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FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES

CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Improvement of the writing skill in students of the 2nd level of English at CEC through an interactive digital application

PLAZA MINUCHE AXEL SANTIAGO
LICENCIADO EN PEDAGOGIA DEL IDIOMA INGLES

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LUNA LARA EDUARDO MARCELO

MACHALA
2022

Tesis

por Jaramillo- Plaza

Tesis

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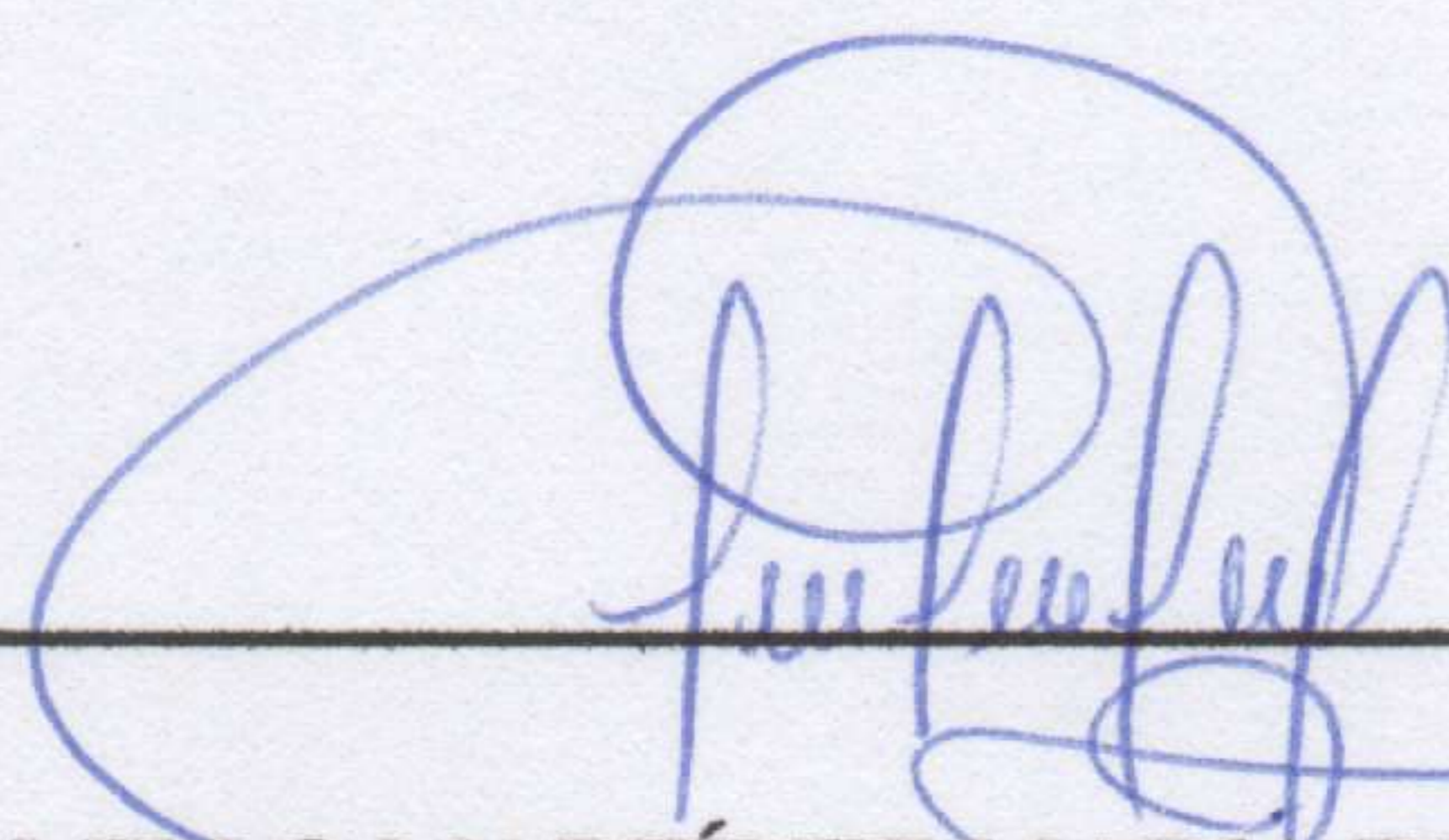
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DEDICATION

In the first instance, I dedicate the result of this work to my family, for sowing in me values and principles that forge character. Also, to my teachers, for the professional training provided over the years. Finally, the educational community in the area of foreign language, with the aim of having made a contribution to this project.

María Del Cisne Jaramillo Martínez

The result of this work is dedicated to my entire family, mainly to my parents who have taught me to be the person I am today, my principles, my values, my perseverance, and my determination. Additionally, I would also like to dedicate this work to the group of professors who have shared their knowledge and excellent advice without limitations.

Axel Santiago Plaza Minuche

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo investigativo tiene como propósito principal el mejoramiento de la habilidad writing en los alumnos de segundo nivel de Inglés del Centro de Educación Continua a través de una aplicación digital en el transcurso del mes de agosto, mediante el empleo de un sistema de actividades didácticas apoyadas en una herramienta digital interactiva, como respuesta al alto grado de dificultades de carácter comunicativo en alumnos de niveles elementario, que ha tenido lugar durante las clases virtuales del año 2022. La investigación tiene como objeto de estudio el proceso de aprendizaje autodidacta en estudiantes que comprenden un rango superior a los 17 años, asimismo sus bases se encuentran sustentadas en el paradigma cualitativo de naturaleza no-experimental de un solo grupo. Comprende una serie métodos teóricos y métodos empíricos, los cuales son instrumentos facilitares para el procesamiento y obtención de información. Por consiguiente, este trabajo investigativo representa un aporte del área de lenguas extranjeras, en el sentido de innovar las herramientas de aprendizaje diarias de práctica durante y posterior a clases en la habilidad de escritura.

Palabras Clave: Plataformas digitales; teoría de la conectividad; sistema de actividades didácticas; inglés como lengua extranjera; proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this research work is to improve the writing skills of second-level English students at the Centro de Education Continua through a digital application during August, based on the use of a system of didactic activities supported by an interactive digital tool, in response to the high degree of communicative difficulties in elementary-level students, during the virtual classes in 2022. This investigation is focused on the self-taught learning process involving 17-year-old students, in the same way, its bases are supported by the qualitative paradigm of a non-experimental nature of a single group. Includes a series of theoretical and empirical methods, both of which are tools to facilitate the processing and obtaining of information. Consequently, this investigative work represents a contribution to the area of foreign languages, aiming to innovate the daily learning tools of practice during and after classes in writing skill.

Key words: Digital platforms; connectivity theory; system of didactic activities; English as a second language; teaching-learning process.

ÍNDICE GENERAL

Introduction

English language acquisition is a challenge to any student at a global level, and particularly when it comes to the continuity given to the practice of the English languages skills; which constitutes a paramount piece according to the article *keys to succeeding in the English learning*, that mentions, "la frecuencia con la que practicas cada día es fundamental para adquirir y consolidar un gran nivel" (Tus Clases Particulares, 2020)

"Escribir a diario es el secreto del éxito". (Krashen, 2020) Such affirmation alludes to the American researcher, Stephen Krashen, a character who inspires to comprehend the major obstacles that the writing skill comes across at schools around the world. This is demonstrated by a study in India applied to high school students, which detected a lexical problem in the writings:

> Tamil is the mother tongue of the students in the present study. The difference in the sentence structures of Tamil and English is a big challenge for the students of Tamil Nadu. This has adversely affected the writing performance of the students in the present study. (Peter & Singaravelu, 2020, pág. 1512)

Peter and Singaravelu through their study reveal that the obstacles in the English writing skill performance can be repeated in different educational contexts which require special attention. Nevertheless, to this effect P. Freire expresses: "escribir no es sólo dominar una serie de signos gráficos con mayor o menor acierto; se trata de todo un esfuerzo de interpretación del mundo, que tiene como origen la lectura y la escritura de la realidad".(Crespo & Pinto, 2016)

(Lujan Romero & Villalobos Vásquez, 2011) point out a series of steps to promote the writing skill. Between these: 1) Motivating; 2) Knowing Vocabulary; 3) Practicing; 4) Producing. These are supported by pedagogical tools so that the student can write more and with a better level of sub-skills such as grammar, lexis, and punctuation.

Las herramientas educativas son programas educativos didácticos que son diseñados con el fin de apoyar la labor de los profesores en el proceso de enseñanza- aprendizaje; las herramientas educativas están destinadas a la enseñanza y el aprendizaje autónomo y permite el desarrollo de ciertas habilidades cognitivas. (Herramientas Educativas, 2013)

From an intermediate overview, Ecuador went through a series of changes in 2014, which had an impact on education and its management. (Ministerio de Educación, 2021) At this time, English is a part of the teaching syllabus, by the name of "inglés como lengua extranjera"; from there, its channeling was sought through popular ministerial agreements.

According to (Ministerio de Educación, s.f.), one of the essential principles of the 2016 foreign language curriculum proposal was the AICLE approach (Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lenguas Extranjeras). "CLIL refers to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects, are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims". (Marsh, 1994) However, according to a study at Universidad Técnica de Ambato the need for a redirection of skills, especially writing skills is mentioned.

This study identified the deprivation of the development of competencies associated with writing that strictly require praxis, both inside and outside the classroom. (López Pérez, 2016) Therefore, the existence of an approach such as AICLE or CLIL does not provide dynamic tools for independent skill development.

Several national studies have exposed the conditions of writing skills in Ecuador today. In order to illustrate, the magazine *Digital Publisher* (Herrera Navas, Olmedo Cela, & Obaco Soto, 2020) has shown it in its article 'Causas que dificultan la redacción de textos: Una aproximación causal a los problemas más frecuentes'. The Education First website states:

Este año Ecuador se colocó en el puesto 81 de un total de 100 países evaluados, considerado como un nivel de inglés "Muy Bajo", obtiene una calificación de 46.57 que equivale a un nivel A1 según el Marco Común Europeo. Dentro de los países latinoamericanos también queda mucho por trabajar como país ya que se encuentra posicionado en el último lugar. (Michelle, 2020)

A lack of knowledge of grammar in both English and Spanish, inconsistency in writing, short vocabulary range, and the frequent fear of making mistakes in developing English texts are everyday difficulties for students. The skill of writing is going through one of the most complex stages linked to the virtual environment. Virtual classes have slowed down the process of knowledge formation in this skill as a result of poor contact between students and English teachers.

All of the above has led to the formulation of the following **scientific problem**: According to the investigation carried out, it has been possible to determine the lack of practice of the writing skill; in response to this, the following question has been formulated: How to optimize the writing skill in the second level students at Centro de Educación Continua?

Its **object of study** is the self-taught learning process in students over 17 years of age.

The **general objective** of this research is, to apply a system of didactic activities supported by the use of the digital tool "Slowly" that contribute to the optimization of the development of writing skills in the English language of the students of the second elementary level of the Centro de Educación Continua in the year 2022.

The **field of research** is didactic tools used in the teaching-learning of English as a foreign language (TEFL).

The present research has determined a series of **specific objectives**:

- To delimit the main and secondary difficulties of the students in the enhancing of the writing skill;

- To apply the digital tool 'SLOWLY', which aims at optimizing the practice of writing through trial and error in the second level students at Centro de Educación Continua;

- To encourage the comprehensive reading of texts for the elaboration of coherent letters corresponding to the objective of the proposed tool;

- To invigorate the widening of the vocabulary range to capture and transmit a written message without obstacles in the elaboration of texts.

This research work represents a contribution from the educational community, particularly from the area of foreign languages, demonstrating from a qualitative perspective the need to innovate the daily learning tools of practice during and after classes in the writing skill.

The **importance of the study** lies in the quality of learning provided by the lesson plans designed by skill and instrument. The integration of a new optimization element, in this case, the virtual tool in the teaching-learning process, is a significant step in the educational evolution. In addition, the writing skill does not work by itself, so the optimization of this skill benefits other adjacent dexterities and abilities.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter lodges a historical review of the digital tools exerted in the development of the writing skill, its evolution, and its impact on English language acquisition. This is how this passage will contextualize contents which will help gather data to understand a theoretical prospect concerning the subject, in such a way to respond to the presented issue: How to optimize the writing skill in the second level students at Centro de Educación Continua during the 2022 year?

1.1 Historical background of educational digital tools through information and communication technologies and their participation in developing writing skills.

By referring to history, "el debate sobre el rol de la tecnología en la educación se remonta por lo menos a 2.500 años atrás." (A. W, s.f.) By that time ancient inhabitants considered the stone slabs to be educational technology. (Carreton, 2019) However, digital pedagogical tools are relatively new, so that the first evidences of TIC (Tecnologías de la Información y la comunicación) in educational processes date back to 1918. (Vidal Puga, 2006, pág. 540)

> After World War Two (1939 – 1945) a new term appeared, educational technology. This concept provided to the 50's decade a take-off that was originally characterized by the insertion of the behaviorist approach in educational technology, which is disaggregated into a series of stages ranging from a theoretical-empirical perspective to a mediational perspective.

The first stage covered the 1940s and 1950s. The basis of this was the audiovisual sector. European schools were considerably influenced by silent films. "Las actividades de dramatización permiten al alumnado el conocimiento y experimentación del lenguaje corporal como modo de

comunicación y expresión personal, al tiempo que favorecen la relación y colaboración". (Muñóz Álvarez, 2013) Furthermore, slides and still images.

The second period was the 1960s and 1970s. This was linked to the psychology of learning and programmed teaching. The digital era came to consolidate in the 1970s due to the evolution of the TIC; leaving its mark on the 1980s as a before and after in the telecommunications world. (Bonilla, 2009)

The third stage was the 1980s. This period was characterized by the integration of digital tools in educational institutions, such as visual materials, and the use of digital technology. (Área Moreira, 2004) During these years, the theory of connectivity significantly influenced the integration of virtual tools into education as part of the system of learning theories. (Martínez Pérez, 2020)

Over the years, the demands of the educational curriculum increased. Likewise, digital tools had to be adopted by the new generations of students. As stated by Márquez:

> Las TIC se han convertido en un eje transversal de toda acción formativa donde casi siempre tendrán una triple función: como instrumento facilitador los procesos de aprendizaje (fuente de información, canal de comunicación entre formadores y estudiantes, recurso didáctico...), como herramienta para el proceso de la información y como contenido implícito de aprendizaje (los estudiantes al utilizar las TIC aprenden sobre ellas, aumentando sus competencias digitales). (Parra Zambrano & Pincheira Jiménez, pág. 03)

As technology advanced, it sought to transform realities and environments in order to adapt them to the needs. Thereby in 1995, online learning environments arrived. As a result, learning came to be managed by the first integrated training platforms such as *Learning Management*

System (LMS) and WebCT or *Blackboard*. By this time, virtual training environments consolidated a system of contents, learning objectives, activities, and others. (A. W, s.f.)

During the virtual pedagogical evolution in the 2000s, *e-learning* took part in the interactive digital platforms thanks to its collaborative and constructivist approach, allowing the foundation of simultaneous communication systems between educators and students, as well as other members of the community. Its digital formative process had great influence at the time, being later a suggestive instrument of educational quality. (Moreno Ramos , Murcia Montañés, Romero Forero, & Ronderos Hernández, 2021)

Since the 21st century, the incorporation of TIC in the educational field has had a different vision, so the term 'educational technology' has been disappearing over the years. (Area, 2000) According to several influential people such as De Pablos (2001), Solomon (2000), Buckingham (2002), among others, the Internet modified the concept of educational environments. This evolution emphasized the digitization of printed curricular materials.

As a consequence of the arrival of new technologies, the field of TEFL took advantage of this media, altering its traditionalist approach to provide students with the necessary resources to major their skills in the new language. According to Mujtaba (2013) "the use of computers in English teaching and learning can offer an extensive variety of multimedia content and other channels of communication between learners" (pág. 10)

> ICT and Web 2.0 tools provide a variety of different approaches as well as learning styles that might reinforce the material delivered in other formats. Not to mention that enjoyment is very much a part of effective learning, thereby captivating learners' interest, increasing personal discovery, generating enthusiasm and the desire to learn

thereby instilling an interest from within to improve the learners' motivation. (McDougald, 2009)

For English language teaching and learning, digital tools played an integrating role. (Cabero Almenara, 1999) Estas lograron clasificarse según las necesidades y el tipo de consumidor, tal como son: por habilidad, edad, nivel, objetivo, entre otros rasgos. En la actualidad las herramientas virtuales son entornos de aprendizaje muy necesarios para los ciudadanos digitales de la nueva era.

Proof of this was the non-experimental study by Solís and Solano (2014), Rico and Agudo (2016), and the exploratory descriptive research by Izquierdo (2017). In each investigation, it was evidenced that the incorporation of TIC in the curricular framework promoted and enhanced the development of skills through autonomous learning of English. This is how digital tools in recent years have been considered rewarding in the process of learning English as a second language.

In this context, didactic virtual tools or OER (Open Educational Resources) have focused especially on English communicative skills. The writing skill, as one of them, has been greatly influenced due to the number of virtual tools such as platforms and applications available on the Internet, which are mediators of learning according to George Siemens's theory of connectivity.

"Writing well enables you to organise and refine your ideas. If you work in English, it'll help you communicate effectively with your colleagues". (Lewis, 2020) Tener un buen desempeño de la escritura del inglés tiene relación con el nivel del estudiante (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). Afortunadamente las herramientas digitales están diseñadas por nivel de inglés, con interfaces sencillas y contenidos específicos que se han ido perfeccionando.

Today it is possible to find on the web a vast number of tools or resources that encourage the development of writing skills in different ways through integrative or independent functionalities,

with easy access and able to satisfy the student's needs. Among the most common the following can be mentioned: applications, platforms, and online forums.

1.2 Referential Background

1.2.1 Connectivity Theory

In the digital era, connectivism is a learning theory, mainly based on the construction of links or connections as a way to achieve meaningful learning (Siemens, 2016). According to George Siemens, the theory of connectivism exposes the impact of technology on the daily processes of modern human beings, such as communication and learning.

This theorem is based on "el análisis de las limitaciones del conductismo, el cognitivismo y el constructivismo" (Barón Ramírez, s.f.), upporting that there are currently new phenomenologies related to learning, as a result of technological influence. Siemens also expresses that the theory of connectivity is about three criteria: Pedagogy, epistemology, and learning; therefore, 21st-century education needs other sources of educational training such as the internet to understand new learning and through this way, acquire new skills and expertise.

In a context unrelated to teaching and learning, George Siemens's connectivity theory emerges, which distinguishes the importance of the activity of the actors and their roles.

- **Role of the teacher:** According to Siemens, the language instructor plays a supportive role in training. This is based on guiding the learner to reliable sources of information, guiding his or her work, and making the most of the Internet. (Vila, 2017)
- **Role of the learner:** Autonomy is essential in the role of the learner. The acquisition of skills is exclusive of digital media, understanding that learning processes are no longer

considered only internal. Therefore, its formation is based on established connections. (Vila, 2017)

In addition, it is crucial to understand the meaning of the psychologist Lev Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZDP).

- **Zone of proximal development (ZDP):** "La distancia entre el nivel de desarrollo real determinado por la resolución independiente de problemas y el nivel de desarrollo potencial determinado mediante la resolución de problemas bajo la guía de adultos o en colaboración con otros más capaces". (Vygotsky, 2017)

The Internet, as a digital tool, has reorganized teaching and learning styles, strategies, and curricular materials. (Martínez Pérez, 2020) Connectivity as a formative model does not ignore the metamorphosis that learning must go through in order to adhere to the new social interactions according to the Vygotskian notion; concept focused on virtual environments such as spaces for proximal development between subjects with different experiential features. (Martínez Pérez, 2020) In other words, Vygotskian ideals coupled with connectivism ideals point to the Internet as a zone of proximal development in virtual learning.

1.2.2 Characterization of the writing skill

Broadly speaking, writing matches a system of signs according to a set of grammatical rules; prevailing in the space-time of history, insisting on its value as a fundamental piece of non-verbal communication. In the educational field, writing has a significant place in the study of English as a foreign language, being part of one of the four productive English skills.

According to P. Freire, the importance of "escribir no es sólo dominar una serie de signos gráficos con mayor o menor acierto; se trata de todo un esfuerzo de interpretación del mundo, que

tiene como origen la lectura y la escritura de la realidad". (Crespo & Pinto, 2016) Although it is true that writing has always been shown as a safe way for the development of personality and sociolinguistic skills, generating it in a foreign language can also be a challenge, but also a very profitable exercise.

Characteristics of the writing skill:

- **Reading comprehension:** Before writing, one of the basic micro-skills is reading comprehension; reading and understanding what a piece of writing says. This field is associated with previous knowledge.

- **Vocabulary:** "Es el grupo de términos que una lengua específica contiene, los cuales son puestos en práctica moderados por ciertas reglas del idioma". (Yirda, 2021) However, vocabulary is also related to the number of words people know.

- **Grammatical rules:** It is the knowledge of written rules for language comprehension and writing quality. It is important to clarify that the concept of grammatical rules also includes the editor's or writer's lexical richness.

- **Construction of the text in English:** The construction of texts in English implies knowing the grammatical structures of the language, on the other hand, it is necessary to unlink the L1 with the L2 to avoid punctuation errors, sentence formation, and the known false cognates.

- **Review:** One of the final stages in the writing development is the self-review of the written text, to identify slips in the transmission of ideas or spelling. In addition, the review of an external aspect is flawless to improve in the skill.

- **Feedback:** "Es el proceso a través del cual se genera una respuesta a la emisión de un mensaje. Puede ser de dos tipos, positiva o negativa dependiendo de las consecuencias del funcionamiento de un sistema". (DELSOL, 2020)

1.2.3 Curriculum Materials

According to Ledesma Nieves, curricular materials present a universal knowledge that stimulates the discovery of skills and hinders conventional subjects. The digital model in which the participation of the English subject is involved as a foreign language makes it clear that the roles and resources take a redirection. Nowadays, the curricular materials seek to undo structures centralized in the teacher; demanding the internet and digital tools participation as a guiding content in the educational spaces

1.2.4 Digital educational platforms for writing improvement.

Digital educational platforms are tools provided by the Internet based on specific content, goals, and learning objectives that vary according to the subject. (Martínez, 2021) Learning objectives are intangible means of assurance for the educator, which communicate the type of knowledge and skills that the learner should reach during a given period.

"La función de una plataforma digital educativa es la creación de entornos virtuales para llevar cualquier asignatura de manera fácil al aula virtual sin necesidad de tener conocimiento de programación". (Martínez, 2021) The use of virtual platforms is interpreted as the simplification of both class tasks for the student and planning for the teacher. However, each platform or virtual tool has its operation depending on some characteristics of the student, consequently, it is important to deepen the tools to suit the level and condition of the student. (Martínez, 2021)

In the case of students from higher education, there is a vast diversity of digital tools that promote the optimization of writing skills, however, before choosing a platform or virtual tool, some properties should be taken into account.

Properties of digital platforms:

- **Usability:** It refers to the level of complexity of the technological resources. Its practice determines the usability of the product for the user.

- **Adaptability:** Access to the platform is considered based on the functionality in different formats. In other words, accessibility from a cell phone or computer.

- **Ability:** It covers the four English skills: 'Reading', 'writing', 'listening' and 'speaking'.

- **Learning objective:** These are goals intended to be reached per subject, as a part of the educational curriculum.

- **Age:** Platforms have an age range for their users. It is important for the teacher to keep in mind that skills are acquired depending on the student's age, especially because some tools may have certain mechanics that may not be understood by the student.

- **Level:** In English, digital platforms are distributed according to the level. These are basic, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced, according to the Common European Framework of Reference. Before choosing a virtual support tool, the student's level must be identified.

1.3 Contextual Background

1.3.1 The teaching and learning of English in the HEI of Ecuador

Teaching and learning are indispensable intellectual processes for the improvement of the human being, being part of the development of his competencies. HEI, taking into account this

ideology, has been promoting for several years the English blossoming as a foreign language skill, to optimize the professional profile of university degrees.

In Ecuador, higher education institutes (HEI) have a centralized focus on the English linguistic skills as a foreign language, whose learning objectives are simplified in the performance of roles and tasks between teachers and learners. TEFL in HEI is based on the management of language programs, according to the relevant curricular guidelines of the country.

Pursuant to Art. 31 of the Academic Regime, EFL students must approve a specific level which is B2, which corresponds to the upper intermediate level of the CEFR international standard. (UTE, s.f.) In addition, it is stipulated as a curricular policy to meet with the levels of English as a foreign language in the curriculum of other majors as a condition for graduation. In other words, curricular conditioning is an educational strategy of the national system to level the knowledge of English in higher education students or high school graduates, in addition to contributing to poor English proficiency.

Academic Language Centers are entities adjoined to HEI in charge of teaching languages for general purposes, among the most common languages are English, Italian, French, as well as native languages. The acceptance and impact of English as a foreign language in higher education institutions is due to its breadth in the professional development of university students, despite the aspects related to the learning of English during the university period and its benefit in the work field. (Chávez Zambrano, Saltos Vivas, & Saltos Dueñas, 2017)

> "En la educación superior se espera que los estudiantes recién graduados sean capaces de comprender textos complejos que se encuentren dentro de su área de conocimiento y puedan expresarse con cierto grado de fluidez cuando se comuniquen con otras

personas en inglés, por tal razón las Instituciones de Educación Superior deben

garantizar el cumplimiento de un número de horas básicas y la calidad en las cátedras

que son impartidas". (Ministerio de Educación Nacional de Colombia., 2005)

In that sense, the year 2006 is considered as the turning point of English teaching in the language centers at HEI, which required students to achieve a linguistic competence in order to graduate from their higher studies. To university students, learning has a simple approach that HEI face because of their ability to meet Piaget's principles of effortless assimilation and accommodation.

Today, the English taught in language departments corresponds to a mandatory conditioning stipulated in universities in accordance with their free judgment, as set forth in article number 355 of the New Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, which stipulates that HEI have complete autonomy in the administrative, academic, organic and financial fields. This law is applied in correspondence to the objectives of the development regime and principles of the Supreme Court. (Constitución de la República del Ecuador, 2008)

1.3.2 Diagnosis of the current status of the writing skill in elementary level students of the Centro de Educación Continua.

The results of the diagnosis applied to the elementary level students of the Centro de Educación Continua will be considered in this section, in which the current state of the students' performance in the writing skill will be presented. Two instruments were selected for the collection of information: the participant observation guide (Anexo 1), and the semi-structured interview with the teacher (Anexo 2).

Results analysis

The first instrument applied was the participant observation guide, which has yielded the following results:

- Learners experience difficulties in using proper English grammar.

- Students have difficulty recognizing and applying English verb tenses.

- Students have a limited knowledge of English vocabulary.

- Students have trouble writing paragraphs with awareness in the application of grammatical signs and in the complete expression of ideas in English.

In addition to the observation guide, a semi-structured interview was carried out with the English teacher in order to obtain a clearer perspective of the current situation of the students and their performance in the writing skill. In this way, the following results are established according to the instrument.

- According to the teacher, some students demonstrate a higher level of proficiency than others, but the problems in grammar are comparable.

- There is a constant tendency to confuse grammatical tenses, and even an inability to recognize them.

- The verb tense that most students tend to confuse is the present perfect tense with the simple past tense.

- Students do use the correct vocabulary in their writing.

- Pupils do apply the vocabulary learned during class in written assignments.

- Learners develop comprehensible texts during activities that involve the writing skill.

- Trainees respect punctuation marks in the development of paragraphs.

- The teacher considers that this productive skill should be included in the lesson plan. In this way, it would have a positive effect on the student to feel confident in their vocabulary, also considers necessary the use of a platform or extra implementation for a constant practice of writing.

All in all, according to the analysis of the information acquired both in the interview with the teacher and in the observation guide, the data reveal that there is a deficient level of the writing skill in the elementary level students of the Centro de Educación Continua. he determining factors that influence the deficient performance in this productive skill are linked to the lack of practice of this skill.

From the results obtained, a lesson plan has been developed based on a digital tool that contributes to the English learning process in the writing skills of the students of the second elementary level of the Centro de Educación Continua by 2022.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Methodological elements are presented in this chapter in order to understand the nature of the scientific study, and to achieve the previously proposed objectives, by presenting the paradigm, type and design of the research, selected population, techniques and instruments directed to data acquisition.

2.1 Paradigm and type of research

This research paradigm is qualitative since it categorizes real environments into information links, in order to explain the phenomenological nature of a problem.

Baptista, Collado and Sampieri state "en el método del enfoque cualitativo se emplea la recolección de datos sin medición numérica, esto con el propósito de descubrir o afinar preguntas de investigación durante el desarrollo de la interpretación". (2010)

2.2 Research Design

According to the research problem, the present study has been framed in the non-experimental category involving a single group.

As stated by (Palella & Martins, 2010) defines: El diseño no experimental es el que se realiza sin manipular en forma deliberada ninguna variable. El investigador no sustituye intencionalmente las variables independientes. Se observan los hechos tal y como se presentan en su contexto real y en un tiempo determinado o no, para luego analizarlos. Por lo tanto, en este diseño no se construye una situación específica si no que se observa las que existen. (pag.87)

2.3 Population and sample or object of study

As a result of the study, the population consisted of a group of 21 students, distributed among 12 women and 9 men from the second level of education belonging to the Centro de Educación Continua de la Universidad Técnica de Machala.

2.4 Research methods

From the methodological perspective of the research, it has been determined the application of theoretical and empirical methods, to obtain explicit and accurate data, for the benefit of the development of the present research.

2.4.1 Theoretical Methods

Therefore, the theoretical methods used are as follows:

- **Analytic - synthetic**

This method includes two kinds of processes: analysis and synthesis. The first process is in charge of intelectually fragmenting an entirety, reducing it to homogeneous quantities called components. On the other hand, the second process involves discovering the connection of these elements taken from a reality.

- **Historical logical**

This method studies the trajectory of events in real time and analyzes the development of the same.

- **Inductive - deductive**

This method fulfills its function from an associative perspective between observation and analysis of the information. In the research field, the inductive-deductive method seeks to identify the reality in the reasoning of the research.

2.4.2 Empirical Methods

The empirical methods used were as follows:

- **Participant observation**

Through this interaction between the researcher and the participants within a social setting or scenario, it is intended to obtain information by adopting a modest position in the period of the interaction. The purpose of this qualitative method is to reflexively inquire into the daily development of the participants.

- **Interview**

It is an investigative technique consisting of data or information collection through orality between the participants and the researcher. The interview suggests a formal or informal dialogue that takes place in an environment of information exchange. The purpose of this instrument lies in obtaining answers to the problem in interest.

2.5 Data processing techniques

Having accomplished the collection of information through the techniques applied, it is necessary to deduce the results obtained.

2.5.1 Content analysis

Using content analysis, it is intended to interpret the results obtained with the respective data collection techniques.

According to the article by Joan Guix Oliver (2008), content analysis is a scientific resource for analysis and reflection. Its practical utility is based on the recognition of codes emitted by the object of research. The purpose of this tool is to know, understand and reflect.

2.6 Draft with the research units of analysis

Units of analysis correspond to units of observation that the researcher delimits with respect to the research problem, categorizing the observations in the study field. The use of the units of analysis is essential for the researcher, since they help to access to the information desired to give continuity to the research process.

2.7 Draft with the unit of analysis: Writing skill performance

Unit of analysis	Categories	Indicators
Writing skill performance	• Grammar • Applying the verb tenses • Vocabulary • Paragraph writing	• knowledge of the structures and grammatical rules of the English language. • Knowledge of the past tense of regular and irregular verbs. • Knowledge of vocabulary appropriate to the level of the learners. • Knowledge of the correct use of punctuation marks in the English language.

2.8 Categories representation in the instruments used

Categories	Participant observation	Interview	Analysis
Use of grammar	Category 1 / Unit of analysis 1		**GOOD:** The learner can easily use the proper grammatical structure of English. **REGULAR:** The student is able to use a certain grammatical structure of English. **INADEQUATE:** The student is not able to use proper English grammar.
Verb tenses application	Category 2 / Analysis unit 2		**GOOD:** The trainee recognizes and easily applies the different categories of English verb tenses.

		REGULAR: The student recognizes and applies some of the English verb tenses. **INADEQUATE:** The student is not able to recognize and apply English verb tenses.
Vocabulary	Category 3 / Analysis unit 3	**GOOD:** The student demonstrates a wide knowledge of English vocabulary. **REGULAR:** The student is familiar with some English vocabulary. **INADEQUATE:** The learner demonstrates a lack of knowledge of English vocabulary.

| Paragraph writing | Category 4 / Unit of análisis 4 | **GOOD:** The learner is able to write paragraphs with awareness in the application of grammatical signs and in the complete expression of ideas in English. **REGULAR:** The student is able to convey complete ideas in the writing of paragraphs in English. **INADEQUATE:** The student does not correctly apply grammatical signs, or does not convey his/her ideas properly in the writing of paragraphs in English. |

This chapter presented the methodological framework, which supported the research and determined the basis for the elaboration of an intervention proposal focused on solving the identified problem.

CHAPTER III

INTERVENTION PROPOSAL

This third chapter deals with a collaboration between the research team and the educational community. This contribution is consolidated in an interactive digital resource as the centerpiece of a system of didactic activities for the improvement of writing skills in second level students of the Centro de Educación Continua.

3.2 Theoretical foundation of a system of didactic activities supported by the use of the interactive digital tool 'Slowly' for the enhancement of the writing skill in elementary level students of the Centro de Educación Continua.

Writing skills, regardless of language, are categorized into six basic components that a person, whether a child, adolescent or adult, should possess when it comes to writing. These components are known as reading comprehension, transcription, sentence construction, planning-revision, and finally self-regulation. It is essential for human beings to construct meanings in their learning process, due to this principle it is crucial to generate, in large extent, alternatives or learning systems according to the time.

Accordingly, it has been considered a system of didactic activities supported by an interactive app that is capable of integrating all the components involved in the production of writing skills, with the purpose of enabling elementary level students of the Centro de Educación Continua to communicate appropriately through writing in English.

From a theoretical point of view, it is essential to explore certain concepts proposed in this study. First of all, it is important to know what an activity system is, its relevance, benefits and

purpose, with the intention of clarifying how a system of resources or tools in a digital era benefits the English lessons, specifically in the writing skill.

According to the website EcuRed, A system of activities consists basically in a set of educational tasks grouped with the purpose of reaching an intellect and developing skills according to the proposed goal of study. Additionally, a system of activities is adapted to the needs of the students and the learning content. (EcuRed, s.f.)

A system of activities is an adaptable and viable resource to generate a complete practice of the contents during the lesson period, because in it lies the school tasks according to the goals or objectives set by the teacher for his or her class. Additionally, it is an effective method to ensure student learning. The general theory of systems states 'sin metas es imposible que exista un sistema'. (Martínez-Salanova Sánchez, 2020)

As part of the structuring of the activity system, the teacher must consider several characteristics before selecting the activities for this resource. Some of the features are age, level of the group, ability, content and modality of study. CAES states on its web portal that the learning activities "son un medio para asimilar información, adquirir o construir conocimiento." (Universidad OTR, s.f.)

Based on this argument, task selection in a system of activities requires a meticulous study by the teacher. During the educational routine, the teacher must carry out an examination of the learning needs and deficiencies of the students according to the skill to be developed.

Creativity is part of the teacher's involvement in the classroom and this is reflected in the didactic part of the lesson plan, i.e., the practice of the same. An efficient form of creativity in the classroom for the technological age generations is interactive applications. These interactive

pedagogical tools are "tecnologías que vienen a complementar la labor del docente en el aula, de manera que mejoren el proceso de aprendizaje" (Meneses, 2020)

As Nacho Meneses says, interactive applications in education represent a redesign at the pedagogical level, due to its symbolism as a functional structure of learning that appears in the new era. These digital elements enrich the pedagogical practice and make learning contents more dynamic, becoming motivational sources for children, teenagers and adults.

The type of learning based on interactive applications is known as 'edutainment'. Edutainment, is the integration of recreation and education, which is reduced to the acquisition of knowledge based on fun, with the purpose of creating meanings in the cognitive system of the students. (Fierro, 2021)

Planning of activities, resources and content is reflected in the lesson plan. The lesson plan is an educational document that the teacher creates with the purpose of describing the activities to be carried out during the lessons. This instrument answers the questions: What should be done and when? Lesson planning involves coherence and special treatment of the contents to be developed, since they must be aimed at achieving a certain goal.

As mentioned by (Caballero , Briones, & Flores, 2014) in his article, creating a lesson plan requires a number of features from the teacher:

- Planning character.

- Knowledge of the student group.

- Understanding the content.

- Knowledge of pedagogy from a general perspective.

- Knowledge of pedagogy from both a general and content-specific perspective, in order to relate them to each other.

- Self-efficacy.

3.3 System planning of didactic activities supported by the use of the digital tool Slowly for the improvement of the writing skill.

The following is the structure of the pedagogical proposal based on a system of didactic activities supported by the use of the digital tool Slowly for the improvement of writing skills in elementary level students of the Centro de Educación Continua. Therefore, it is specified that the proposal will be implemented on Monday, August 29, Tuesday, August 30 and Wednesday, August 31, 2022.

LESSON I

Content: Present Simple

Objetive: Students will be able to apply appropriate vocabulary related to daily routines, describing people and places, as well as personal information.

Sources

- Slowly app

- Slides

- YouTube

- Online games

Activities

- Introduction: 10 minutes

- Development: 40 minutos

- Conclusion: 10 minutos

Time: 60 minutos

Task/Assessment: Slowly app. Students will be able to write a complete routine through a letter on the Slowly app, and another student will replicate it using the correct structure.

LESSON II

Content: Present Progressive

Objetive: Students will be able to use the present continuous tense to show that a temporary situation is happening in the present.

Sources

- Slowly app

- Slides

- YouTube

- Online games

Activities

- Introduction: 10 minutos

- Development: 40 minutos

- Conclusion: 10 minutos

Time: 60 minutos

Task/Assessment: Slowly app. Students will be able to write texts in the present continuous through a letter on the Slowly app, and another student will replicate it using the correct structure.

LESSON III

Content: Past Simple vs. Past Perfect

Objetive: Students will be able to identify the verb tense, and compare and relate the difference between the simple past and the present perfect tense.

Sources

- Slowly app

- Slides

- YouTube

- Online games

Activities

- Introduction: 10 minutos

- Development: 40 minutos

- Conclusion: 10 minutos

Time: 60 minutos

Task/Assessment: Slowly app. Learners will be able to compose sentences in a text by differentiating the past simple and past perfect through a letter on the Slowly app, and another learner will replicate it using the correct structure.

3.4 Practical application of a system of didactic activities supported by the use of a digital tool for the improvement of the skill writing.

This excerpt expresses detailed information on the application of a system of didactic activities supported by the use of a digital tool for the improvement of the writing skill in elementary school students of the Centro de Educación Continua, in order to test the effectiveness of the present pedagogical proposal.

Lesson I

To start the first lesson a warm up was used, therefore, it was necessary to ask all students to share step by step the activities they perform in their day. Given this activity, we proceeded to introduce the topic Present Simple, and for this purpose it was shown a video related to expressing the activities that are carried out during the day as a routine.

To reinforce the grammatical tense, it was necessary to explain grammar grammar of the verb tense of study through slides and some activities aimed at practicing it. As a final step, students were required to apply what was reinforced by relating their daily routines through the Slowly application, then assign a partner to answer the letter by repeating the command to relate their routine.

Lesson II

This lesson started with a warm up aimed at guessing certain action verbs. Therefore, as an introduction to the grammatical tense of study (present continuous) it was necessary to present a video in which, through a dialogue, the use of the present simple and continuous tense was evidenced.

Afterwards, through the use of slides, it was possible to show the rules and examples of the grammatical tense being studied. As a next-to-last activity, exercises were applied that allowed the students to demonstrate what they had learned. To evaluate their knowledge, they were asked to share their daily and progressive activities, using the grammatical tenses already learned through the following app "Slowly".

Lesson III

Firstly, the lesson started with a warm up focused on forcing the student to express sentences in the present perfect and simple past, with questions such as: What have you done today? What did you do yesterday? As a next step, a video was presented which demonstrated how to manage a conversation by playing with the grammatical tenses already learned.

To analyze the differences between these grammatical tenses (past simple and present perfect) it was necessary to express them in slides, and then practice with interactive activities. For the final evaluation, they were assigned to write a letter through Slowly, in which they had to relate their activities playing with the grammatical tenses already learned, and then share it with their partners to be replicated.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS DISCUSSION

The results obtained in the present research will be presented in this chapter, where the degree of efficiency of the interactive application will be examined, together with the system of activities in elementary level students of the Centro de Educación Continua, being the unit of analysis the improvement of the writing skill.

During the first stage of the practice of the writing skill, a low level of interest was evidenced among the students. The lack of dynamism and interaction significantly affects the learning and appropriation of a language skill, such as English. In other terms, motivation in language learning is an internal state that the teacher must control through practice and method. Given this fact, part of this research work is dedicated to generate positive attitudes and interest towards learning.

According to Ospina Jackeline in her article, she defines motivation as 'el motor del aprendizaje' (2006). Motivation in learning is a construction of active processes present in the practice, which must be adequately handled to encourage and generate knowledge, skills and abilities. Motivation is an element that should always be a primary goal for teachers.

The system of activities during the class was a source of security and communication for the students. Group participation increased according to the activity; however, there were some students who avoided any participation. The tool plan consisted of independent activities, but with collaborative feedback from the lesson. Each of the tool plans made for the lessons were planned with a game, which was considered as a motivational element for the lesson.

In the practical part of the lesson, the learners showed a greater interest in the interactive Slowly app. The idea of exchanging letters between peers was unique to them, as well as being able to practice productive skills with native English speakers. At this point in the lesson, the students had made a positive change in the way they responded to the teacher's instructions for the new final task.

According to Valle (2009) Internet-based learning is based on three hypotheses: constructivism, dialogue and placed knowledge. This thought reinforces the theory of connectivism, in which the 'Slowly' app takes place. This tool promotes written dialogue in a fun way for the students, however, it is important that the teacher frequently monitors the students' activity and content in the app, in order to maintain an academic frame during the practical evaluative task.

CONCLUSIONS

- Through the method of classroom participant observation, it was possible to identify the main difficulties of the students in the improvement of the writing skill.

- Through the method of classroom participant observation, it was possible to identify the students' main difficulties in improving their writing skills.

- The system of activities supported by the digital application 'SLOWLY' was applied, which enhanced the practice of writing through trial-and-error in the second level students of Centro de Educación Continua.

- Through the implementation of the digital tool 'Slowly', it was possible to encourage the comprehensive reading of texts for the elaboration of coherent letters corresponding to the objective of the proposed tool.

- Based on the system of activities and the proposed digital tool, a widening of the vocabulary range of the students was identified, with the purpose of capturing and transmitting a written message without obstacles in the production of texts.

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ANEXOS

ANEXO 1

Guía de observación

Tabla de valores

Niveles	Valores
Bueno	Siempre
Regular	A veces
Insuficiente	Casi nunca

Unidad de análisis: Desempeño de la habilidad writing	
Categoría I: Empleo de la gramática	
El estudiante es capaz de emplear con facilidad la estructura gramatical adecuada del inglés.	
El estudiante es capaz de emplear cierta estructura gramatical del inglés.	
El estudiante no es capaz de emplear la adecuada gramática del inglés.	
Categoría II: Aplicación de los tiempos verbales	
El estudiante reconoce y aplica con facilidad las diferentes categorías de los tiempos verbales del inglés.	
El estudiante reconoce y aplica algunos de los tiempos verbales del inglés.	
El estudiante no es capaz de reconocer y aplicar los tiempos verbales del inglés.	
Categoría III: Vocabulario	

El estudiante tiene un vasto conocimiento del vocabulario del inglés.	
El estudiante tiene conocimiento de cierto vocabulario del inglés.	
El estudiante tiene un bajo nivel de conocimiento en el vocabulario del inglés.	
Categoría IV: Redacción de párrafos	
El estudiante es capaz de redactar párrafos con conciencia en la aplicación de signos gramaticales y en la expresión completa de ideas en inglés.	
El estudiante es capaz de transmitir ideas completas en la redacción de párrafos en inglés.	
El estudiante no aplica correctamente los signos gramaticales, ni transmite sus ideas adecuadamente en la redacción de párrafos en inglés.	

ANEXO 2

Entrevista semiestructurada la docente

Objetivo: Conocer el estado actual del desempeño de los estudiantes en la habilidad writing.

Unidad de análisis 1: Empleo de la gramática

1. ¿Los estudiantes emplean la gramática del inglés sin problemas?

Unidad de análisis 2: Aplicación de los tiempos verbales

1. ¿Los estudiantes identifican con facilidad los tiempos verbales que deben emplear en las respuestas escritas?

2. En el caso de que los alumnos no empleen adecuadamente los tiempos verbales, ¿cuál o cuáles han sido los tiempos verbales que los estudiantes han tenido mayor dificultad de producir?

Unidad de análisis 3: Vocabulario

1. ¿Los estudiantes utilizan el vocabulario adecuado en su redacción?

2. ¿Los estudiantes aplican el vocabulario aprendido en las clases en sus textos?

Unidad de análisis 4: Redacción de párrafos

1. ¿Los estudiantes desarrollan textos entendibles durante las actividades que involucran a la habilidad writing?

2. ¿Los estudiantes respetan los signos de puntuación en el desarrollo de párrafos?

3. ¿Desde su experiencia, considera usted que es necesaria una motivación adicional en el desempeño de la habilidad writing?

ANEXO 3

<table>
<tr>
<td colspan="6" align="center">

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE MACHALA
"Calidad, Pertinencia y Calidez"
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UNIDAD ACADÉMICA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES
CARRERA DE PEDAGÓGIA DE IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Lesson plan ° 1

</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">School: CEC</td>
<td colspan="2">Subject: English</td>
<td>Level: Elemental A1</td>
<td>Academic period: 2022 - 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Topic: Present Simple</td>
<td colspan="2">Skill: Writing</td>
<td>Time: 60 minutes</td>
<td>Date: 29/August/2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="6">Objective: Students will be able to apply appropriate vocabulary related to daily routines, describing people and places, as well as personal information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td align="center">Contents</td>
<td align="center">Time</td>
<td align="center">Activities</td>
<td align="center">Techniques and strategies</td>
<td align="center">Resources</td>
<td align="center">Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Simple

Routine verbs

Vocabulary</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

DEVELOPMENT (40 minutes)

CONCLUSION (10 minutes)</td>
<td>→ Warm up
→ Introduce the topic
→ Watch a video
→ Complete the following Gap filling activity related to the target tense.
→ Answer the following concept-</td>
<td>Implicit Approach
Questions - answers
Gamification
Total Physical Response</td>
<td>Slowly app
Slides
You Tube
Online Games</td>
<td>Students are able to write a full routine through a letter on Slowly app and other students are able to reply it.</td>
</tr>
</table>

		checking questions. → Apply the Slowly app			

ANEXO 4

<table>
<tr><td colspan="6" align="center">

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UNIDAD ACADÉMICA DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES
CARRERA DE PEDAGÓGIA DE IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS

Lesson plan ° 2
</td></tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">School: CEC</td>
<td colspan="2">Subject: English</td>
<td>Level: Elemental A1</td>
<td>Academic period: 2022 - 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">Topic: Present Progressive</td>
<td colspan="2">Skill: Writing</td>
<td>Time: 60 minutes</td>
<td>Date: 29/August/2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td colspan="6">Objective: Students will be able to use the present continuous tense to show that a temporary situation is happening in the present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td align="center">Contents</td>
<td align="center">Time</td>
<td align="center">Activities</td>
<td align="center">Techniques and strategies</td>
<td align="center">Resources</td>
<td align="center">Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Progressive

Vocabulary</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

DEVELOPMENT (40 minutes)

CONCLUSION (10 minutes)</td>
<td>→ Warm up
→ Introduce the topic
→ Watch a video
→ Complete the following multiple-choice activity, and</td>
<td>Implicit Approach
Questions - answers
Gamification
Total Physical Response</td>
<td>Slowly app
Slides
You Tube
Online Games</td>
<td>Students are able to write text with present continuous actions through a letter on Slowly app and other students are able to reply it.</td>
</tr>
</table>

		choose the correct. → Change these positive sentences to negative connotations. → Apply the Slowly app			

ANEXO 5

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Lesson plan ° 3

School: CEC	**Subject:** English		**Level:** Elemental A1		**Academic period:** 2022 - 2023
Topic: Past Simple vs Past Perfect	**Skill:** Writing		**Time:** 60 minutes		**Date:** 29/August/2022
Objective: Students will be able to identify the verb tense, and compare and relate the difference between the simple past and the present perfect tense.					
Contents	**Time**	**Activities**	**Techniques and strategies**	**Resources**	**Evaluation**

Present Simple Present Perfect Participle verbs	INTRODUCTION (10 minutes) DEVELOPMENT (40 minutes) CONCLUSION (10 minutes)	→ Warm up → Introduce the topic → Watch a video → Complete the sentences with the correct verb in brackets. → Fill the gaps to complete the following dialogues. → Apply the Slowly app	Implicit Approach Questions - answers Gamification Total Physical Response	Slowly app Slides You Tube Online Games	Students are able to compose sentences by differentiating between past simple and past perfect through a letter on Slowly app and other students are able to reply it.

ANEXO 6

ANEXO 7

ANEXO 8

ANEXO 9

ANEXO 10

ANEXO 11

Hassler ×

About Hassler

Hello, I am Doménica and I am here to talk with people around the world. I want to improve my English skills. Please write me!!! 😛

- Aug 10th (23) ♌ Leo
- Gender: Female
- Ecuador
- < 100 km
- Letter delivers in 35 minutes
- Joined Apr 2022
- Sent:Received Ratio (≈1:1)

ANEXO 12

Hello Luisa,

How are you? Is everything okey in your home? Well, I would like to tell you my routine in a normal day.

In the morning I wake up at 6:30 am, very early because I have to go my dog for a walk. Then, I have breakfast. Usually I eat fruit and vegetables or eggs. I like vegetables and my mom too. At 8:00 am I start my classes, after my classes I watch a movie on HBO or Netflix.

At noon I have lunch together my all family. We like eating natural juices, rice and soup. In the afternoon I do my tasks and sometimes my mom and I hang out to the hometown.

After, I attend my English classes in CEC. When my classes ended, I have dinner and finally I take a rest. I like watching videos on YouTube. Finally I go to sleep with my dog Lucas.

Well, this is my routine. What do you thing about it? Can you tell me your routine Doménica? I want to know.

Hope you have a good time! Look forward to hearing from you soon. 😊

Yours,

Carla

ANEXO 13

Hi Carla. I'm very good, thank you. And you? Everything is perfect here! Do you have pets then? I have two called Lucas and Coco. They are beautiful and I love them too much. Also you said you watch films. What kind of films do you like watching? I like watching horror and comedy films. My favourite is Heredidaty, a horror film.

Well, I will tell you my routine, it is very simple. At 07.00 am I get up, at 07.30 I go to university. On Mondays my classes are not online. By the way, I eat traditional food from Piñas city in the mornings. Then, I arrive home and have lunch with family. In the afternoon I sometimes go to the cinema with a friend. I love watching films. At 04.00 pm I practice sport. I like football and basketball. Do you play a game?

At 06.30 pm my classes start, so I have dinner during the English classes. After, I do my assignments. I stay until 12.00 am up. I talk with my brothers and mom and finally go to sleep.

I have a question for you. What's your favourite food? I like natural food too!! Well, I think your routine is good.

Have fun!

Yours,

Doménica