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METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY THAT SHOULD BE USED IN CLASS BY THE
TEACHER TO DEVELOP THE WRITING SKILL.

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ABSTRACT

METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY THAT SHOULD BE USED IN CLASS BY THE TEACHER TO DEVELOP THE WRITING SKILL.

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The present investigation has as an objective to determine a methodological strategy that should be use in class to develop writing skills in the teaching learning process of English. In the statement of the problem it refers to the limited development of writing skills of English language, which prevents there is a real interaction between teacher- student, causing a deficiency at the time of writing different texts notoriously affecting the student , because it ignores the grammatical rules of writing the second language.

Therefore in the development of this research a methodological strategy is presented to be used in class by the teacher while writing occurs. In a detailed way the process of writing is displayed, and the purpose of the teacher in the process of writing, it references to the techniques and activities used in class to efficiently develop the skill of writing in a second language. One of the methods used during the development of this research was the analytical - critical method because it allowed us to analyze the history of the phenomenon, the nature of the problem, the object of study, and also allowed to argue the solution. It is concluded that the use of personal diaries in the educational process significantly influences motivating students to practice writing. It's recommended that teachers implement strategies and techniques of teaching writing as a means to stimulate the development of English language learning, with emphasis on writing skills. It is recommended to use several teaching strategies for classes not to become monotonous, and finally recommended for the teacher to guide the student in the writing process with the purpose for students to achieve domain in the language.

KEY WORDS: Methodological strategy, writing skill, English language, writing process, language domain.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is an important means used to communicate our ideas and thoughts, so to improve learners' writing skill, EFL teachers adopt many strategies to facilitate the written skill.

“Written language is a fundamental skill that develops at the early years of education and it is perfect over time. “Writing is usually one of the major skills involved in learning a foreign language, because it is an important mean of conveying language as well as speaking” (Loucif, 2014, pág. 18) According to Loucif writing is a fundamental tool that should be incorporated into the students' years of education, and certainly has to be used in a dynamic manner , in combination with other modalities of language like oral expression so that it can incorporate writing sub-skills.

“Writing seen in the context of a second language classroom should ideally include creative self-expression; used as a way to put ideas and thoughts on paper and as a dynamic way of processing elements of foreign culture.” (Mota de Cabrera, 2006, pág. 58) According to the author Mota de Cabrera writing in the classroom should be taught as a creative and real mean. Students learn to write faster when they have real reasons to communicate. So that`s why it is important to create situations where learners have the opportunity to write real short essays, summaries, main ideas, among others.

“Writing researchers have enunciated that influence in the writing performance, the spelling, grammar, punctuation, effectiveness, intelligibility, fluency, comprehension, appropriateness, and vocabulary” (Aryadoust, 2010)

In this sense Aryadoust defines the sub-skills that develop effectively in writing skills which are: vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation. It means that students have to make sentences punctuation, to read and reread to check mistakes, write with confidence, and build vocabulary to write summaries; for that reason is important to make children's writing meaningful emphasizing on content in order to develop the communicative competence.

In Ecuador teaching writing significantly influences the student to achieve developing English language skills in a second language. This is why the English teacher should

facilitate the learner the correct process for writing. Therefore, the teacher should provide students with opportunities to produce multiple drafts of their work in order to make a better performance in their composition.

In El Oro province at the basic and higher educational institutions, writing has been giving a greater emphasis to the study of English. It is therefore necessary to emphasize that writing skill depending on its complexity, should be given greater importance in their teaching, by applying methodological strategies to improve and deep in knowledge that leads students to develop the writing skill.

The methodology used during the development of this research was analytical – critical, because it allowed analyzing the history phenomenon, the nature of the problem and the study object.

The general objective is to determine a strategy that should be used in the classroom by the teacher to develop the writing skills, so students can be able to use the English language for communication purposes.

The project will display the development of problems that will be based on scientific articles that contribute to the solution of them and the conclusions that are a summary of the purpose of this investigation.

DEVELOPMENT

In English area, there still are teachers that don't use didactic–methodological strategies to activate student's cognition, this means that knowledge is taught by using the traditional strategies and techniques of teaching; the limited development of writing skills of English language, avoids that there is a real interaction between teacher-student, causing a deficiency at the time of writing different texts like: sentences, descriptions, among others, which affects the student notoriously, due to the lack of knowledge of grammatical structures in English; reason why a student can't go on with the knowledge and as a consequence isn't able to develop appropriately a written production, causing failures when writing; adding to this grammatical mistakes that can get to be permanent, that's why it's necessary to use strategies that allow to improve and deepen knowledge that lead students to develop the skill of writing.

Since ancient times there have been effective strategies expended for teaching and learning English as a second language. Each one of them has significantly contributed in the development of language skills.

The methodological strategy for teaching writing in a second language, have been placed within a historical context. In the twentieth century there were three methods found that significantly influenced in the teaching of languages, among them are the grammar - translation method, audio lingual method and the Oriented Instruction toward the development of the skills.¹ (Mota de Cabrera, 2006, pág. 58)

“The Grammar- Translation method for teaching a second language is one of the most traditional methods. Its pedagogical focus is obviously the teaching of grammar, reading and translating of texts.”² (Mota de Cabrera, 2006)

The **audio lingual method** arises as a reaction to the grammar translation method (...) it was perceived as a mean to increment the contact time with the language when providing the student the opportunity to write dialogues and oral exercises practiced in class.³ (Mota de Cabrera, 2006, pág. 58)

This method is the **Development of abilities or skills** (...) This focus promotes the use of culturally authentic materials and the creation with language in real life situations from the earliest stages of teaching and learning.⁴ (Mota de Cabrera, 2006, pág. 58)

According to Mota de Cabrera the methods to teach writing have been applied since the XX century due to their importance to help students develop the language abilities. However, it has depended a lot on the use of strategies used in class by the teacher in order for students to translate paragraphs or write sentences, the same which will demonstrate their vocabulary domination and the grammatical precision when they write.

“Students have to understand that grammar is important, and that people may not understand what they write (or say) if their sentences are ungrammatical, if they misspell words or use incorrect punctuation”. (Herrero, 2011, pág. 5) It's worth to say that the correct usage of grammatical structures help to student to reach the language domain

The correct use of any strategy in the class to promote students participation, reflection and that is good to help the written expression process is considered an active methodological strategy; it just depends on the use and the pertinence that the teacher can give, keeping in mind the time and the number of students.

Numerous pedagogical experiences in the field of teaching and learning writing (in first language or second language) suggest the incorporation of specific strategies that work as means for a learning that is personally relevant. Within these strategies it's good to stand out the daily use of diaries of students.⁵ (Mota de Cabrera, 2006, pág. 62)

According to Mota de Cabrera's argument different strategies can be applied for learning within them he stands out the use of diaries of students.

Diary writing

Diary is a report written immediately after each class, (...) Writing diaries helps develop the skills to think about described facts, the diaries provide strong potentialities for analysis and understanding of the social process that occurred in the classroom. A diary contains only a small part of the events that occurred within the classroom. Therefore, the researcher must be aware of what happens during the class and be able, at any moment, to focus his/her attention on events of special relevance. The diaries also contain interpretative comments made in the classroom or during the writing process. (Sá, 2001, pág. s/n)

As stated by the author Sa, the class diary is a personal written entry in which students take notes and make reflections about the class process, its use implicates reflecting and thinking in a written way and establish relations with all the information received.

A learner diary is a private dialogue between a student and teacher. It doesn't only have to be about the learning process, but can be about almost anything that the learner would like to know or discuss. The most important thing is that it is a real way of communication where students share thoughts and opinions with the simply objective correcting their grammar and to check vocabulary. (Peachey, pág. s/n)

Types of Diaries

There are many types of diaries, depending on the objectives that are being proposed within them. Some types of diaries are:

Classroom Diary: It's a log sheet of information that is elaborated by students as it moves on the different themes of the class. This log sheet shows students work, of its production starting from the independent study and the interaction with others, gives its reflection, proposals, questions and answers. In it is written all the things related to the studies, student's memory within the school.

Personal diary: It is also known as a life diary. It's informal and in it contains the way the student feels, thinks about what happens in daily life with in the friendship, family, school or work. It helps the person to think about themselves, look at themselves, and try to understand themselves and others. (Diana Patricia Ospina, pág. s/n)

As the author Diana says, the use of diaries in the teaching process looks for writing practice, for students to increase their interest in writing; so that's why an effective method to develop writing skills is the use of a personal diary because in it there are life experiences, emotions, anecdotes, among other topics that encourage students to share things that they did, where they went, etc.; with the use of the diary besides expressing their feelings teachers can observe their difficulties.

Purpose

The purpose of teacher in the writing process.

- Makes it easier to organize selected ideas.

- Guides how to transform ideas, diagrams, graphic organizers and key words in text.
- Directs the use of dictionary while students write.
- Guides about the organization of paragraph to keep the text sequence. (Delmastro, 2015)

Techniques for writing

Teachers should use techniques and strategies to help students write. There are some clear descriptions how teachers are going to develop the following strategies the writing skills inside the classroom with their students.” (Harmer J. , 1991, pág. s/n)

Generating ideas

“This is a useful strategy that consists in concentrate for a few minutes on a topic and writes down everything you can think of, ask questions about the subject, draw, etc.”¹ (Caldera, 2003, pág. 366) In the words of Caldera this technique is useful because the student doesn't have to think in order to write about the theme, it only has to do with writing the first ideas that is in mind.

Stages

- Students produce fresh ideas about topics in any subject area.
- students write down ideas without self-editing.
- Students choose ideas and information for possible topics and subtopics.

Purpose

- Help students to start writing to produce more writing.
- Encourage fluency in generating ideas for writing on any topic, in any subject area.

Organizing ideas

This strategy consist in lists, classify information in mind maps, students need to know how organize ideas about any topic what they have learned. Besides, they need to know to link ideas in logically connected paragraphs that contain enough supporting detail.

Purpose

-Identify relationships and make connections among ideas and information.

Stages

- Select ideas and information for possible topics and subtopics.
- Organize ideas and information to focus the writing task.

Supporting the Main Idea

Using this strategy is important for students learn how to select two possible main ideas to use as a topic sentence in an information paragraph, and then to learn how to choose details to support it. Student samples are selected from a variety of subject areas. Samples could be used to teach summary writing.

Purpose

-Discriminate main ideas and supporting details for a paragraph.

Stages

- Students write well-organized paragraphs for different subject areas, with supporting details.
- Students demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.

Activities for Writing

Some activities for the generation of ideas provide more successful results than others. They are instant writing, writing to each other, poetry.

Instant writing: one way of building the writing habit is to use instant writing activities. Instant writing activities are those where students are asked to write immediately in respond to a teacher request. We can, for example, dictate half sentences for students to complete (e.g. my favorite relative is...´ or ´I will never forget the time I ...´).¹ (Harmer J. , 2011, pág. 118)

Poetry: To write poems allows students to express themselves in a way that others genres. In this activity the students can write acrostic poems or short verses to practice the written. (Harmer J. , 2011, pág. 119)

Writing to each other: the email interview is an example of getting students to write each other. They can also write emails, or any other kind of message. (Harmer J. , 2011, pág. 120)

As said by the author, these types of easy and fun activities give an opportunity so students can involve in the writing process and achieve a quick success.

The writing process

“In the writing process there are four stages in writing they are: prewriting, composing/drafting, revising, and editing” (Loucif, 2014, pág. 18) As stated by Loucif there are four strategies that have as a didactic purpose to carry out the written expression and sub processes of the same, this involves pre-writing what the student will write about, drafting it, reviewing what student has written and editing what student has written and then producing a final draft. So the teachers need to encourage students to plan, draft and review.

Pre-writing

The pre-writing or planning consists in to do drafts, analyze key words about the topic, and organize ideas in mind maps. It consists in:

- Analyze elements of the communication.
- Form with words the objective of a written communication: What's expected to get?
- Research in diversity of information sources: encyclopedia, dictionaries, etc.
- Apply different techniques to organize ideas for example: hierarchical diagrams, mind maps, key words, etc.
- Determine how the text would be (tone, presentation, etc.)
- Elaborate drafts (Caldera, 2003, pág. 366).

Drafting

The drafting consists in to write the ideas onto paper. Focusing on various aspects of the text selectively, and use the correct syntax and vocabulary.

- Proceed to capture on the paper the ideas.
- Selectively focus on various aspects of the text.
- Handle the language to achieve the desired effect
- Use the correct syntax and vocabulary select. (Caldera, 2003, pág. 366)

Revising

The Revising is the most important strategy in a writing process; it involves checking that your content and purpose is clear and appropriate for your reader, in the particular writing situation. "Reviewing depends on two sub-processes: evaluating and revising. Reviewing, itself, may be a conscious process in which writers choose to read what they have written." (Hayes, 2008, pág. s/n) According to Flower revising is evaluate the content, check the terms, change, or delete words to make the written text understandable.

- Compare the text produced with previous plans
- Read selectively, focusing on different aspects: content (ideas, structure, etc.) or form (grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.).
- Dominate various forms of redo a text: delete or add words or phrases, use synonyms, complete redesign. (Caldera, 2003)

CONCLUSIONS

- Diary writing is a methodological strategy to improve students' writing skills. First, because students are more motivated to write because they have a chance to express their opinions, write about their own experiences. Second, they have an opportunity to use the language learned in the readings in a real context and they can adapt it in their writing. However the causes that obstruct the implementation of strategies to develop the skills of English writing are related to the ignorance of the teachers about what these techniques and their utilities are, in most cases know their names but not how to use them in class.
- It's recommended to teachers to implement strategies and techniques when teaching writing to encourage the development of English language learning, emphasizing their utmost skill in writing, maximizing the various existing activities.
- It is suggested to use other teaching strategies so that classes do not become monotonous generating a negative attitude in the student.
- It is recommended that teachers guide students in the writing process in order to achieve the development of the skills and gain domain of the language.

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