthermore, this theory supports the fact that writing process is not sequential, and it can change depending on the writer's needs to shape his piece of writing. Writing processes are not constrained to occur in a fixed sequence such as plan, translate, and review. (Flowers & Hayes, 1981)

2.2 How to teach writing

A major element of writing process pedagogies is to make students aware that writing is often a process of discovery in which ideas are generated and not just transcribed (Susser, 1994). Unfortunately, in Costa Rican teaching, writing is very often seen just as the final product of an unperceived process. However, the writing skill is a combo of process and product. What is the process to teach? It is the process of discovery through language. It is the process of exploration of what people know, and what people feel about they know through language. It is the process of using language to learn about the world, to evaluate

what people learn about the world, to communicate what people learn about the world.

(Murray, 1972)

If a student is asked to write a composition in the foreign language, the teacher should design a task that guides the student, and makes him aware of how he is putting together all the elements needed to write the composition. Learners should have conscious strategies for dealing with parts of the writing process (I. Nation, 2008). Every writing process involves several stages such as choosing a topic, developing or researching the topic, drafting, and writing. Choosing a topic can be approached in different ways. The pre-writing activity that will come after choosing the topic will derive from the type of topic chosen. All these elements together will create a type of writing task. According to I.E Nation (2008), these four kinds of tasks are called experience tasks, shared tasks, guided tasks, and independent tasks. One way to look at these types of tasks, it is to see their job as dealing with the gap which exists between learners' present knowledge and the demands of the learning task. Experience tasks try to narrow the gap as much as possible by using or developing learners' previous experience. Shared tasks try to get learners to help each other cross the gap. Guided tasks try to bridge the gap by providing the support of exercises and focused guidance. Independent tasks leave learners to rely on their own resources.

Of course, this does not mean that the four types of task can be used with every group of students. The teacher must determine wisely if the task suits the student's profile based on age, behavior and level of knowledge. Although, some might consider that every group of students should experience the four types of task, and this is not necessarily true. The task must be designed to help students feel successful at the end of it. This does not mean that a student will not make mistakes, nor does this mean that the teacher will not

correct the student. What it is intended; it is the students to feel familiar with the whole writing process in a natural way. In other words, a way that imitates the first language acquisition for the writing skill. Writing is most likely to be successful and meaningful for the learners if they are well prepared for what they are going to write. (I. Nation, 2008).

Different genres use different writing conventions and draw on different language features (Biber, 1989). Students cannot be constricted to only one type of writing. They should explore different types of writing with different objectives and for different readers. As another important fact, being aware of what is the message that they are trying to transmit, will trigger a process within the students' mind. They will need to think about proper vocabulary and tone for their piece of writing. This is a more natural process for vocabulary acquisition and practical than the one usually used with the teacher about making a list in front of the students. Writing instruction should be based on a careful needs analysis, which considers what the learners need to be able to do with writing, what they can do now, and what they want to do. (I. Nation, 2008)

According to cognitive theory, communicating in writing is an active process of skill development and gradual elimination of errors as the learner internalizes the language. Acquisition is usually a product of the complex interaction of the linguistic environment and the learner's internal mechanisms (Klimova, 2014). It is very common that students seem reluctant to certain writing activities because they are somewhat more complex than the typical fill in the gaps exercise. The teacher can educate the students about the different stages of the writing process. Learners should have conscious strategies for dealing with parts of the writing process. (I. Nation, 2008). Before the student can actually sit down and write, they need to go through pre-writing activities; for example, brainstorming. This part

of the process can often make students feel confused. They must understand that this stage is just for them, and to put into paper all of their thoughts and ideas about the topic. There are no restrictions in this part. The objective is to gather as much information as possible. Once this has been done, the teacher guides the student to the next step, which can be outlining. In here, students do need more structure and judgement to pick the ideas that fit best. Furthermore, having more students that are knowledgeable in matters of the writing strategies requested to use, will allow them to work on a more effective way with peer correction and peer discussions about the subject. Learners should know about the parts of the writing process and should be able to discuss them in relation to their own and others writing. (I. Nation, 2008)

2.3 Writing approaches

The close relationship between writing and thinking makes writing a valuable part of any language course (Raimes, 1983). Every group of students is different, and so are English teachers. This is why people can find many different approaches to develop the writing skill. There is no approach better than other is; however, it is the teacher's responsibility to investigate and educate himself as best as possible to play with the approaches that fit the group of students.

2.3.1 The Controlled Free Approach

With this approach, the teacher starts by giving the students sentences or small paragraphs. The teacher asks the students to rewrite the content and allows them to make specific grammar changes. Then, the difficulty increases as students must keep doing the

same exercise with larger pieces of text as a difference. This technique works if focused mainly in grammar and syntax.

2.3.2 The Free Writing Approach

The objective of the free writing approach is for students to write as much material in the foreign language as it is possible. With this, the teacher can avoid the typical lack of ideas that students have when requested to write about a free topic in the target language. This point is accomplished by letting them know they do not have to worry about grammar, punctuation, or syntax. With this approach, the teacher avoids any type of corrections, except for feedback about content and ideas. The goal is for students to start feeling comfortable with putting their thoughts in paper as they put into practice this kind of writing more and more often. At the very end, some find that they write more fluently and that putting words down to paper is not so frightening after all. (Raimes, 1983)

2.3.3 The Paragraph-Pattern Approach

This approach works from an organization-standing point of view. The students are given a paragraph or just a series of scrambled sentences that they have to put in a correct grammatical and syntactical order. Students can even add sentences or words to the text. This approach bases on the principle that in different cultures people construct and organize their communication with each other in different ways. (Raimes, 1983)

2.3.4 The Grammar Syntax Organization Approach

The grammar syntax organization approach is somewhat similar to the one described previously. Only in this case, the teacher stresses the importance of organization and other topics such as grammar and punctuation at the same time. This approach then links the purpose of a piece of writing to the forms needed in order to convey the message (Raimes, 1983).

2.3.5 The Communicative Approach

This approach gives a big importance to the role of the reader. Therefore, teachers have their students asking themselves who will read their piece of writing. This approach also allows a lot of peer participation as the students can ask classmates to read their work and even make comments about it. Of course, the use of imagination becomes important with this technique. It is not because the students write about fiction, but because sometimes they need to imagine a reader. For example, the teacher could ask them to imagine they are writing a letter to a friend that they have never seen in person in order to describe their neighborhood. Another example could be writing a letter to their grandma. This means, students must have to use different vocabulary depending on who will read their piece of writing. Student writers are encouraged to behave like authors in real life and to ask themselves the crucial questions about purpose and audience (Raimes, 1983).

2.3.6 The Process Approach

This approach allows students to explore the topic, get familiar with it, and even choosing it themselves if possible in order to be able to play with the topic. It concerns more about the flow of thoughts and ideas the student can have the moment to write.

Teachers, who use this approach, give their students two crucial supports: time for students to try out ideas and feedback on the content of what they write in their drafts (Raimes, 1983).

2.4 Problems within the process approach

If processes differ, then the role of process teachers is not to impose a process, but to perceive their students' differences, and then assess each one's particular needs (Liebman-Kleine, 1987). The process approach is definitely focused on a more personalized treatment of each student when it comes to their writing. However, this is also represented as a challenge because every student will need a different process. If the teacher imposes a specific type of process for a lesson, she will need to handle different types of reactions, as this process is not as methodical and controlled as others are.

Likewise, several ethnographic studies have shown that even writing teachers who have been trained in or consider themselves adherents of process writing tend to violate process-writing principles in practice. A situation that sends conflicting signals to their students about what they expect (e.g., Courtland & Welsh, 1990; Courtland, Welsh, & Kennedy, 1987; Inghilleri, 1989; Zamel, 1985, 1990; see also Winer, 1992). As stated before, process writing is not as controlled as other approaches. Therefore, making clear expectations for the students becomes a blurry subject. For instance, Costa Rican students might have somewhat of a problem with unclear expectations with writing tasks.

Furthermore, they will not feel successful at the end of the task if they do not know what was supposed to be accomplished. Costa Rican education focuses more on memory, and not so much on analyzing. The issue with this comes when the teacher needs autonomous students to set their own goals and expectations, which can be the case with process

approach. Since this can become a very personalized technique, the teacher needs to rely on how much the students can respond for their own learning process.

2.5 Cognitive Theory in Speaking

The cognitive theory in education analyzes the process of thought that a student has when attempting to perform a task. Thornbury (2005), talks about the cognitive theory and the speaking skill and remarks that based on the principle of the cognitive theory, acquiring this skill is a complex task that goes from a controlled process to a more autonomous one. It is complicated to teach such a skill, and not just to learn it. The cognitive theory implies that the teacher must take the time to observe his pupils and prepare detailed material to collect information that serves as a guide to understand how students think when they speak in the foreign language. A cognitivist account of language learning, rejects the behaviorist view of learners as empty vessels waiting to be filled, and instead credits them with an information processing capacity, analogous to a computer (Thornbury, p. 38, 2005). Based on this principle and according to the cognitive theory, it can be assumed that to develop the speaking skill, students need more than just the memory skills. They require key exercises that will activate prior knowledge and help them make connections to benefit the “controlled experience” of trying to speak in the target language.

2.6 Socio Cultural Theory in the Speaking

Socio cultural theory supports the fact the students need to have a real life interaction to develop the speaking skill. According to this view, all learning – including the learning of a first and second language – is mediated through social and cultural activity (Thornbury p. 38, 2005). It can be assumed then, that learning how to speak in a second

language is almost the same as learning to speak in the first language. They are both cultural processes that have happened subtly and slowly.

The role of the teacher in this theory is just to be a living example. The Socio Cultural Theory encourages also peer work and interaction, as it is always needed to have this factor to develop their own sense of knowledge. The professor is the person students look up to listen the target language. By listening the teacher, the student will also see the many ways in which ideas are constructed and puts them into words. In order to achieve autonomy in a skill, the learner first needs to experience other-regulation, that is, the mediation of a “better one”, whether parent, peer, or teacher (Thornsbury p.38, 2005).

2.7 How to improve writing

Motivation is a factor that every student takes into account when working with the writing skill. If a student is not well motivated, he will perform the task, but will not grow interest in understanding the writing process. It has already been said that based on the cognitive theory, writing is seen as a process, not just a product. Therefore, it is necessary that students can raise metacognitive awareness to work in the written tasks. Positive feedback on the content of learners’ writing can do a lot to increase the amount of writing that learners do and to improve their attitude to writing (Nation p. 137, 2008). The attitude and attention the teacher gives to this factor, it has a major impact on how much usage can be given to it.

Each teacher selects the best way to give positive feedback to the students. However, this is not something to be decided at a group level. Nation (2008) points out that some students are shy and do not feel comfortable when the teacher makes comments about

their writing skills, even when this feedback is positive. One way of dealing with this is to praise the piece of work and not the person (Nation p.138, 2008).In that way, the attention of the class is diverted from the student, and it is focused on his written work, which at the end, is what the teacher truly wants to focus on.

Another form of positive feedback is publication (Nation p. 139, 2008). Nation (2008), also explains that this is a form of positive feedback that can be done in many ways; for instance, the teacher could have the piece of writing circulating in the classroom, or even have the work pasted on the wall for everybody to see it. As an alternative, the teacher could even create an “awards session”, in which different awards are given depending on the strengths of the different pieces of writing that students create.

On the other hand, correction is also a type of feedback. Furthermore, correction is the feedback that must be given in detail, and with more delicacy than any other must. Part of the problem lies in the nature of the teacher’s feedback which can be unclear, inaccurate, and unbalanced – because it focuses only in certain elements of the written output, and because it over emphasizes the negative points(Kroll, 1991).Besides, from the fact that students often have different mistakes from a grammar or morphosyntactic nature, teachers can also get over judgmental with the content of the writing. Clearly, the content goes with coherence and cohesion, and it is something the writer has to learn to develop. However, it is necessary for the teacher to be always objective when correcting. In addition, the teacher must be aware of each students’ strengths and weaknesses. Giving attention to the writing process, it is a way of bringing about improvement in learners’ writing by providing help at the various stages of the process, instead of just focusing in the product (Nation p. 123, 2008).

Within giving feedback, teachers should choose what to correct while dealing with students' errors. More often than it should, professors look for the perfect composition. This means that even if topics from last weeks have been related to a grammar tense, the teacher will most likely mark punctuation or even spelling mistakes. Raimes (1983) mentions that the teacher should see student's mistakes as something that is there to conquer, and not as an enemy. Mistakes give the teacher a wide field of investigation to analyze what should be addressed, what are the students understanding, and what are the students struggling with. Raimes (1983) also explains that the teacher should pay attention to the root cause of the error. A student can make mistakes in writing due to several reasons. Among those reasons, lack of interest in the topic, poor understanding about a grammar rule or even unclear instructions are clear examples about them. Raimes (1983) says that by paying attention to these details, students are giving the time and opportunity to correct errors before the teacher has to do it for them. This reason has to do a lot with auto correct, and developing the skill of being auto critical. In addition, students should know how to look for the answers and build them by using their prior knowledge. Consequently, this will not guarantee that students will avoid mistakes, or that their auto-corrections will always be right; however, this will encourage a path of thinking that will improve language learning in the end.

The teacher can help students to develop the ability to self-correct. The learners should be encouraged to develop the habit of correcting their work carefully before giving it to the teacher to be marked (Nation p. 123, 2008). This can be a difficult field, especially for those students who preferred the light and easy type of task where they simply have to recall, write, and wait for the teacher's response. Self-correction can be strengthened by

doing peer correction in groups first. This exercise would be collective type of self-correction that can help the individual student to feel less vulnerable and more prone to be judgmental.

Pre-writing activities

If your students are producing notes and lists of a first draft, concentrate on meaning. (Raimes p. 22, 1983). There is no need to overwhelm a student with grammar rules from the beginning. It should be especially taken into account that if writing is seen as a process, the pre-writing time should be respected as one of free writing. Question only the major errors, like jumbled sentences, which interfere with communication so much that you cannot work out what the student is trying to say (Raimes p.22, 1983).

Brainstorming is the most common and simplest activity for pre-writing. It allows the student to place all his ideas into a paper smoothly without worrying too much of making mistakes. Whatever the writing assignment is based on a -reading, a picture, map, textbook topic, personal experience, or an examination essay question- it can precede by student talk, specifically by a brainstorming activity, with students producing relevant vocabulary, making comments, asking questions, and making associations as freely as they can in a short time. (Raimes p. 69, 1983).

It is well known that students struggle when they have to develop a topic. They find it difficult the moment they have to find more ideas to talk about, or how to express their thoughts. Group discussions can become an alternative to deal with these feelings students have so often. According to Raimes (1983), the main rule of group discussions is that the student's thinking must have a direction set by certain guidelines. The benefit of having a

group discussion relies the fact that students can be calibrated in a topic. Furthermore, if the teacher is interested in working with a very specific content using the writing skill, all students should have a level of knowledge that is similar to each other. With the group discussion, the teacher will know who are the students that lack knowledge on the topic, who are the ones that do not feel comfortable developing the topic, and it will also help to expose key points that the teacher wants the students to know. Raimes (1983), points out several activities that can be used during group discussions. Those activities this author refers to are such as asking *wh* questions, taking notes, or recording the discussion. It can also be remarkable to set roles that proactively save and emphasize information from the discussion. Raimes (1983) says that some examples of these roles can be the summarizer, the reporter, and the discussion leader.

Skits are another option to go when choosing a pre writing activity. They are similar to role-play, but giving a lot more emphasis on how the written part is done. Writing can then follow as an outside report or summary of what was said and done, or it can be a continuation of the skit, with the writers assuming the voices of the personalities in the skit (Raimes, 1983).

2.8 How to Teach Speaking

A key question to ask, therefore, is whether a teacher is engaged in ‘teaching the spoken form of a language’ or ‘teaching a language through speaking’ (Hughes, 2011). This question is quite important when it comes to English teaching in Costa Rica. It is very common to hear a teacher suggesting to their colleagues to speak more English in the class. However, with what purpose?

Deciding how much of the foreign language will be used in the classroom and in which type of situations, is something the teacher can only know by identifying the needs and strengths of his students.

Therefore, having an answer to whichever of the two questions seen previously, it is important. This has a direct effect on how teachers are going to assess their students, and what expectations should be set.

Speaking is a very complex skill to teach since it has many other topics attached to it. For an individual to be able to communicate using his voice in a foreign language there is a lot more needed than just repeating information. Hughes (2011) points out that as a second language learner acquires a living language, a large number of aspects other than grammar and vocabulary are necessary to be acquired for successful communication to take place. Therefore, a teacher should create an appropriate environment in the classroom for students to be more in contact with the contact related to the target language. The teacher could also play movies, or even have music in the background that is sung in the target language. In order to learn communicating expertly in another language, a speaker must change and expand identity as he or she learns the cultural, social, and even political factors, which go into language choices needed to speak appropriately with a new 'voice'. (Hughes, 2011).

2.9 Speaking Awareness

For English learners, it is important to raise awareness because this is a controlled-stage of the speaking development. As a part of raising awareness, it includes putting the students in situations where they will have to be conscious of the required aspects to speak in the target language. These aspects cannot be evaluated all at the same time; otherwise, students would feel frustrated. Examples of this controlled-stage can be role-plays or dialogues, which are cases the student can read the transcript. In this situation, it is also important for the student to have a role model. Therefore, the learner can compare what is been listened to his own performance. The task prompts a degree of attention, and in rehearsing the task, individual learners may notice “the gap” between their performance and that of their peers (Thornsbury p.44, 2005). This is a process in which the student becomes aware of “the gap”, and it can be awkward at first. It is in this stage, where the teacher should present activities to the students for them to feel comfortable with the fact that they are going to make mistakes, and they are going to be corrected. That is why the necessity to bring material the students can read; at least at the beginning, as this will provide them a guide. Awareness involves at least three processes: attention, noticing, and understanding.

2.9.1 Attention

During this stage, the teacher has to get the student’s attention at all cost. This means more than just having the student listening to the explanation while the teacher is

talking about the topic. As hard as it can be, the teacher has to stimulate the student into staying curious about how the speaking activities will develop. Thornsbury (2005) mentions that learners need to be interested, involved, and curious.

2.9.2 Noticing

The process of noticing is nothing like the previous one. What defines this process is when students become aware of a certain event that occurs with their performance. Noticing then is the conscious registering of the occurrence of some event or entity (Thornsbury, 2005). Now, if it is about registering, how can this be differentiated from just paying attention? For many tasks that are done during a day, an individual must be paying attention; also, to register or notice something, something else has to happen. The event has to be out-of-usual for the student to register it. Professors also notice things if they have been previously pointed out to us (Thornsbury, 2005). In here, a teacher would be activating short-term prior knowledge. It is easy for students to notice a new phoneme or intonation pattern if the teacher had just explained in the previous lesson.

2.9.3 Understanding

During this part, the students come to acknowledge what the teacher was trying to explain whether a phoneme, intonation pattern, sentence stress, or rhythm. Finally, when the student has integrated this into his bank of knowledge about the language, the process to acquire it is while he is performing, and it will become smoother. About understanding,

Thornsbury (2005) exemplifies that a teacher can support the students' understanding of the pattern or element by asking him to underline it. This shows that one of the identifying is one of the key objectives that a teacher needs to have present in order to check for understanding. Finally, there is no real awareness, without understanding (Thornsbury, 2005).

2.9.4 Recording and scripts for speaking awareness

Recordings can be a highly useful resource for the development of productive skills, such as speaking and writing. It also works with the listening skills, so students must go through an "identifying process" every time a recording is used during the lesson. On the other hand, scripts give students a more detailed exposure to the language since written language is a denser than the spoken one.

How to improve speaking

Speaking is a skill that, regardless the content or topic the teacher is focusing on, is must be practiced in as much as possible. There is no use in just teaching theory. Activating prior knowledge should be done during most part of English lessons. However, when the teacher tries to work on speaking, activating prior knowledge can truly make a difference. Thornsbury (2005) explains in "How to teach speaking", that before a speaking activity is carried out, it can be helpful to establish some specific topics, and to brainstorm some vocabulary that students already know.

Students sometimes wonder about the importance of learning a language. This importance falls specifically on those who are at a school level and are taking English as a foreign language. This is the reason why purposefulness is consequential to improve speaking. In fact, often language productivity can be increased by making sure the speaking activity has a clear outcome, and especially one which requires learner to work together to achieve a common purpose (Thornbury p. 90, 2005). Content-based activities and task-based activities are good examples of techniques that can have a clear purpose.

Purposefulness helps the students to understand the context of the activity, and to know what is expected of them. Given that speaking has to do a lot with interaction, students have a strong need to have a clear context that provides them confidence and safety; it means factors that every individual needs in order to communicate, even in their native language.

Just like writing, speaking should have a well-prepared correction and feedback stage.

Usually with speaking, there are two major forms of correction: either on the spot correction, or postponed correction. The spot correction must be carried out properly, or it can strongly interfere with the student's perception of speaking. It is hard for some teachers to let go of mistakes that students make while speaking. Therefore, the instructor must have a very clear objective about what they are trying to assess or what they are trying to achieve.

Nevertheless, uncomfortable about "letting errors go", even in fluency activities, and there is support for the view that maintaining a focus on the form- that is, on formal accuracy- is good for learners in the long run (Thornbury p. 92, 2005). In addition, according to

Thornbury (2005), the feedback on-the-spot feedback given by the teacher, should be economical and effective, and it should allow the student to feel secure and not attacked.

On the other hand, for postponed correction, teachers need a rubric that is structured and directed to point out the growth areas and the strengths of the students' performance. In

either case, is generally more motivating if the learners' successes, and as well as their failures are recorded (Thornsbury p.93, 2005). For this purpose, the teacher can also come up with elements such as tracking folders and award charts. These elements are a tool in which the teacher can share the progress or the performance of the student with him. In addition, this will engage students a lot more than just by letting them know if they are doing something correctly, or if there is an area of improvement.

Sociocultural rules are also a key point when it comes to developing speaking. If students are well versed in sociocultural rules, they will be well prepared for real life speaking scenarios, and they will not be afraid of making a cultural mistake while speaking. The kinds of extra linguistic knowledge that affect speaking include such things as topic and cultural knowledge, knowledge of the context, and familiarity with the other speakers (Thornsbury p.11, 2005). If anything, the understanding is that sociocultural rules allow the student to feel somehow closer to the target language culture. These facts can improve the students' confidence when trying to speak in English.

Storytelling

Now, not every communication is in story format or intended as such, but most of our speech is related to story in some way (Spaulding, 2011). Every individual uses an unofficial form of storytelling to communicate through his native language every day. It is also used to explain complex situations, to exemplify, or to share an anecdote. For that reason, it is that storytelling has a benefit to the students' productive skills.

Storytelling is also an antidote to the increased and sometimes excessive usage of technology that students have nowadays. Technology can be a powerful tool. In fact,

students currently need to know how use technology. However, there are factors students need to have from mere human interaction. There is a danger in our becoming so overwhelmed by media, technology, and modern information forms (and I am very aware of the irony of writing these words on a laptop, checking references with a wireless modem) (Spaulding p.97, 2011).

Storytelling and the productive skills

Thornsbury (2005) exemplifies that speaking is a cognitive skill that becomes more and more automated with constant practice. However, practicing a productive skill such as speaking represents a challenge for students. This happens especially because they have to think a lot before learners are actually able to produce; and given that, this product is their own self-expression, and the task becomes harder. A teacher must help to create safe environments with enough factors to stimulate the usage of the target language in speaking activities. Storytelling is a universal function of language and one of the main ingredients of casual conversation (Thornsbury p.95, 2005). Through storytelling, teachers are able to create an environment filled with imagination that can also be co-created with the students according to their own interests.

Each person is a singular narrative, which is constructed continually, unconsciously by, through and in us – through the perceptions, feelings, thoughts, actions, and not least, the discourse, and spoken narrations. Biologically people are not so different from each other, historically as narratives; people are each of us unique (Thornsbury, 2005). Naturally, storytelling is narrowly linked to storyteller's identity and experiences. Adding imagination to that, it turns into an activity that if used properly, stimulates the students'

speaking skill. When a student is going to tell a story created by himself, he is required to access to his own memories. The student can do this without having to improvise that much; and yet, every story or every time a story is told, it is going to be different.

The moment a teacher asks students to tell a story, he can ask the students firstly to create their story in a written format. In here, all the writing subskills can be put into practice. However, it is important to remember that in order to be able to assist the students with storytelling, the approach must be focused in writing as a process. It cannot be a controlled-composition. Taylor (1982) used to say that writing is not just an exercise simply planned, outlined and written, as many people think. Based on these words, it is deducted that to use storytelling in order to develop the writing skill, teachers need two factors: time and preparation. For students to work in their writing without feeling too pressurized, they will need enough time to make mistakes and learn to self-correct. Then, to understand the expectations, and what they might encounter while working on the written task, they need preparation.

Remember stories go back to the beginnings of human culture when science and scholarship did not exist, so do not expect neat categories and straight lines (Spaulding p.35, 2011). Storytelling is not an orthodox strategy used in an only way. Techniques such as the direct method, desuggestopedia, or the process approach can all be included within a storytelling strategy when this is used as a such.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

The purpose of this project is to investigate and learn the application of storytelling, its effects in English teaching, and more specifically for the productive skills such as writing and speaking. Moreover, this includes observations and discussions with the students to have a better understanding on how they work with their productive skills. In addition, this research wants to measure the effects of storytelling as a strategy in students who are 11-12 years old and are students at Bethaba School.

The approach of the research will be qualitative, and so will be the methods and instruments used to develop the investigation. The researcher decided to use the qualitative approach because in this case, it will be observed the phenomenology that appears as a product of the use of storytelling.

Additionally, it would also mention the main sources of information used to support the study. The reasons to select these sources and mainly the inputs given by these sources will be explained as well.

For this study, the investigator will need several instruments that allow recording all of the events in detail. Interviews, rubrics, and observation are part of the instruments that will help to collect the data.

3.1 Research Approach

Qualitative studies try to capture the perspectives that actors use as basis for their actions in specific social settings (Hatch p.7, 2005).

The nature of this research is clearly social as it involves the education field and the interaction of dynamics with students. In order to analyze the effects of storytelling properly, the whole research will be qualitative. The phenomenology that will come from the usage of storytelling for the output skills of students is the main interest of the investigation. Therefore, observations and reports are highly important to appreciate in detail with the reactions of students, as well as how comfortable they feel with this strategy.

Since the main purpose is to collect data and analyze it in order to improve the effects of storytelling in English teaching, at some point, the methods to collect this data can be semi structured and moldable. For instance, interviews and be extended might help if the person who is being interviewed has more remarkable information.

Because this investigation is more social, it will be required to rely on several instruments to collect data. This will provide not only more information, but also more reliable data.

3.2 Research Method

During the first part of the research, the investigator will collect information about storytelling; this includes storytelling resources, digital tools, and possible techniques. This information will be used to create a blueprint of what will be done with the testing group of students. The blueprint must include the skills that will be evaluated, the relation between the skills and storytelling, the possible techniques or activities that will be used with the group, the digital tools, and at least, one lesson plan as an example. This blueprint will be presented to the English teacher or advisory teacher who works with the testing group on regular basis. Storytelling is introduced to the group of students, and a survey will be

conducted for a better understanding on how this particular group of students feel about their output skills in the foreign language.

Parallel to the process with the testing group, the researcher will be doing at least two different types of interviews. One will be about output skills, specifically on the strengths and weaknesses these skills have. The purpose of this interview is to gain knowledge of how the productive skills for a Costa Rican teacher is developed in the foreign language classroom, and to discover the methods and tools they use. In addition, this will help having a wider sight of the challenges teachers face with this particular part of the learning process. The other interview shall be conducted to a teacher that already uses storytelling in the English class. This teacher will be an important source to analyze as an example about other experiences with storytelling as a strategy. Both interviews can generate valuable information used for a better outcome with the testing group.

The investigator will also use rubrics to measure the performance of each student. Rubrics will evaluate, of course, the productive skills. For instance, one of the rubrics will evaluate cohesion and coherence in the written stage of the storytelling and fluency for the speaking stage. The students will produce the written story in order to tell it in front of the classmates afterwards.

In this rubric, the student- teacher will evaluate some subskills from writing and speaking. During the whole application of the project, subskills will be part of the evaluation of the testing group.

While students tell stories in front of their classmates, the student- teacher will be always taking notes about their performance. More than analyzing if their performance is

good or bad, the purpose of these observations, will be trying to interpret the cognitive process that students go through when they polish their output skills with this exercise.

3.3 Information sources

For this study, the investigator had to use several information sources, mostly books. The theoretical framework explains mainly three major topics: writing, speaking, and storytelling. Therefore, the researcher looked up books specifically for each topic. Although, some of the books also had information from the other topics as well.

For the writing section, it was required to explain the cognitive theory first. In order to accomplish this, the researcher used a book written by Flowers and Hayes called “The Cognitive Theory of Writing”. Following that, the theoretical framework tries to develop on how to teach writing. A section in which several words of “Teaching Writing as Process, Not a Product” by Murray, are used. This masterpiece reflects the student creates the importance of focusing on all the steps that take place before the final product.

Then, “Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing”, describes how the writing tasks are usually developed, and also explains briefly some of the cognitive process that students can have while working with this skill. It also discusses some of the challenges that writing has for the pupils.

To start concluding the writing section of the theoretical framework, Raimes elaborates on several techniques to teach writing in the book called, “Techniques to Teach Writing”. On that publication, Raimes goes each technique at a time to show how each one works.

After explaining writing, the researcher dedicated a large portion of the theoretical framework to discuss speaking. The most important source to support this study on speaking matters is Thornsbury with his book, “How to Teach Speaking”. Thornsbury gives an overview of how the Cognitive and the Sociocultural theory are important grounds to teach speaking effectively.

Later on, Rebeca Hughes states that there is a difference between wanting to teach English to speak and speaking in English to teach a language. Aside from this, this author also goes deep on how the process works in the brain of a student when they are acquiring a language in speaking terms.

Once the productive skills have been addressed, the researcher explains Storytelling. That part of the theoretical framework is supported thanks to Amy Spaulding and her book named, “The Art of Storytelling”. This book elaborates on what storytelling is, and who can take advantage of what storytelling has to offer.

3.4 Analysis Categories

a. Writing

Writing is usually an underrated skill. Students do not quite understand the importance of developing writing. It is the teacher’s responsibility to show the pupils that writing can increase their possibilities to improve their performance in the target language. Writing is a process that can be introspective for the student. When a student writes, this learner needs to access to prior knowledge and experiences. Writing also involves the ability to analyze the idea that is going to be communicated and modified to make it coherent.

b. Speaking

From the productive skills, speaking is the one that learners are more interested in developing. However, it is plain to see as the most challenging one. Speaking is a skill that requires the student to revolutionize his own thinking process in order to be able to express himself in the target language.

c. Storytelling

Storytelling is a ludic activity that has been among people for thousands of years now. It promotes sharing and interacting with peers and relatives. Storytelling in English teaching has enough characteristics to use as a strategy that develops writing and speaking.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

The first instrument mentioned on this part of the investigation will be the interview. This instrument was selected because of how effective it can be when the source of information is another individual's previous experience. Since this is a qualitative research, the investigator will need to make at least two interviews to different teachers who can expand the topic of using storytelling for teaching English as a foreign language. The interview must be done to teachers who have used storytelling in the classroom several times before. It should include questions on how the teacher prepares a lesson when storytelling is going to be used as a strategy. In addition, it should elaborate on the strengths and areas of opportunity that the teacher had noticed while working with storytelling. The reactions of the students that the teacher is able to observe should be also addressed in the interview.

The present study tries to evaluate the effects of storytelling as a strategy for educational purposes. Therefore, rubrics will be the most accurate way to evaluate student's performance and cognitive process. Rubrics will be used to evaluate speaking as well as writing. The rubrics for speaking should evaluate mainly fluency, intonation, and cohesion since this study is looking to have the students feeling more comfortable with the idea of speaking in the target language and sounding legible. For writing, the focus will be more in grammar and coherence. As what it is intended, it is for the students to work on the structure of the stories with writing.

Some observations will also need to be practiced in order to have a better understanding of the student's behavior toward storytelling. The observations will be in a form of a diary and done once the students are already executing storytelling-related activities.

Furthermore, the investigator will give the students a questionnaire. This questionnaire will contain questions that seek to comprehend how students feel toward the English language productive skills in class. These questions will be written in English. However, if they need to, students can answer in Spanish.

Another important instrument included on the investigation is surveys. Surveys will also be applied after the students have worked with the digital tools. These instruments will judge how the students feel with these tools. In addition, two factors will be included in the survey. The idea is to measure if students are enjoying the usage of these websites, and if they believe that they are really learning through it.

Finally, the observations of the group before they present their stories are a tool to comprehend their production process. Observations of how well they tell story will also support whatever that rubrics are evaluating.

3.6 Collection data process and data analysis

In order to collect the information from the interviews, the investigator will transcript the recorded material. It will not be necessary to transcript every word verbatim, but it will be important to save the main ideas and any keyword that can change the meaning of what is being said. It will also be important to take notes during the interview in order to capture any information that may arise and turned into a key point for the research.

As a part of the analytical process, the investigator will have a research diary. The objective for this tool will be to write down any idea or thought that can add something to the investigation.

As an important fact, it will be necessary to categorize the observations. There will be three categories for the observations: cognitive process, collaborative performance, oral performance. Within these observations, the investigator will also talk about skills and subskills.

The rubrics will be used individually for each student. Then, the student- teacher will make a report about the effects storytelling had in this particular group of students, and obviously based on the rubrics. Therefore, most of the rubrics needed to be detailed.

The student- teacher will create codes for different effects, so they can be compared to each other in the final part of the report and for the conclusion

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

This study was applied to a twelve-year-old group of nine students from the Bethaba School. The students were mainly used to work with memory-based exercises for the writing part, and pre-made dialogues were applied for speaking. Most of the learners agreed to collaborate with the new strategy. In total, they received eight hours of English lessons in which the student-teacher set the expectation from the beginning. The students were about to receive English classes in which the activity used to develop the topics was storytelling.

During several times of the study, students felt like they did not understand the point of certain activities, and even on how they were going to learn by participating in them. For that reason, the student-teacher had to make brief discussions in order to explain the students what to be achieved with each activity. The simpler the goal, the easier was for the students to understand the reason of the activity. Before each activity, the teacher had to make a short session to review the vocabulary selected to be used during the activities, and to refresh vocabulary that had been seen previously.

The students were three girls and five boys, and they were all in sixth grade. Moreover, most of them had been receiving classes at Bethaba School since first grade. Only one of the boys had fewer time there since he was transferred from a public school the year before.

4.1 Analysis of results

This research was divided in three different stages. The first part consisted on testing the students to get familiar with their English level and rhythm of performance. In order to achieve this, the teacher created a survey, a checklist and a questionnaire that will help to understand how the students felt towards learning English as a foreign language. In addition, the researcher conducted an interview to two English teachers. One of the professors was from a private a school, and the other was from a public school. The objective of both interviews was to see their experience on using storytelling and towards which skills they were using it.

The second stage had as a goal to prepare the students for the storytelling activities in which they were going to be involved. This was achieved through brief activities in which they had to build stories, written and orally. For this part, the teacher did observations to analyze how students reacted to these activities. During this stage, the teacher also tried to give as much constructive feedback as possible, so that students could be ready to engage fully in the next stage. This feedback was given based on the results given by rubrics.

For the third phase, the teacher made activities that would help the students to feel more confident with each other since one of the biggest challenges to develop speaking is how threaten students feel by their peers' reactions. In order to gather the data in this stage, the researcher carried out a survey. In addition, during this stage the teacher also worked with digital storytelling tools. Once again, the teacher carried out a survey to evaluate the effect of this tool's usage in the students.

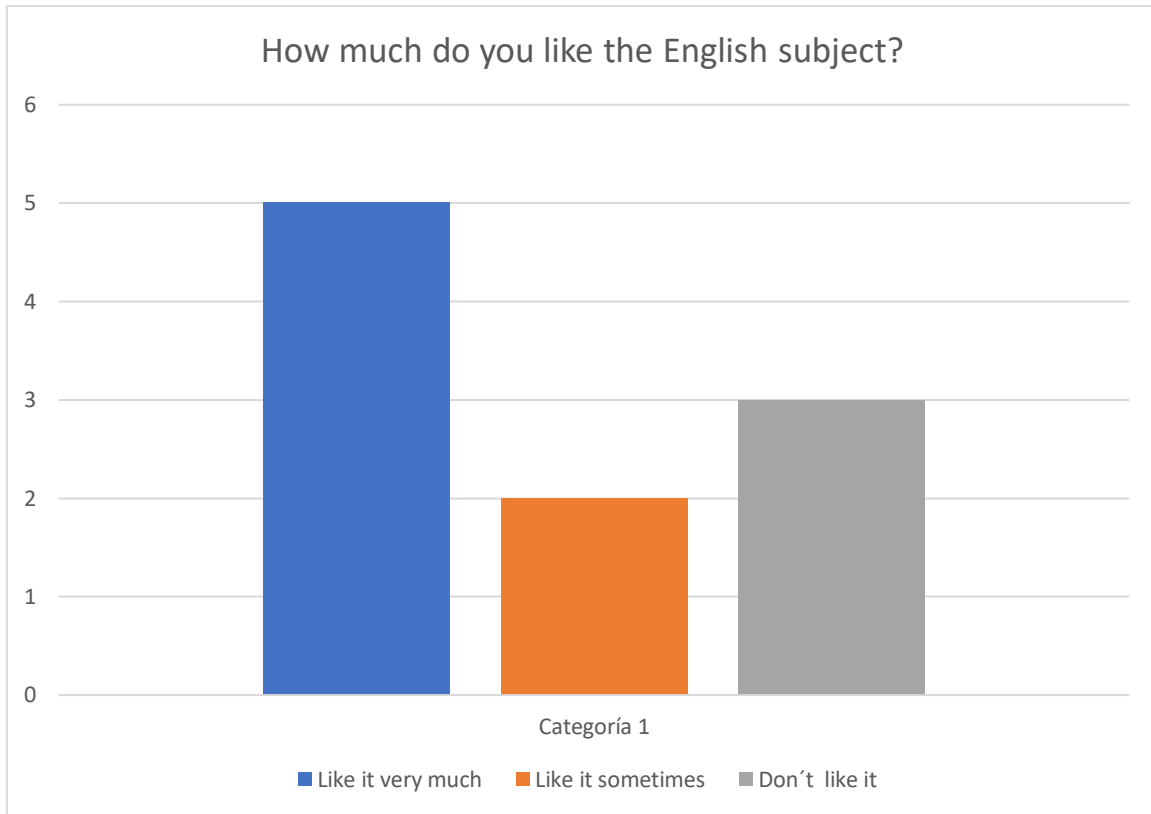
Finally, in the fourth stage the teacher applied rubrics to evaluate the results of the student's performance after working with storytelling and being prepared for that experience.

First Stage

The first day with the students, it was required to use English and Spanish. The students were not able to understand certain commands in English and seemed to be distracted when they were not able to understand. During the first day, the teacher applied a survey to see how the students felt with the English subject.

The figure below shows the results obtained on the question made to students about how much they like the English subject.

Figure 1. Likes results for the English subject.



*Figure 1 illustrates the results on students' like for the English subject.
Source: Researcher's creation.*

While discussing this question later on, the students mentioned that in spite of how difficult it was to talk in English sometimes, it was still a subject they preferred over others. They said that the English subject is a subject in which they can carry out different types of activities, even if this was not the case usually. They always had a positive expectation of the subject.

The next figure shows numbers obtained on asking students how they feel when asked to accomplish written tasks in the English language.

Figure 2. Students feeling towards accomplishing written tasks in the English language.

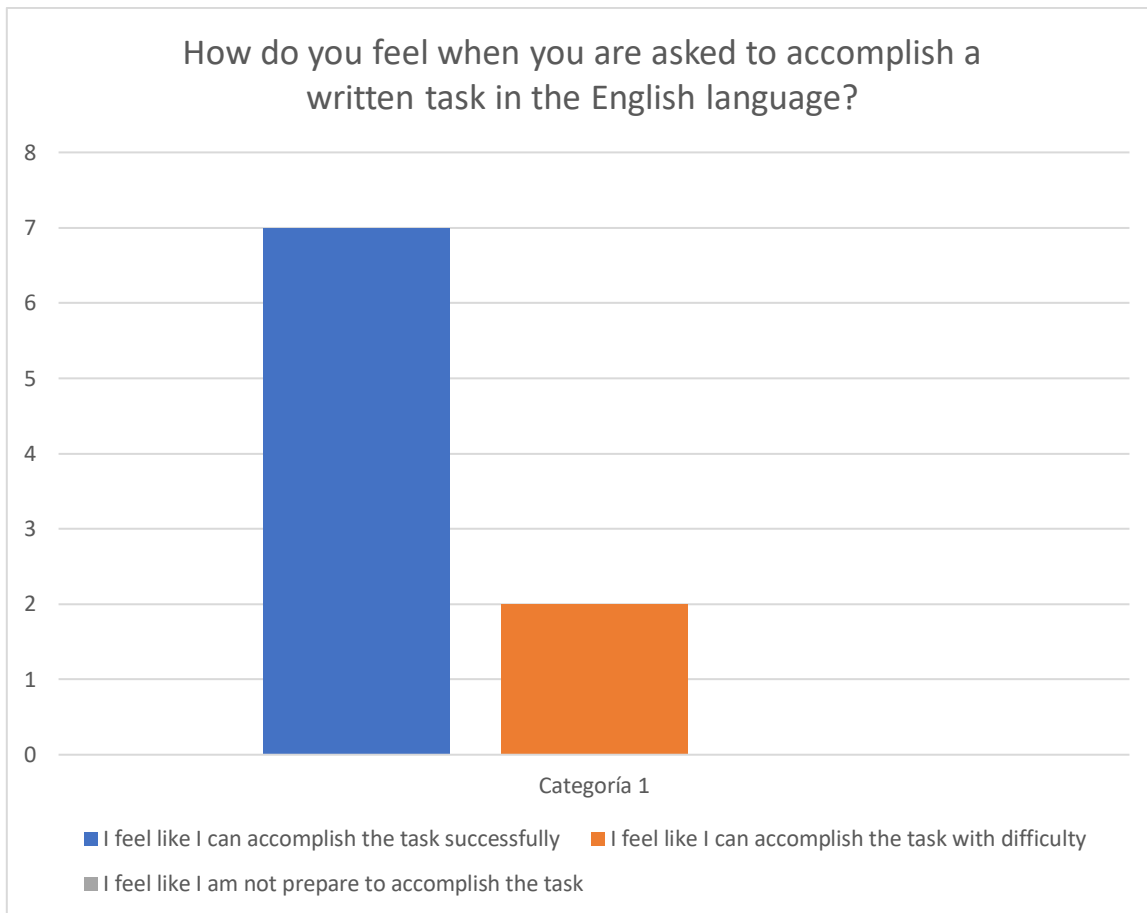


Figure 2 illustrates the results on students' feeling when accomplishing written tasks in the English language. Source: Researcher's creation.

This question was asked to understand later on how they felt towards failing when writing in the English language, or to define what they thought that could be identified as areas of opportunity. However, most of the students answered that they felt prepared to accomplish written tasks in the English language. During this first stage, the teacher asked them to write short fictional stories. With these exercises, it became evident that the students struggled with certain gaps of knowledge in structure, vocabulary and subject/verb agreement.

The fact that in spite of how hard it was for most of them to accomplish the task without constant help from the teacher and to do it with the least amount of mistakes is very

interesting. The teacher did ask the students to start analyzing their process of thinking when they were trying to write about a topic in the English language. The learners answered saying that they started trying to translate what they thought in Spanish to English with the vocabulary they already had. This became important for the next stages in which the teacher wanted to work more on writing as a process and not only as a product.

Figure number three presents the results gathered from the question about the students' feeling the moment they are asked to speak in English in front of their peers.

Figure 3. Students feeling the moment asked to speak in English in front of their peers.

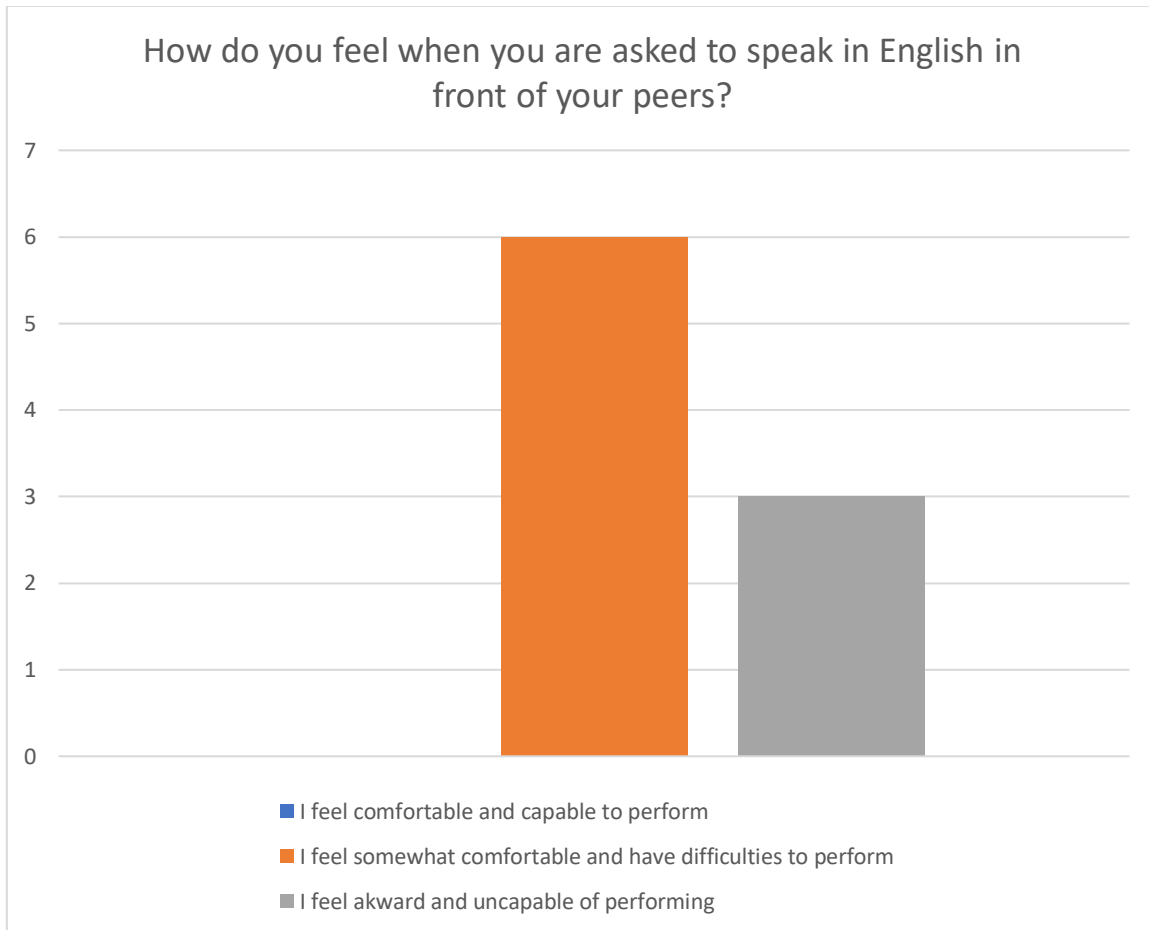


Figure 3 illustrates results on students' feeling the moment asked to speak in English in front of their peers. Source: Researcher's creation.

The results from this question, students made very clear that they find challenging to perform a speaking activity in front of their classmates. Learners mentioned that they cannot really have time to think what they are going to say; and if they do, it makes it obvious that they do not know the answer, which makes them feel vulnerable. This result also made clear on the importance to carry out activities that would break the ice, and help them feel more comfortable at the time of speaking in English.

Figure 4. Knowledge of students about Storytelling.

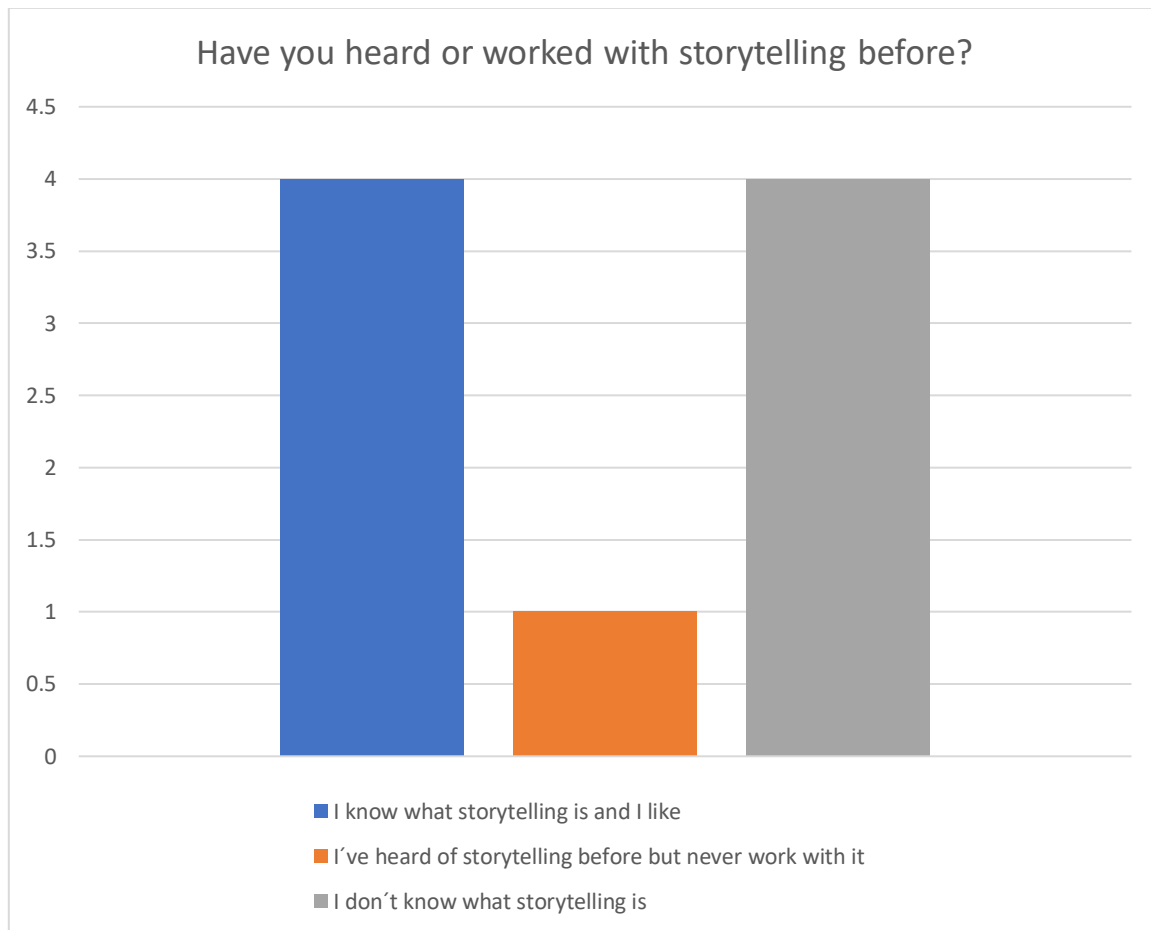


Figure 4 illustrates students' knowledge about Storytelling.

Source: Researcher's creation.

Students were not familiar with storytelling as a strategy that could be used to practice the English language. Most of them recalled telling stories in other signatures, but they have never done it in English.

During this stage, the research also carried out an interview to a private school teacher who has a seven-year experience, and has used storytelling previously with his class.

The questions asked during the interview were the following:

1. Are there any warm-up activities that improve the performance students have once they are working with storytelling?
 - a. Can you mention some of them? How do you prepare for them?
2. How do you prepare a lesson in which you are going to use storytelling as a strategy?
 - a. What materials do you use to decorate the classroom?
 - b. What type of didactic materials do you use?
 - c. What activities are done for the students to understand storytelling better?
3. What are the strengths that you find in storytelling as a strategy for productive skills, such as speaking and writing?
4. What are some areas of opportunity that you find in storytelling a strategy for productive skills, such as speaking and writing?
5. How is the interaction among the students while presenting their stories and practicing speaking?
 - a. What is the main issue that you can find when it comes to the social interaction between students while practicing these speaking exercises?
6. How is the reaction among the students while working with written part of storytelling?
 - a. What is the main challenge they face with it?

These were the answers to the questions:

1. I believe it is always important to give the students some vocabulary before starting to work with storytelling
 - a. I give them a sheet with the vocabulary they will be using.
2. I usually try to look for stories I know they already know. For example, stories like Cinderella, The Beauty and the Beast, that type of topics.
 - a. I do not decorate my classroom if I work with Storytelling. I think is unnecessary, but it depends on the teacher and the students, of course.
 - b. I use sheets with the story and a bank of words.
 - c. In my case, I just compare storytelling to some activities they do in their Spanish class, and they understand what it is.
3. I think this is a rich activity that can be transformed into a strategy. However, I do not believe just any teacher can pull it. Any teacher that wants to work with this activity will need to be engaged with his students to adapt to them, but also being strict among all the creativity that storytelling involves; not all teacher can balance those things so well.
4. Storytelling is basically telling stories. The fact is that how a teacher decides his students should do it is what makes a difference. Professors know that if students do not have clear expectations, learners will do whatever they think is right. This can be an issue with storytelling because they can lose their north very easily. In order to make storytelling a strategy for writing and speaking, it is important to create a structure. This last point can be

achieved through investigation, but also by observing the students and their patterns of behavior.

5. In my case, I have applied this to students from fourth grade to sixth grade. However, they are already familiar with storytelling in their Spanish lessons, so it is not new to them. It is fun to observe them coordinate their stories and create them. They do not get everything right, but they do learn to work as a team in order to create something coherent.

6. I feel like writing is where they need more structure. Certain mistakes are more obvious in paper, not only for the teacher, but also for the student. Letting them see the rubrics that the teacher will use beforehand is very helpful for them. More specifically if they are going to be telling stories.

Second Stage

During this stage, the teacher implemented activities that involved collaborative creation of stories in writing and speaking. The evaluation for this stage was light, as it only intended for the students to get used to work storytelling in groups. The teacher used very simple rubrics to see how well they started to perform using this type of activities.

Figure number five presents the results gathered from writing tasks on the second stage.

Figure 5 Writing tasks – Second stage

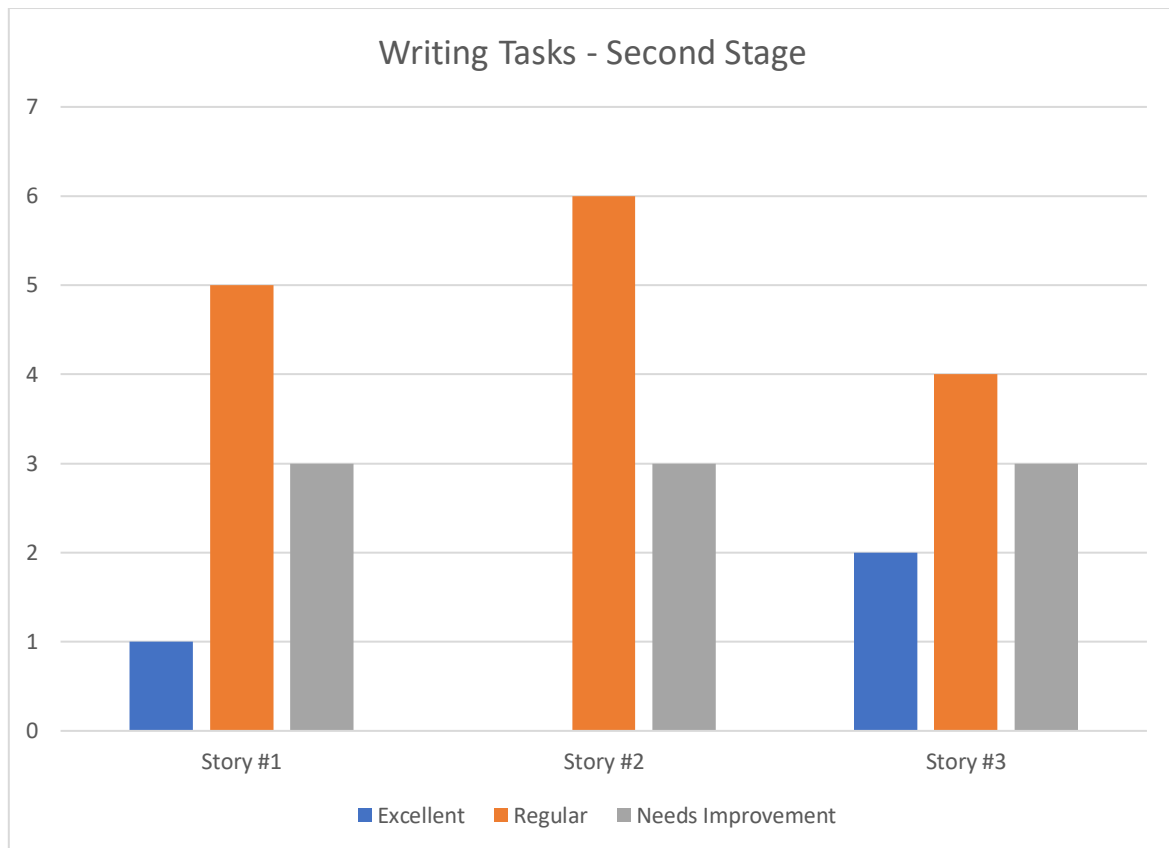


Figure 5 illustrates writing tasks-second stage.
 Source: Researcher's creation.

In order to practice writing and using storytelling, the teacher divided the class into two groups. The professor divided the board as well, so that each team will have its own side of the board. The educator gave a bank of words for each team, then, wrote an initial prompt for their story. The teacher would tell students which grammar tense they had to use for the story, and she reminded them that the story should have a beginning, a middle, and a conclusion. The groups would write their fictional story on the board in real time. Once they have finished, the teacher will ask them to sit down and write the same

story individually, but this time correcting any mistake they could see. Usually, they would make several mistakes in board version. This last point depended on which students would be writing.

Each group had a student that was more skillful than the rest. However, the teacher asked these students please not to monopolize the participation, so the others could participate with writing as well. With one of these students in each team, both final products were acceptable. They made a few grammar mistakes, but overall did well as teams. Students used the vocabulary provided by the teacher in order to create fictional stories. In addition, they used proper punctuation, and the stories were cohesive enough.

Since the student- teacher wanted to focus on writing as a process later on, the researcher also paid attention to all the actions taken by the students before actually writing the story. Both groups seemed to discuss the topic enough in order to start writing when they felt only like there was some type of order. Only one of the groups decided to do a brainstorm of ideas, as they seemed to have a lot, but they mentioned that the ideas did not fit with each other. In fact, this group got the best story in comparison to the other group.

On the other hand, the other group discussed a lot, but they decided to write the story as it came. One member from this group was almost dictating the story events to the other members who would take turns writing on the board. The researcher noted that the student giving these ideas or structure to the story was very creative, but he had a hard time when writing or correcting the story individually.

After the teamwork, students had to sit down and correct their team's story individually.

Below there is a checklist of the students' observation performance during these tasks.

Table 1. Students' observation performance during the tasks.

Area	Rubric	3	2	1
Student's performance	Students are able to work as a team to put their ideas cohesively together at the time of creating the story.		x	
	Students are able to put a story that has an introduction, a body, and ending.	x		
Student's knowledge	Students know grammar structures and use subject and verbs accordingly.		x	
Student's process	Students discuss their order of the events in the story before starting to write	x		
	Students are able to put the ideas together using the target language.			x
	Students use pre-writing activities such as drafts and brainstorming.		x	
Student's individual correction	Students are able to spot the grammar and spelling mistakes.		x	
	Students are able to apply effective corrections.			x

Table 1 illustrates students' observation performance during the tasks.

Source: Researcher's creation

Third Stage

The objective for this stage was to help the student to feel closer to storytelling. Two main events happened during this phase. Students were part of activities such as the “circle of trust” to encourage them to open up and feel trustful when they were going to express themselves in the target language. Secondly, there were two websites used as tools for storytelling: Storybird and Comix.

With Storybird, the student has the option to pick sets of illustrations made by professional users of the website. With these sets of illustrations, learners can create their own story. The students liked it because of the variety of illustration and topics they were able to find.

Comix, on the other hand, has several features. The one selected to use for this research was the “Writing Prompts”. There are different types of writing prompts with illustration in that section, so that students can pick one and create their stories. Below there are some graphics that were taken from the results of the surveys applied to understand how the students felt with these tools.

On figure number six, students had to answer if they consider Storytelling as an entertaining tool to practice English skills. The results were the following.

Figure 6. Storytelling as an entertaining tool to practice English skills

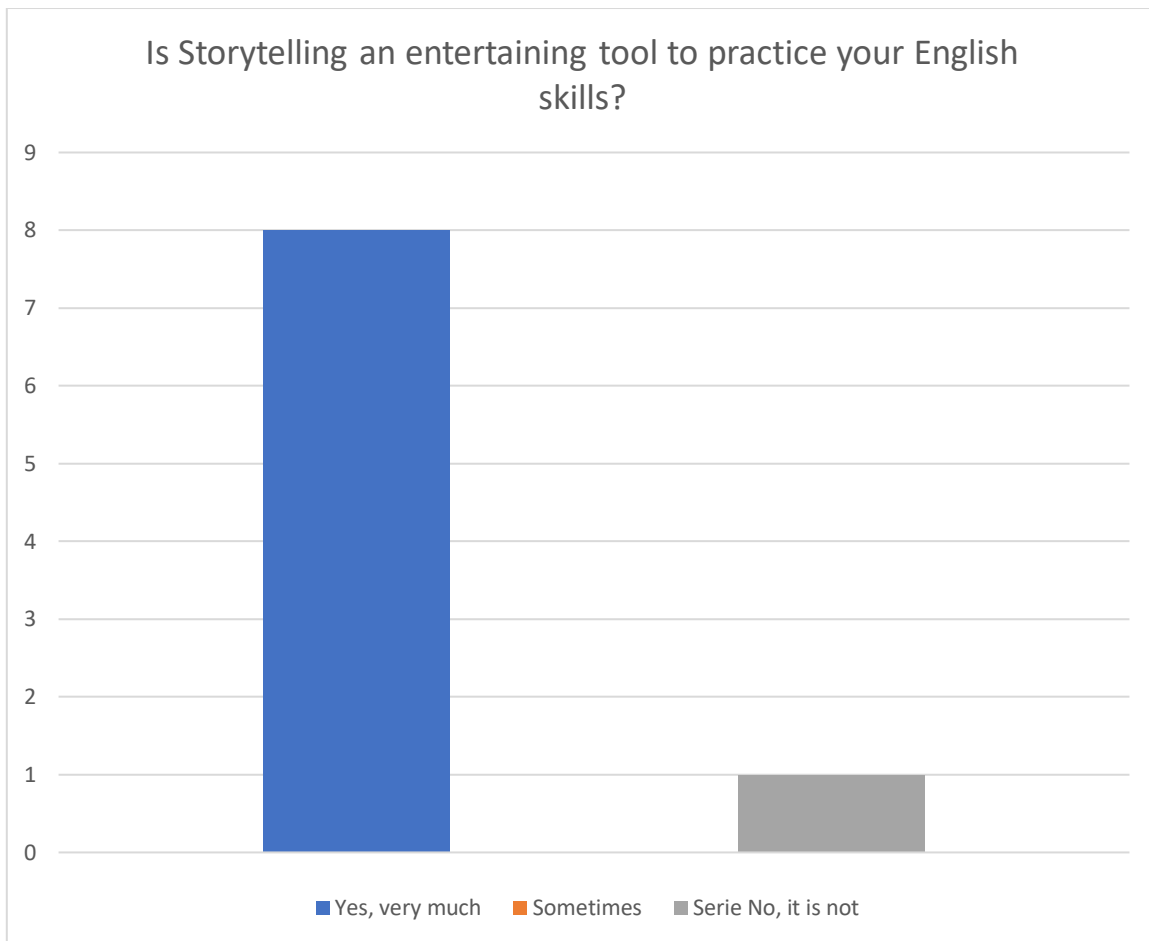


Figure 6 illustrates if students consider Storytelling as an entertaining tool to practice English skills. Source: Researcher's creation.

With the answer to this question, it is evident that the students enjoyed working with Storybird. This particular group had some behavior issues, as learners get distracted and bored easily. However, they were able to keep focus on the tool, as they mentioned that the illustrations were jazzy and fun.

The graph below asked students about the options to practice writing activities. The results obtained from this question are presented here.

Figure 7. Students' preference activity to practice writing activities.

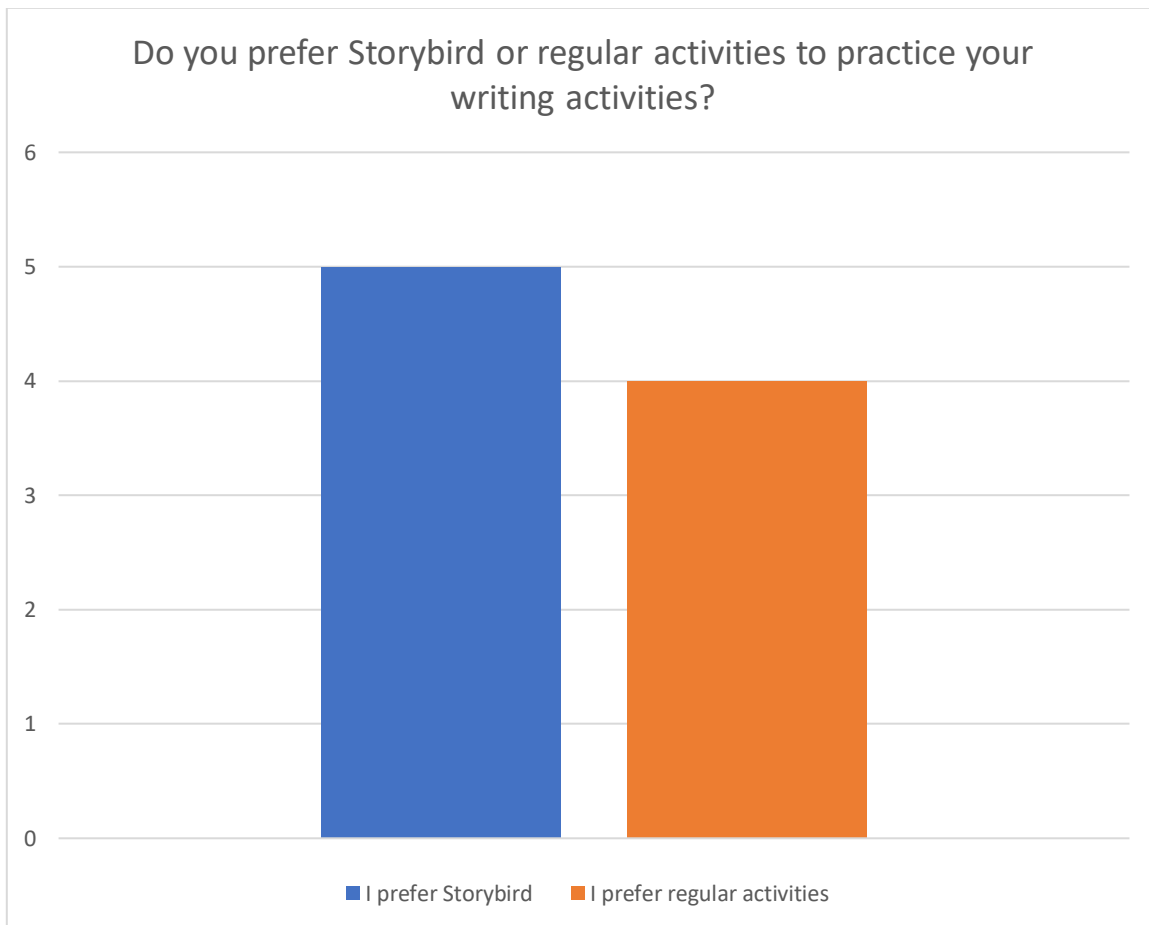
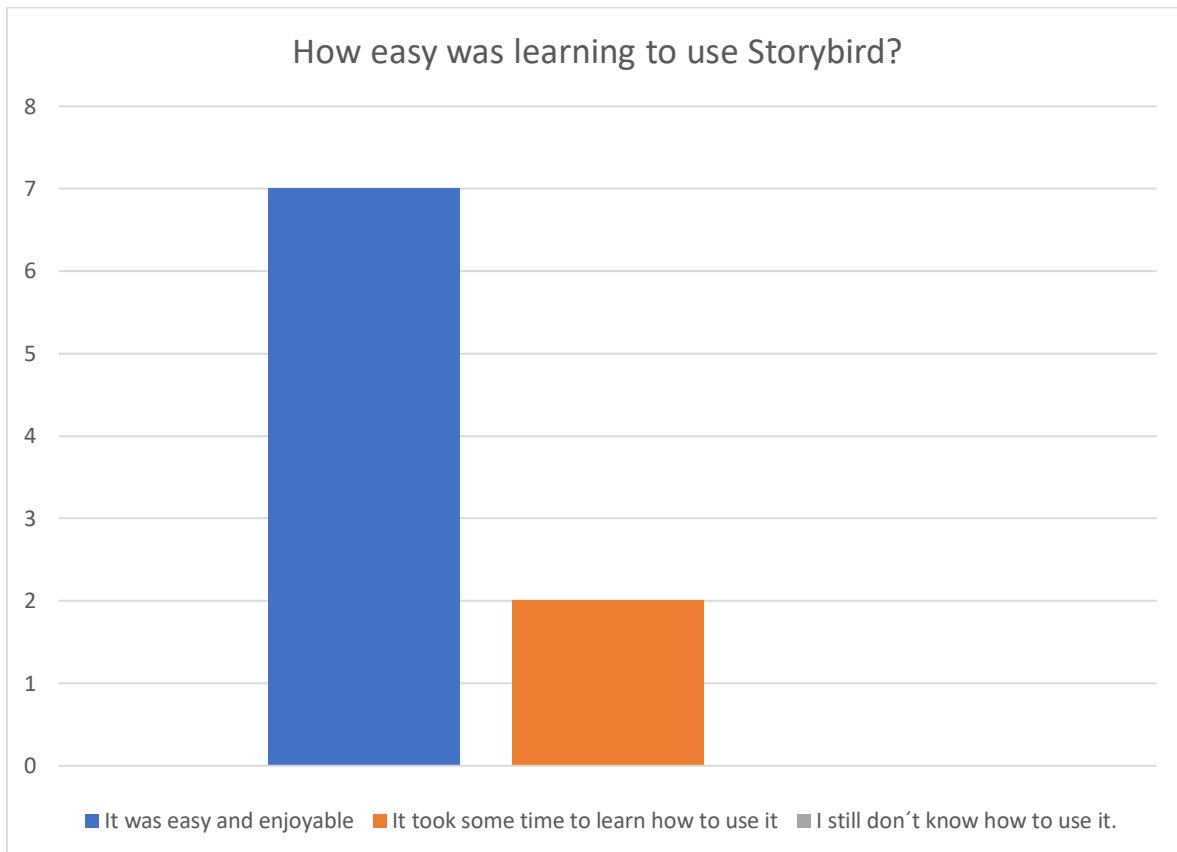


Figure 7 illustrates students' preference activity to practice writing activities.
Source: Researcher's creation.

In this question, the students made clear that they have no problem with regular writing activities. That even happens when they do struggle to work without the teacher's help. The students that preferred regular activities said that even though they enjoyed working with Storybird, they did not always felt as if they were learning because it was not hard. The other students said the opposite. They mentioned that they felt like they were learning more because they were having fun while doing it.

The next figure shows numbers obtained on asking students how easy was for them learning to use Storybird as a strategy. The results obtained were the following.

Figure 8 shows the result of how easy was for the students learning to use Storybird.



*Figure 8 illustrates the result of how easy was for the students learning to use Storybird.
Source: Researcher's creation.*

The students find it easy to use Storybird. Since the first day they worked with Storybird, there was only one computer. The students had to take turns and went in pairs in order to use Storybird. The two students that gave that answer were the last ones to use the tool, so they have less minutes to try the tool. Moreover, they were in some hurry because the English lesson was about to finish.

The researcher continued gathering information from the interviews made, and the next question highlighted about the concentration students had while the application of Storybird. The results are presented on the graph below.

Figure 9. Results about getting distracted from the English task when using Storybird.



Figure 9 illustrates the results about getting distracted from the English task when using Storybird
Source: Researcher's creation.

Most of the students seemed to be focused during the whole time Storybird was being used. The students, who answered that they sometimes got distracted, said that this happened equally with regular tasks where no digital tools were used.

During this stage, the student-teacher also did an observation from the activity "Circle of Trust". The main point of this activity was for students to realize that they are not

alone in this feeling of insecurity. It is important to clear this out because it is common and expected to feel that way, but they can feel secure as well.

This activity consisted on having the students sitting in circle and writing something they fear (related to English speaking) in a piece of paper. Then, the teacher mixed the papers. Each student had to take out a piece of paper that inclusive could be his or hers. They had to read the fear written in the piece of paper and had to come up with an advice for that person. If not, at least expressed something that might help the other student to feel better. This was the first session of the Circle of Trust. For the second session, the students had to create a set of rules for their future speaking presentations. The rules must ensure that they created as a team, a safe environment to speak using the target language.

This checklist includes the data gathered through the observation.

Table 2. Data gathered through the observation.

Areas	Rubrics	1	2	3
Students Interaction	Students behave constructively towards creating respectful and acceptant human relations		x	
Students dynamic	Students understand the dynamic and follow the instructions			x
Students reaction	Students react positively towards the dynamic and understand the objective		x	

Table 2 illustrates the Data gathered through the observation. Source: Researcher's creation.

The interaction that students had with each other was acceptable. They made some mocking comments to one peer who seemed to accept the comments quite well. This particular student is the one that has more difficulty to speak in English. While the others at least made a try, this particular student usually took more time to think of an answer and sometimes still did not reply. The teacher always tried to make him feel as comfortable as possible, but the educator still pushed him to participate and took the risk. This student did not have major problems when the classmates made comments about his difficulty with speaking. However, when reading, the students presented fear. The researcher discovered he felt somehow threatened by these comments when he was about to speak in English.

On the other hand, three students got easily distracted by talking loudly and making joke comments about any topic. It was hard to explain the activity and its goals since they found it funny. Two girls were annoyed and started to complain about their peers because these girls really wanted to understand the dynamic.

The student-teacher raised her fist and called the student for a minute of silence in order to recover the structure of the class. After this, there was still some struggle with the same students, but it was under control. The professor took control enough in a way that she could continue with the lesson and the activity.

Finally, when the time came for students to give their advices, they felt somewhat awkward or embarrassed. They were not required to do this using the target language because the main point was to create more trust among them as a group. Even though, the teacher asked them what could make difference for them to feel more comfortable doing activities such as this one. As a positive fact, students answered that this type of activity was very new to them, and they just needed time to get used to it.

During the second session of the “Circle of Trust”, students came up with their own set of rules. These were the rules they decided to set up for their speaking activities.

1. At least one peer will always try to make one positive comment about the other’s performance.
2. It is not allowed to laugh or get distracted while someone is speaking in front of the class.
3. If someone was feeling scared to talk, the peers would cheer him up to continue with the speech.

Fourth Stage

During this stage, the students had to work with storytelling individually, as well as collaboratively. The teacher used materials such as “Story Sticks” for them to create their own stories. There were three different sets of “Story Sticks”. The first set contained different types of characters. The second set was for “problems” or events that gave a gist to the story. The third one was for “places” in which the story was going to be developed.

The description of the activity goes like this. First, they worked collaboratively in groups of three. The teacher would give them the “Story Sticks”, and the students would have twenty-five minutes to create their story. The first step was to create a draft in which they developed their story. The teacher would give the learners ten minutes to do this draft. The educator would be as present as possible in order to offer guidance at the time of creating the story.

After doing the draft, they would rehearse on how to tell the story in front of their classmates. In this phase, the students had several questions. Many of them were regarding

vocabulary; they wanted to know how to say something in English because they could not find it in the bank of words the teacher had made for them. Other few questions were related to grammar, and even less regarding pronunciation. Once they had rehearsed the story and coordinated how they would tell it to their peers, it was time to present it. This task was performed twice, and the teacher used two different rubrics for each because she did not want to evaluate too many subskills at one time.

On the first rubric, the teacher evaluated fluency, vocabulary, and grammar. On the second rubric, the educator evaluated pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. The following graph presents the results gathered specifically from fluency.

Figure 10. Results from fluency.

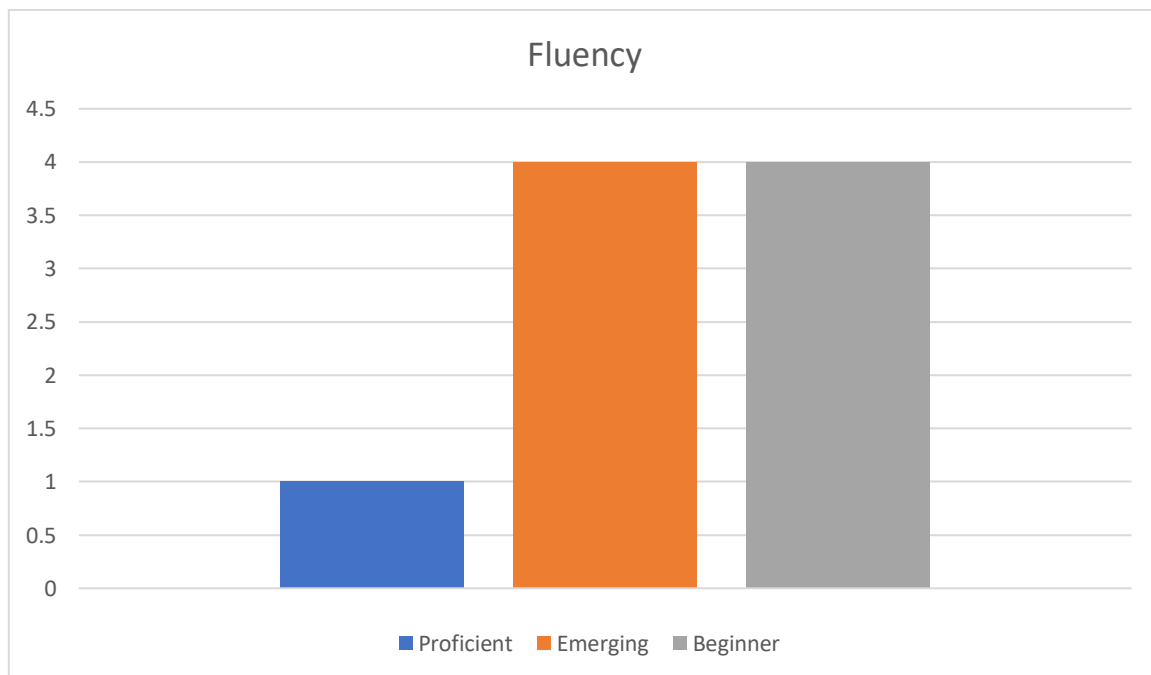
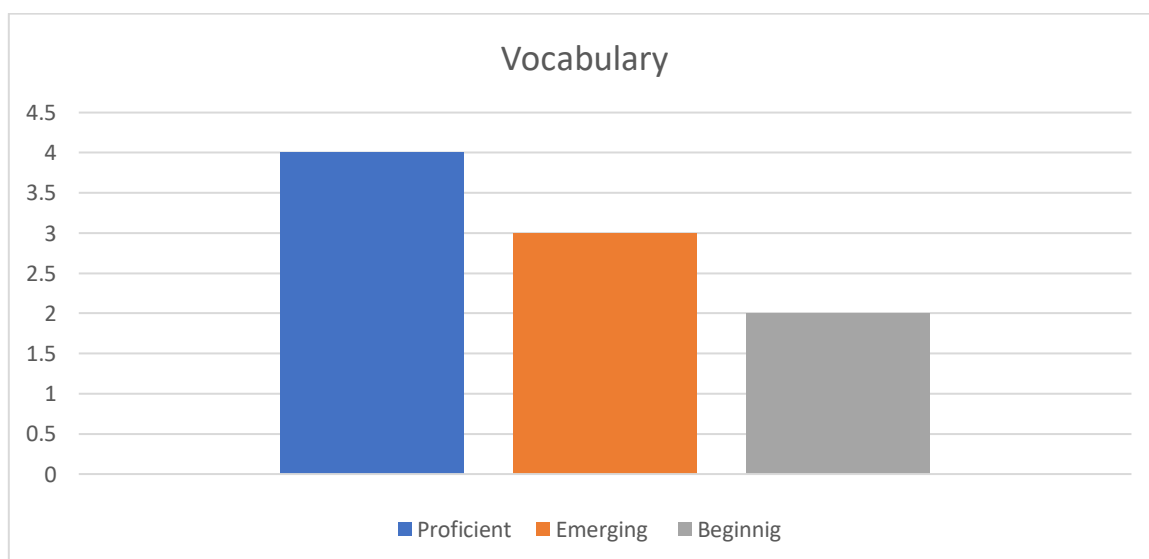


Figure 10 illustrates the results from fluency.
Source: Researcher's creation.

The results from the rubric for fluency were low in terms of proficiency. Only one student had more fluency than the rest. Four students were in an emerging level in which even though they were doing it well, at some point they started pausing too much thinking about what they were going to say. The other four students took the time to say things the best way as possible, but unfortunately, they were not fluent. One of them had to read, as he said he would present his part unless he could read.

The rules that the students had set up during the “Circle of Trust” were partially applied. There was one comment about taking too much time to tell the story, which was not part of what students had discussed previously. The teacher intervened and reminded them that this were the type of comments that should not be present during speaking performances. The following graph presents the results gathered specifically from vocabulary.

Figure 11. Results from vocabulary.



*Figure 11 illustrates the results from vocabulary.
Source: Researcher's creation.*

The vocabulary seems to be one of their areas of strength since they asked as many questions as possible in order to have enough vocabulary to express their ideas. Two students struggled more with the vocabulary. They said that this happened because they still got nervous, so they forgot certain words. In addition, it is important to remark that some of these words were new for them.

Figure 12. Results from grammar.

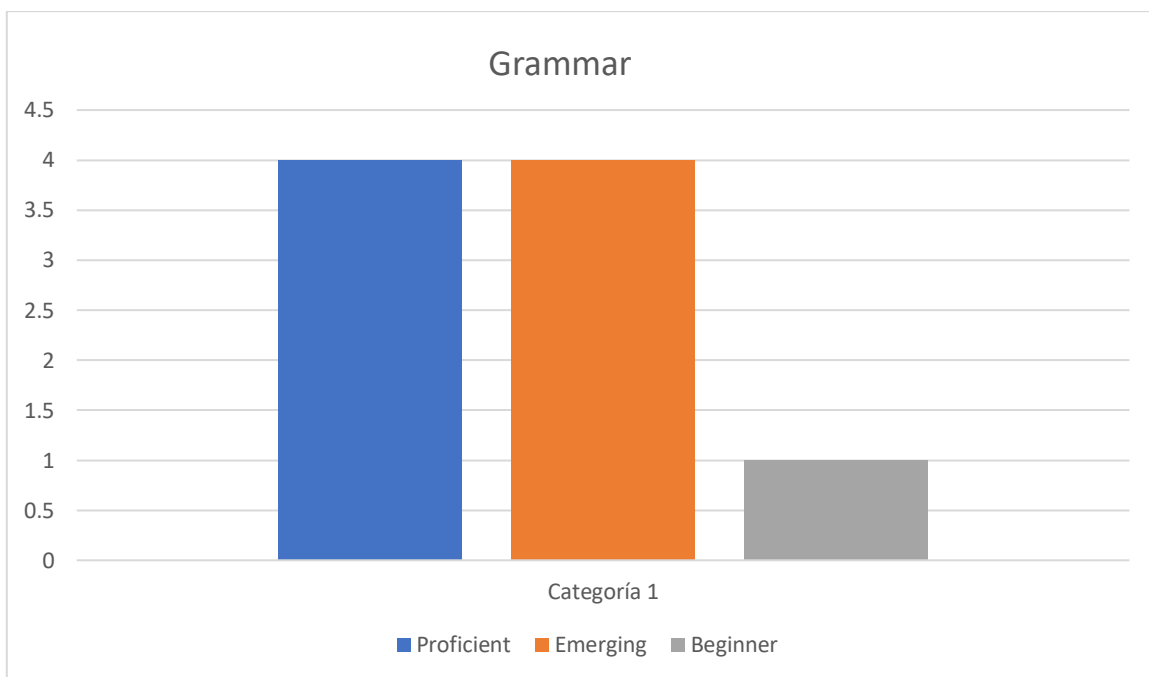


Figure 12 illustrates the results from grammar.
Source: Researcher's creation.

The students did very well when it came to grammar structure. They made sure to correct most of the grammar mistakes when they did the draft, and paid attention to the grammar structure while their speaking performance.

When the second speaking performance was done, the results were a little different. The same “Story Sticks” was used for the students to create their story, but this time the teacher tried to help them correct their pronunciation as much as possible. Once again, the educator used the bank of words and demonstrated it to the learners, which was the correct pronunciation. The professor only evaluated the pronunciation from these words, and the verbs that the students had already seen in class. Any other word that the students wanted to add to the story was not part of the pronunciation evaluation.

Before this speaking performance, the teacher reminded the students of what they had discussed during the “Circle of Trust”. The students said that the jokes were part of the fun in the class, but agreed not make those comments during the performance.

Figure 13. Students’ progress.

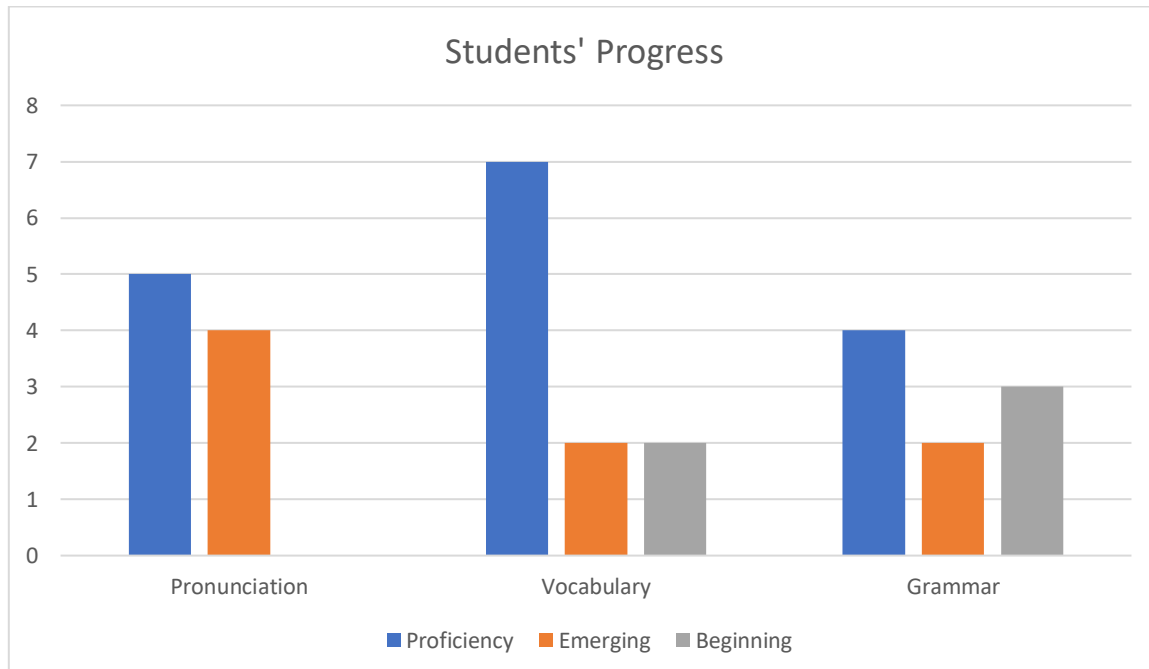


Figure 13 illustrates students’ progress.
Source: Researcher’s creation.

For this second speaking performance using storytelling, students had a better idea on how to prepare for the task. They did a very effective job by paying attention to the pronunciation of the words. However, this time the teacher did not provide as much assistance with the grammar correction of their drafts because she was providing extra assistance with pronunciation. The usage of vocabulary improved significantly this second time. The reason was they were already familiar with transition words and had been practicing irregular verbs.

Once again, a student made a joke when a peer made a mistake, but the student who was speaking did not react toward the comment. In fact, later on when the teacher asked him how he felt about this, he said that he knew it was just a joke and did not give that much importance. The teacher asked the students if the feeling toward the “Circle of Trust” had made a difference, and on how they felt with speaking in front of the class. Fortunately, almost half of the students said that what they like was that this topic was discussed. They felt like it was important to admit that sometimes they as students feel attacked by certain comments. In addition, other peers said that they did not really feel like this made a difference, but that they were not bothered by the activity.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

This chapter tries to provide conclusions based on the results of the investigation, and all the information that was collected after applying the instruments to use Storytelling as a strategy. This research was conducted to evaluate the effects of storytelling as a strategy for the development of output skills about the English language, and it was applied to the students of sixth grade from the Bethaba School.

The main idea for this research, it was to carry out several activities that helped the student to know what storytelling is, and how it can be used to practice the output skills in English. In general terms, it can be said that students felt comfortable with storytelling as a strategy in their English classes.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 To identify the most common obstacles a teacher might find while using storytelling as a strategy.

While the researcher did the observations, she realized that sixth graders could not be a little acceptant of certain creative activities such as storytelling. They can even feel embarrassed by an activity that puts them on the spot. However, after explaining in detail the reasons of why storytelling was going to be used as an strategy, they agreed that it was easier to feel more comfortable with speaking in a the target language with activities that

involved playing a different role. Making time to dialogue with the students about the activity, its definition, and its goals, was extremely important for them to be engaged.

Most of the students in this group were uneasy and needed to keep moving or talking. Although, not one of them had a diagnosed attention deficit disorder. It was hard to get learners following instructions at the beginning of every activity. The student-teacher would take the double of time that she had planned to use on giving instructions because students would keep interrupting, or they would not be paying attention.

The researcher also asked an experienced teacher what were the main obstacles when she tried to use storytelling in her English class. The educator answered that storytelling was an activity that could be carried out in many ways. Nevertheless, for the activity to be used as a strategy and the teacher was going to use, it needed to be structured a lot. This means that the teacher needed activities before that could prepare the students to create and tell their stories, but also to confirm learners fully understand the stages of the storytelling process. The teacher also mentioned that even though it is usually said that students have a lot of imagination; they are not trained or used to put a structure to create stories. The difficulty intensifies when they are asked to create these structures and use vocabulary in a foreign language.

While this structure the teacher mentioned might not be as hard to accomplish by a student who has an advanced level of English, or that has had a similar type of instruction during his completely academic process, it can become a very challenging task for students who still struggle with the target language.

The ability for students to be self-critical was also an area of opportunity at the time of creating stories. During the phase in which they had to create written stories, they had a hard time when evaluating their own work. Learners even said that they did not find it that hard to write a story. This can become a problem because the teacher needed even more time just to correct very basic errors. For instance, she would have to invest time correcting topics such as subject, verb agreement or incorrect usage of the verb to be.

When using digital tools such as websites, it is important to have enough equipment. For the purpose of this research, only two laptops were used, and the students had to work in groups all the time. They never got the chance to explore the tool individually. The side effect had that, while there were some students using the laptops, the others were simply observing. Since very active students integrated the group that participate in this research, it was hard to have some of them without equipment because they would start and get distracted easily.

Finally, using storytelling as a strategy requires applying several activities to create a structure and be able to accomplish the goals. Therefore, it can be easy for students to lose the sight of what the object is. More often than not, they can feel like they are just doing random activities or games, due to the nature of storytelling. This is why the teacher must know the students beforehand and dialogue with them regularly to check if they know the objectives of each activity.

5.2.2 To define which digital tools can be used for storytelling purposes in the English classroom.

During the interview, the researcher asked the teacher about her previous usage of Storybird. She defined Storybird as a friendly tool that in terms of appearance it can be very appealing to the students because of the variety of illustrations that it had. A very important fact to mention is that in Storybird the users can publish their stories in the website; so, the students have also access to many stories they can read and practice this skill as well.

Furthermore, Storybird offers a safe environment for students and teacher. Any inappropriate or offensive language, provocative or explicitly sexual content and discrimination are forbidden in the website.

For teachers, Storybird offers an option in which they can create a specific type of account. The only negative aspect, it is that the educator has to pay a monthly fee to have an account. For the purpose of this research, the student-teacher subscribed for a month on an account and took advantage of the resources offered in the website.

As an advantage for the account, the students had access to animations and tasks that were pre-made in the website. For example, for this research the students used the “Challenge Tasks”. This activity consisted in prompts that Storybird would give the students about events and characters for them to develop a story. It would also let the students know what genre they were going to write about. Students really enjoyed these activities.

Comix was the other digital tool that students used. In spite of the amount of features this website has, the easiest one to use for this particular group was the “Story

Prompts”. From this tool, students could pick a “Story Prompt” and started to develop the story from there. This became useful to give students the first push into their story especially because they tend to take a while to figure out what type of story they want to tell.

5.2.3 To apply storytelling activities to enhance output skills in the classroom.

The storytelling activities that were done during this research were very similar. What really changed was the way stories were built by the students. This particular class did not like to work in groups, as some students felt like when working in groups all the workload was only for a few of them. However, they had very positive outcomes with their written works. They made grammar mistakes, but it was evident that they were starting to create a path of thinking to write their stories. In addition, in spite of the lack of self-correction they had during their individual written work, they were able to spot certain grammar mistakes easier than when they did it alone.

When students worked with the speaking skill, the teacher made sure to take costumes such as hats, masks, sweaters, and any other object that could make the students felt like they were another person. The usage of these objects increased the ludic environment in the class and helped students felt less threaten.

In addition, it is important to make a remark on the fact that students could not simply create stories out of nowhere. The usage of “Story Sticks” that gave them a place, an event, and characters, made a huge difference. Even the regular teacher made a remark on the fact that the stories that students crated using this resource, were far richer and cohesive than the ones they created usually.

5.2.4 To evaluate the performance of students while they work with storytelling strategies.

The evaluation stage was mainly achieved through rubrics. Observations served to record the students behavioral reaction towards the usage of storytelling strategies

Some of the strengths that the students presented were observable especially after two activities that the teacher would do with the students. The first one was the activation of prior knowledge and also the objectives that were going to be evaluated. This part was difficult because of the students' lack of knowledge when it came to sub skills of the productive skills.

Before students would make a storytelling presentation, the teacher would make sure to practice the pronunciation from a specific bank of words. This made a huge difference for them. They were more aware of their pronunciation and could focus more, once they knew what specific vocabulary was going to be evaluated.

The same happened with the performance of writing. When students had seen the rubric that the teacher was going to use to evaluate them, their results would improve. For the purpose of this research, the students did a lot of collaborative writing. However, the teacher would only evaluate certain vocabulary or grammar rules depending on the day.

The rubrics that were used for this were very simple and customized by the researcher. As they intended to measure the students with a positive approach starting from "needs improvement" to regular, and finally, "excellent". The speaking rubrics on the other hand, started with beginner, emerging, and proficient.

5.3 Recommendations

After the research was concluded, the student-teacher realized that storytelling in order to be used as an strategy, the students needed more time to be prepared. Storytelling requires a lot of active participation and engagement from the students. Therefore, this is not a strategy that can be easily put into practice. It requires more observation of the students to understand their behavior and a lot more of practice with writing. In this research, the student-teacher tried to focus on writing as a process, and how the students felt towards the experience. In order to be able to do this, learners also require more hours of non-creative writing tasks that help them develop a more self-critical thinking. In that way, students can create their stories and focus less in basic thoughts, and emphasize more on increasing vocabulary for example.

As for the speaking skill, this particular group of students was not familiar with certain speaking subskills such as intonation, rhythm, and fluency. Therefore, it was hard for them to understand that they were being evaluated on that since they did not know how to pay attention to those factors. The student-teacher had to take parts of the lesson to explain these subskills. However, this was not enough. Once again, for storytelling to work as an effective strategy, it needs to be as structured as possible.

The digital tools were a stimulating experience for students, who expressed their desire to work with these tools again. However, based on the results, students also liked to work with activities that are more traditional. According to the student-teacher experience, the usage of these type of tools must be carefully supervised to make sure that students are always following instructions. In addition, it is important to have enough equipment, so that all the students can work with the digital tools at the same time.

Based on the results of the study, the researcher can recommend the following:

- Students need to understand what writing and speaking subskills are. They must be taught with time and not just in a few lessons. Students must understand the subskills and become aware of when they are working to develop one of them.
- With students who present behavior issues, or that get easily distracted, award boards can be very useful to remind them that even if they forget the goal of the activity, there is going to be a prize if they accomplish the task.
- Storytelling can be an effective strategy, but it must be applied in long-term basis. This means that students need to be trained to work and to take the best out of this strategy. Learners must be able to auto-correct.
- Setting rules for the class is remarkably important. When a teacher decides to work with unorthodox activities such as storytelling in order to develop productive skills, the students need to have a clear idea of what is allowed, and what is not allowed in the classroom. These rules will avoid a mess.

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Appendixes

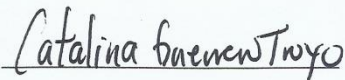
Tribunal Examinador

Esta tesina fue aprobada por el Tribunal Examinador de las Carreras de Inglés de la Universidad Internacional de las Américas, como requisito para optar por el grado de Bachiller en Inglés.



Mcs. Dinier Amador Serrano

Tutor



Msc. Catalina Guerrero Troyo

Lectora



Msc. Yanith Delgado Chacón

Directora de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta del Director de Carrera

San José 23, de Agosto de 2019

Señores

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimados señores:

La suscrita M.Sc. Yanith Delgado, Directora de las Carreras de Inglés, hace constar que ha revisado la Tesina del estudiante, Amy Quirós, portadora de la cédula identidad no. 116350945, que ha titulado: Evaluation of the effects of storytelling as a strategy to enhance the output skills in the English class at Bethaba School

La mencionada Tesina, responde a los requisitos exigidos en la Guía que nuestra carrera tiene para estos casos. Por tanto, se autoriza al autor para que lo presente ante el tribunal examinador nombrado para esta ocasión.

Atentamente,



M.Sc. Yanith Delgado Ch.

Directora de las Carreras de Inglés

Carta del Lector

San José, 23 de Agosto, 2019

Máster

Dinier Amador Serrano

Director de las Carreras

Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimado señor:

La estudiante Amy Quirós Alvarado, portador (a) de la cédula de identidad no. 116350945, ha presentado para su lectura y corrección de estilo la tesina denominada Evaluation of the effects of storytelling as a strategy to enhance the output skills in the English class at Bethaba School. He revisado y corregido la coherencia de los objetivos con el marco teórico, instrumentos y resultados, la calidad del trabajo y la relevancia del trabajo. Por lo tanto, hago constar que este se encuentra listo para ser presentado a la Universidad como trabajo de graduación.

Atentamente,

Catalina Guerrero Troyo

Lectora de Tesis

Catalina Guerrero Troyo

Carta del Revisor

Sábado, 17 de Agosto de 2019

Máster
Dinier Amador Serrano
Director de las Carreras de Inglés
Universidad Internacional de las Américas

Estimado señor:

La estudiante Amy Quirós Alvarado, portador (a) de la cédula de identidad no. 116350945 ha presentado para la respectiva revisión la tesina denominada *Evaluation of the effects of storytelling as a strategy for the output skills in English at Bethaba Schhol*. Por lo tanto, se hace constar que el documento fue revisado en lo relativo a la estructura gramatical, ortografía, puntuación, cohesión y terminología. Asimismo, se comprobó que las correcciones sugeridas se incorporaran al documento. Por ende, una vez incorporadas las recomendaciones efectuadas en el documento, el mismo se considera listo para su presentación la Universidad como trabajo de graduación.

Atentamente,



Lic. Leslie Elizondo Mora
Céd: 109990600