



UTMACH

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES

**CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y
EXTRANJEROS**

**SYSTEM OF PLAYFUL ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS IN
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**ORELLANA ROMÁN KERLY MISHEL
LICENCIADA EN PEDAGOGIA DEL IDIOMA INGLES**

**ULLAURI AGUILAR KATHERINE LISSETH
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**SISTEMATIZACIÓN DE EXPERIENCIAS PRÁCTICAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN Y/O
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DEDICATION

The present research is dedicated to:

First and foremost, we thank God for giving us the strength and wisdom to carry out this work. To our professors and peers, for their continuous support and collaboration. To our family for their love and unconditional encouragement. This project is dedicated to all the students who, through their efforts, make every day an opportunity to learn and grow.

Orellana Roman Kerly Mishel

Ullauri Aguilar Katherine Lisseth

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Finally, we wish to acknowledge the encouragement and guidance of our parents, who helped us overcome obstacles and achieve our goals. Their words of inspiration have clarified our doubts and strengthened our desire to move forward with our aspirations.

Orellana Roman Kerly Mishel

Ullauri Aguilar Katherine Lisseth

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo de investigación tuvo como objetivo diseñar e implementar un sistema de talleres con actividades lúdicas para mejorar la habilidad de escritura en el idioma inglés en estudiantes de décimo año de Educación General Básica en una institución educativa de la ciudad de Machala. La problemática detectada fue el bajo nivel de desempeño escrito en inglés, debido al uso de metodologías tradicionales, escasa motivación y limitada práctica significativa del idioma. La propuesta se fundamentó en los aportes de Dewey (1938), quien promovió el aprendizaje activo y experiencial; Ausubel (1983), con su teoría del aprendizaje significativo; y Hymes (1971), al considerar la competencia comunicativa como elemento esencial en la enseñanza de lenguas.

La investigación se enmarcó en el enfoque cuantitativo, con un diseño pre-experimental aplicado a una muestra de 32 estudiantes. Se utilizaron métodos teóricos (histórico-lógico, analítico-sintético, sistémico e hipotético-deductivo) y empíricos (observación y encuestas). El sistema implementado integró actividades lúdicas orientadas a las dimensiones lingüística, cognitiva y pragmática de la escritura, incluyendo juegos lingüísticos, dinámicas grupales, escritura creativa y recursos visuales.

Los resultados evidenciaron una mejora significativa en la competencia escrita, especialmente en los aspectos lingüísticos y pragmáticos. No obstante, la dimensión cognitiva mostró avances más discretos, por lo que se recomienda profundizar en estrategias que estimulen la organización de ideas y el pensamiento crítico en futuras implementaciones. Se concluye que los talleres lúdicos fomentan la motivación, participación y aprendizaje significativo, representando una alternativa didáctica eficaz y replicable en otros contextos similares.

Palabras claves: Habilidad escrita, idioma inglés, actividades lúdicas, sistema de talleres, enseñanza-aprendizaje, gamificación.

ABSTRACT

The present research project aimed to design and implement a system of workshops with playful activities to improve writing skills in English among tenth-grade students of Basic General Education in an educational institution in the city of Machala. The identified issue was the students' low performance in written English, attributed to traditional teaching methods, lack of motivation, and limited meaningful language practice. The proposal was grounded in the theoretical contributions of Dewey (1938), who advocated for experiential learning; Ausubel (1983), with this theory of meaningful learning; and Hymes (1971), who emphasized communicative competence as a core element in language instruction.

The research followed a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental design, involving a sample of 32 students. Theoretical methods (historical-logical, analytic-synthetic, systemic, and hypothetical-deductive) and empirical methods (observation and surveys) were used. The implemented system integrated playful activities targeting the linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions of writing, including language games, group dynamics, creative writing, and visual prompts.

The results showed a significant improvement in students' writing performance, particularly in linguistic and pragmatic aspects. However, the cognitive dimension showed more modest progress, highlighting the need to reinforce strategies that promote idea organization and critical thinking in future applications. It is concluded that playful workshops foster motivation, participation, and meaningful learning, offering an effective and replicable teaching alternative in similar educational contexts.

Keywords: Written skills, English language, play activities, workshop system, teaching-learning, gamification.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered one of the most complex skills that a human being must master (Cuertos, 1991; Kellogg, 1994). This complexity intensifies when writing in a second language, such as English, which has become the lingua franca of the current globalized world. Numerous international organizations, such as the United Nations and the European Union, have recognized the importance of promoting the learning of foreign languages, particularly English, as a key tool for Intercultural communication, cooperation, and sustainable development (European Commission, 2012; United Nations, 2015).

In this global context, the ability to write effectively in English has become a highly valued skill in the academic, professional, and cultural fields. However, teaching writing in a second language presents additional challenges, such as the transfer of linguistic knowledge, the organization of thought, and adaptation to the cultural conventions of the target language (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

These challenges have led to numerous research studies and innovative pedagogical approaches aimed at improving the teaching and learning of writing in English as a second language (Hyland, 2003; Manchon, 2009). In Latin America, several countries have implemented educational reforms to strengthen the teaching of English at all levels, recognizing the importance of preparing students for an increasingly globalized world (Barletta Manjarres, 2010; British Council, 2015).

In a study conducted by University students in Colombia, Candela Borja and Benavides Bilon (2020) demonstrated that playful strategies can strengthen educational skills such as writing. In their research, they implemented playful activities to improve students' spelling competence, achieving significant progress in writing, composing, and interpreting texts by

replacing traditional methods with dynamic and participatory approaches. This research opens a door to continue using playful methods to capture the interest of students, who today are more dynamic, and motivate them to embrace the learning process, not only with a new language but also in regular subjects.

On the other hand, Hernandez and Silva (2020) highlighted the impact of playful activities in teaching a second language, in this case, Spanish as a foreign language. In their research conducted in Brazil, they found that the use of playful pedagogical strategies not only increased students' enjoyment of the subject but also favored vocabulary acquisition and its application in real contexts. These results emphasize the transformative role of playful activities in language learning.

Regarding Ecuador, it can be affirmed that the Ministry of Education (2016) has made significant efforts to improve the quality of English language teaching in educational institutions, such as the implementation of teaching resources. However, despite these efforts, the reality in many educational institutions across the country reveals persistent challenges in the development of writing skills in English (Benitez & Benitez, 2021).

A study conducted in the province of Manabí, carried out by Candela and Benavides (2020), evidenced the impact of playful activities as strategic tools to foster meaningful learning among students at the Unidad Educativa Picoazá. This study highlighted how playful activities create pleasant and natural environments that develop skills, expand vocabulary and strengthen classroom interactions, while also engaging families in the school processes. Additionally, it was noted that these activities improve creativity, self-esteem and language development.

In the same vein, in the city of Machala, located in the province of El Oro, there are multiple General Basic Education schools with academic recognition. However, for this research,

an observation was carried out in a General Basic Education School, an educational institution known for its commitment to academic excellence. It was observed that students face difficulties and expressing themselves effectively in writing in a second language, specifically in English, due to poor writing skills, limited vocabulary in English, lack of interest in learning a new language, the absence of didactic or playful activities driven by the English teacher, and limited class hours that hinder students' writing improvement with the help and guidance of the English teacher. This is not the only institution that presents these deficiencies.

The central question of This research was: How can the writing ability in English of General Basic Education students be improved? The focus of the study was on the teaching-learning process of the English language in General Basic Education.

-Several potential causes were identified that could contribute to the problem, such as: traditional and unattractive teaching methodologies for students, lack of motivation and interest in English writing activities, limited use of innovative teaching resources and tools for teaching writing in English and insufficient practice and exercise of writing skills in English by students.

Consequently, the general objective of the research was to propose a system of workshops with playful activities to improve the writing skill in English of students in General Basic Education.

The objective is delimited in the field of action, which is playful teaching methods. To achieve the objective, the following specific objectives were set:

-Theoretically based on the use of playful activities for the development of writing skills in English for students in General Basic Education.

-Diagnose the current level of writing ability in English for students in General Basic Education.

-Design a workshop system with playful activities to improve writing skills in English for students in General Basic Education.

-Evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of a workshop system with playful activities in improving writing skills in English for students in General Basic Education.

These objectives are developed with the following scientific hypothesis: the implementation of a workshop system with playful activities will significantly improve the writing ability in English of students in General Basic Education.

According to the scientific hypothesis, the relationship between two variables is studied: The independent variable is the system of classes using playful activities, which is understood as a series of structured and interconnected activities intended to meet specific objectives based on a unit or a particular topic in the educational field. The dependent variable is writing ability in English, defined as the student's ability to write coherent and appropriate text in English within an academic context.

This scientific research is conducted from a quantitative methodological paradigm, with a pre-experimental design. Consequently, theoretical methods such as historical-logical, analytical-synthetic, systematic and hypothetical-deductive methods are used. Additionally, empirical methods such as observation and surveys will be employed.

The importance of this research is centered on the use of playful activities as a methodological strategy to develop writing skills in English, through a workshop system that aims to improve the writing performance of General Basic Education students using motivating and participatory techniques.

The practical contribution of this scientific research lies in the workshop system with playful activities for improving the writing ability in English of General Basic Education

students. This way, students can feel more engaged in the teaching and learning process of a second language, fostering a more dynamic and effective environment.

This scientific study is divided into four chapters: Chapter I: Theoretical Foundation of the Use of Playful Activities for the Development of Writing Skills in English as a Second Language, where the teaching learning process and the use of playful activities in developing writing skills in English are theoretically grounded. Chapter II: Methodological design for implementing a Workshop System with Playful Activities in Teaching English Writing, which includes the research design paradigm, as well as the theoretical and empirical methods and the description of the instruments. Chapter III: Design of a Workshop System with Playful Activities for Developing Writing Skills in English in Students in General Basic Education. Chapter IV: Evaluation of the Impact of Playful Activities on Writing Skills in English. It concludes with the findings and followed by the bibliography and annexes.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF USING PLAYFUL ACTIVITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE.

The theoretical framework of this research seeks to provide historical, conceptual, and contextual foundations of the teaching-learning process, specifically focused on the development of writing skills in English as a second language through the use of a workshop system with playful activities. This approach allows us to analyze how traditional pedagogical practices have evolved into more dynamic and participatory methodologies, adapting to the needs of students.

First, historical background highlights the evolution of learning and the integration of playful methods as pedagogical tools, from ancient civilizations to their implementation in English language teaching. Then, conceptual background offers a theoretical view of the main variables of this study: writing skills as a key language competence, and the workshop system with playful activities as an innovative means to improve it.

Finally, contextual background addresses the educational reality in institutions, emphasizing the need to implement playful strategies to overcome writing difficulties in English that students face.

1.1. Historical Background of the Use of Playful Methods in the Process of Teaching-Learning English.

The invention of writing marked a key milestone in the development of human civilization, transforming how knowledge was transmitted through time and space. According to authors like Jack Goody (1987) and Denise Schmandt-Besserat (1992), the emergence of writing was not an isolated process but a result of administrative, religious, and cultural needs that arose with the increasing complexity of early organized societies.

The origin of writing dates back to the civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, where the first systems appeared around 3000 BCE. However, Mesopotamia is considered by many researchers as the initial birthplace of writing, as the clay tablets found in Uruk, dated around 3300 BCE, are the oldest known evidence (Crawford, 2004). The cuneiform script, developed by the Sumerians, consists of symbols engraved with a triangular-tipped stylus on clay tablets, which were then baked to preserve them. This system allowed not only the recording of economic records but also the documentation of religious and everyday aspects, marking the beginning of written history.

From its origin in Mesopotamia, writing spread to other regions, developing various forms and functions. In Egypt, around the same time, hieroglyphs emerged, used mainly for religious and ceremonial purposes. Further east, in China, oracular writing on animal bones and turtle shells dates back to 1200 BCE, demonstrating a focus on the divine and ritual (Keightley, 2000). In Crete, Linear A writing, dating to around 1750 BCE, shows the early development of European systems. Similarly, in Central America, Olmec writing began around 900 BCE, reflecting how the need to record events transcended continents and cultures (Marcus, 1992).

A significant change occurred around 1500 BCE when the alphabetic system emerged in the Levant region, what is now Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan. This system, based on a small number of signs representing sounds, simplified writing by making it more accessible. According to DeFrancis (1989), the development of the alphabet was one of the most revolutionary advances, allowing the democratization of knowledge and facilitating the creation of literature, history, and science. Therefore, writing, from its most rudimentary forms to the complex alphabets we have today, has been a crucial tool in the construction and preservation of human

knowledge. Its evolution reflects cultural adaption to communication needs, contributing to the development of civilizations throughout history.

Evolution of Playfulness in Education: From Recreational to Pedagogical Playfulness, understood as the use of games in the learning process, has its roots in ancient times and has evolved through different stages of human history. Derived from the Latin term *Ludus*, meaning play, fun, or entertainment, its application in education has not only been a cultural constant but also a powerful tool for facilitating knowledge acquisition and the development of social, emotional, and cognitive skills (Huizinga, 1983).

- Different civilizations have conceptualized play in unique ways, reflecting its relevance in social traditions:
- Romans: Considered play as a plastic, lively, and creative activity associated with joy and revelry. According to classical authors like Cicero, *ludus* was an integral part of both leisure and value formation.
- Hebrews: For this culture, play was related to humor and laughter, seen as a way to create bonds and strengthen the community.
- Germans: In German tradition, it was associated with pleasure, understanding that enjoyment and fun are essential for human well-being and learning (Froebel, 1826).

Playfulness in Modern Pedagogy: From the 16th Century Onwards The 16th century marked a turning point when pedagogy began integrating playfulness as an essential means for teaching, especially in the formation of younger students. Educators like Juan Amós Comenius advocated that learning should be pleasurable, incorporating games and recreational activities to stimulate students' interest and active participation (Comenius, 1657). From a biological perspective, the "Expression Theory" proposed by Bernan Mason suggests that play has an

evolutionary function as an active organ, shaped by natural and social phenomena. This theory holds that playful activity allows individuals to develop the necessary competencies for adapting to the environment, favoring the comprehensive development of personality (Mason, 1904).

Play has been a constant sociocultural practice, passed down through generations as part of traditions and social practices. In Ancient Greece, philosophers like Plato and Aristotle emphasized the importance of play in forming character and intellectual development. Plato, in *The Republic*, argued that games were fundamental for education, allowing children to learn spontaneously, while Aristotle saw them as means to cultivate civic virtues.

In short, playfulness has evolved from being a simple form of entertainment to becoming a fundamental educational tool. Its ability to connect emotional, social, and cognitive aspects makes it an indispensable resource in modern teaching, adapting to the needs of each era and culture.

Furthermore, the relationship between playfulness and the teaching of writing has been constructed throughout history, evolving from a philosophical perspective to being supported by contemporary studies. Since the 17th century, John Locke emphasized the importance of learning through experience, proposing that language acquisition through conversation was more effective than traditional grammatical approaches. This practical and dynamic method would later resonate in the theories of John Dewey, who argued that “experience represents the initial stage of thought,” consolidating the foundation of playfulness as a pedagogical tool. Dewey believed that learning should be participatory, allowing students to actively engage in their educational process (Dewey, 1938).

Over the centuries, playfulness has gone from being an intuitive practice to a well-founded educational strategy. From Locke’s and Dewey’s postulates to recent studies, play has

become an effective tool for enriching the teaching-learning process in a comprehensive way. In modern times, studies like those by Nunes (2002) confirm that the proper use of playfulness significantly impacts learning, promoting not only technical knowledge but also critical thinking, values, and interpersonal relationships. According to this approach, play becomes a bridge between skill acquisition and socialization, allowing students to engage emotionally and cognitively.

Regarding the use of playful strategies in the classroom, Miranda and Medina (2020) affirm that they constitute a set of procedures, activities, techniques, and methods that the teacher uses to boost the educational process. These strategies integrate group dynamics, role-playing games, dramatizations, and other creative activities, promoting a more fun, motivating, and collaborative learning environment within a framework of respect for rules.

In the context of teaching specific skills like writing, Camps et al. (2007) highlight the importance of integrating this practice in real and meaningful contexts. This approach implies that students internalize spelling rules through practical activities. Complementing this perspective, Caicedo et al. (2016) argue that playful tools attract and motivate students, facilitating the retention of spelling rules and developing linguistic skills effectively and entertainingly.

Additionally, Cepeda (2017) concluded that play not only improves spelling skills but also fosters communication, decision-making, and problem-solving during social interaction. This shows how playfulness prepares students to face challenges in a collaborative and creative way, promoting meaningful and lasting learning.

In the context of teaching English, authors like Negrete (2024) mention that linguistic games such as crosswords, word games, role-playing games, creative writing activities, and

grammar games are useful tools for improving skills in a fun and meaningful way. Incorporating these games into the classroom contributes to a more dynamic and practical learning experience.

Some examples of useful playful methods to teach writing in English include:

- Finish the story: Presenting incomplete story fragments for students to develop an ending, using their creativity and imagination while practicing idea structuring.

- Creative Dice meaning: Using customized dice with words, images or categories related to the topic's vocabulary to create short stories and encourage practical language use.

- Chain Writing: Each student writes an initial sentence and passes it to a classmate, who adds a new sentence to continue the narrative, promoting collaboration and teamwork.

- Visual Stories: Presenting images that inspire students to write descriptive narratives.

- Story Detective: Solving a mystery using written clues on cards, stimulating logical reasoning and critical thinking.

Throughout history, the teaching-learning process has shifted from rigid, traditional methods to more interactive and participatory approaches, such as the use of playful strategies. From early civilizations using play as a learning tool to contemporary approaches emphasizing its pedagogical relevance, playfulness has proven to be an effective tool for fostering motivation, creativity, and meaningful learning.

In the context of teaching English, the historical evolution of these methodologies highlights the importance of integrating practices that not only develop language skills but also stimulate critical thinking and social interaction. These historical backgrounds underscore the need to adapt educational methods to current demands, prioritizing innovative strategies like playful workshops to enrich the teaching-learning process and improve students' competencies in a globalized world.

1.2. Conceptual Referential Background on the Use of Playful Methods in the English Teaching-Learning Process.

1.2.1. Pedagogical Characterization of the English Teaching-Learning Process.

The teaching-learning process is defined as a systematic interaction between teachers and students, aimed at facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values that contribute to the holistic development of individuals. According to Álvarez (1992), this process combines educational and instructional aspects to solve social problems through cultural appropriation and active student participation. Zilberstein (2002) expands on this perspective by emphasizing that the process involves organized activity that fosters socialization and the construction of values in a dynamic and participatory environment.

From a cognitive perspective, Manzano (2007) defines the teaching-learning process as an activity that integrates thought and language, activating both internal and external processes of the individual. In this framework, Ausebel's (1983) meaningful learning becomes relevant, as it enables students to relate new concepts to their prior knowledge, creating coherent and lasting cognitive structures (Latorre, 2017). This means that the English teaching-learning process is based on several pedagogical theories and approaches that aim to optimize the learning of the foreign language.

One of the most important educational methods is the communicative approach, which focuses on communication and the use of language in real-life situations. The basis of this approach is the idea that effective communication is fundamental for language learning, as it develops both communication and linguistic competencies.

The teaching of the English language, considered key in the current global context, has evolved significantly through various methods and pedagogical approaches. According to Perez

(2010), the English teaching process involves not only the acquisition of linguistic skills but also the development of communicative competencies. This approach seeks to integrate listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing in a holistic process that promotes fluency and effectiveness in communication.

Authors like Byrne (1989) and Canale (1980) emphasize that English teaching should focus on developing communicative skills through the integration of linguistic and contextual components. Littlewood (1981) points out that these skills include knowledge of grammatical structures, functional vocabulary, and the ability to express social and functional meanings. In educational practice, methods have shifted from traditional approaches, such as the grammar-translation method, to communicative approaches that prioritize interaction and practical language use (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Currently, the communicative approach stands as a model that promotes active and contextualized learning, facilitating the acquisition of language in real and meaningful situations.

The development of communicative skills in English is essential for students' academic and professional performance. According to research by Daquina (1994) and Pérez (2010), the implementation of integrative strategies, such as designing exercises that combine linguistic and communicative skills, significantly improves language learning. These strategies allow students to progress gradually from basic levels to advanced competencies, fostering cognitive independence and creative language use.

Motivation and active student participation are crucial factors in this process. According to Deci and Ryan (2000), intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play a fundamental role in learning. Intrinsic motivation, which refers to the desire to engage in an activity for the pleasure and

satisfaction it brings, is particularly important in language learning, as it fosters greater involvement and persistence on the part of the student.

In this context, Reeve's (2012) self-determination theory suggests that educators can enhance student engagement by offering opportunities for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, allowing students to personalize their learning experiences. This is especially relevant in English teaching, where personalization and adaptation to individual needs can make a significant difference in learning outcomes (Reeve, 2012).

1.2.2. Didactic Characterization of the Use of Playful Methods in Teaching.

The use of playful methods in English teaching has gained recognition for its ability to make learning more engaging and effective. Playful learning, defined as the incorporation of game elements into the educational process, seeks to enhance student motivation and involvement. Rice (2009) emphasized that this approach promotes “creativity, motivation, and active participation”, essential elements for meaningful learning.

Candela and Benavides (2020) state: “Playful activities are a powerful ally in fostering meaningful learning. Play is a way of living everyday life, experiencing pleasure and valuing what happens by perceiving it as an act of physical, spiritual, or mental satisfaction” (p. 78). This perspective highlights how games can transform the educational environment into a more stimulating and meaningful space for students.

Furthermore, gamification, which involves applying game elements and principles in non-playful contexts, is an effective strategy in this regard. Kapp (2012) argues that gamification can transform traditional learning into “a more dynamic and motivating experience,” facilitating the acquisition of skills and knowledge through fun and challenges.

Game-based learning (GBL) uses games as the primary teaching tools. Mayo (2009) argues that this approach can effectively develop cognitive and social skills, providing students with an “interactive and entertaining” way to achieve learning objectives. This approach not only improves knowledge retention but also fosters the development of critical skills such as problem-solving and collaboration.

Solis Garcia (2018) asserts that play is essential for cognitive, social, and emotional development in children, defining play as “a spontaneous and fun activity that promotes natural learning”. This principle is effectively applied in English teaching, where games can facilitate comprehension and language use in various contexts.

1.2.3. The Development of Writing Expression Skills.

Writing skills are one of the most complex language competencies, as they involve not only mastery of grammatical and orthographic rules but also the ability to organize ideas, develop arguments, and adapt language to different purposes and audiences. In the context of second language teaching, the development of this skill requires pedagogical strategies that integrate linguistic, cognitive, and pragmatic aspects, allowing students to communicate their thoughts clearly and coherently.

Various authors have addressed the importance of writing as a means of expression and knowledge construction. This section will analyze the main definitions and theoretical approaches to the development of writing skills in order to understand the factors that influence their acquisition and how these can be enhanced through the use of playful workshops designed to improve writing in English.

Writing skills are a crucial competence in learning English, as they enable students to express ideas clearly and accurately. Strunk and White (2000) describe effective writing as

“clear, concise, and precise,” advocating for economy of language and proper use of grammar and style. This approach is fundamental for English learners; as good writing not only facilitates communication but also reflects a solid command of the language.

Pinker, S. (2014) adds that good writing must communicate ideas “clearly and accessible”, using precise and evocative language. He highlights the importance of understanding the psychology of the reader, which is crucial for English learners, who must learn to adapt their writing for different audiences and purposes. Clark, A. (2006) considers writing as an “effective communication process” that involves a series of strategies and tools that writers can learn and apply to improve their skills. In the context of English learning, these strategies include planning, drafting, and revising, all of which are essential for developing strong writing competence.

Kellogg and Raulerson (2007) emphasize the importance of deliberate practice in the development of writing skills, noting that “deliberate practice has been proven highly effective in training performance on related tasks, such as typing (one motor output for writing), chess (another planning-intensive task), and music (another creative production task)” (p. 237). This approach highlights the need for structured and conscious practice to improve writing competence. Deliberate practice involves not just repeating a task, but doing so with the intention of improving specific aspects, which requires focus, feedback, and continuous adjustments.

In the case of writing, this refers to identifying particular weaknesses, such as text organization, appropriate vocabulary use, or grammatical correction, and working on them through exercises that challenge the writer to improve constantly. Moreover, deliberate practice is not limited to mechanical repetition but involves a critical analysis of the mistakes made and the application of strategies to avoid them in future tasks.

Therefore, Kellogg and Raulerson (2007) emphasize that this type of practice has proven highly effective in various fields, such as typing, chess, and music, which also require a high degree of planning, creativity, and precision. Thus, writing, like these disciplines, benefits from continuous attention to detail and concentrated effort to perfect the skill over time.

This approach also highlights the importance of feedback in the improvement process, where writers can identify areas of opportunity and work on them in a focused manner. In English teaching, deliberate practice might involve specific tasks that challenge students to write texts with more complex structures, improve the coherence of their ideas, or employ more precise vocabulary, contributing to their development as competent and autonomous writers.

In the structuralist approach, the emphasis on grammar and structure provides an essential foundation for students to master the formal elements of language. According to Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), language can be analyzed as an autonomous system, where syntax, morphology, and lexicon interact to form meaningful units. This approach is particularly useful for writing, as it allows learners to understand how linguistic rules structure texts and contribute to their clarity and coherence. However, as Hymes (1971) and Richards and Rodgers (1995) point out, exclusive emphasis on structure may limit students' ability to apply this knowledge in real communication contexts.

Thus, the communicative approach arises as a necessary complement, prioritizing the functionality of language in practical situations. This approach, which centers on communicative competence, enables students not only to write correctly but also adapt their texts to different contexts, purposes, and audiences. In the English teaching-learning process, activities such as writing texts for specific purposes (e.g., essays, letters, or narratives) are essential for connecting grammatical theory with practical use.

Based on the entire literature review conducted, the authors of this work consider that the writing skill consists of:

Linguistics.

Linguistics, understood as the scientific study of language, has been conceptualized from different approaches over time, each contributing key elements to understand its nature and its applications in the teaching and learning of second languages.

Ferdinand de Saussure, in his work *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), laid the foundations of structuralism by defining language as an autonomous system composed of phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic subsystems. Saussure introduced two essential concepts: *langue*, as the system shared by a community, and *parole*, as the individual use of language. This distinction allowed for a scientific analysis of language, separating its internal structure from external factors such as the social context. According to Perez (2020), citing Saussure (1916), “language is defined by its internal relations and not by external influences, which makes it an autonomous system of signs”; this synchronic perspective contributed to the development of methodologies focused on the grammatical mastery of a language.

Noam Chomsky, in contrast to Saussure, expanded the field of linguistics by focusing on the innate capacity of humans to acquire language. His theory of generative grammar posits that linguistic competence is a set of mental rules that allows the speaker to produce and understand an infinite number of sentences. This view became the foundation for numerous studies on second language acquisition. Lopez (2021), citing Chomsky, (1965) highlights that generative grammar emphasizes the role of language as an innate faculty, leading to the development of

methodological approaches centered on discovering patterns and underlying structures of language.

However, criticism of these purely structural and formal approaches gave rise to more functional and pragmatic proposals. Hymes (1971) introduced the concept of communicative competence, which considers the use of language in real contexts as a fundamental aspect of learning. Unlike Chomsky, Hymes argued that linguistic competence is not enough; speakers must be able to use the language appropriately in specific social situations.

This approach has been key in the development of language teaching, as it prioritizes learning in authentic and meaningful environments. According to Martínez (2019, citing Hymes, 1971), the communicative approach transforms the classroom into a space of constant interaction, where language stops being a mere structure and becomes an effective communication tool.

The Association for Language Awareness (ALA) presents a more metacognitive perspective through the concept of Language Awareness, which focuses on explicit knowledge of language and critical reflection on its use. This approach stands out for combining formal language analysis with contextual and pragmatic understanding. According to Bolitho et al. (2003, cited by Gonzalez, 2020), Language Awareness fosters student autonomy by allowing them to discover and analyze the language themselves, leading to deeper and more lasting learning.

Finally, Hawkins (1984) emphasizes that Language Awareness not only improves language comprehension but also develops cognitive and critical skills. Constant reflection on language allows students to adapt to different communicative contexts and solve linguistic problems autonomously. Garcia (2022, citing Hawkins, 1984) emphasizes that this approach

contributes to the formation of autonomous learners who can continue practicing the language outside the classroom, ensuring sustained long-term learning.

Through its various currents and approaches, linguistics offers a comprehensive understanding of language, from its internal structure to its use in social contexts. The contributions of classical authors, reinterpreted by recent researchers, highlight the importance of integrating both structural analysis and critical reflection in the teaching-learning process. These concepts are fundamental for designing pedagogical strategies that promote meaningful learning, especially in the development of skills like writing in English.

In the context of this research, an integrative definition of linguistics is proposed:

Linguistics is the systematic study of language that encompasses both its internal structure (grammar, phonology, morphology, and syntax) and its use in real communicative contexts.

From an applied perspective, linguistics not only seeks to describe and explain language but also to offer practical tools for its teaching and learning, fostering critical reflection, communicative competence, and the development of autonomous linguistic skills.

This definition reflects the need for a balanced pedagogical approach, where the structure of language is taught explicitly but always in terms of its practical and meaningful use. When applying this concept in playful workshops, it is expected that students will not only improve their writing ability but also develop metalinguistic, cognitive, and pragmatic skills that allow them to use English effectively in various contexts.

Cognitive.

The cognitive aspect constitutes a central element in learning, encompassing the mental processes through which students acquire, comprehend, and apply knowledge in different

educational contexts. This concept has been defined and developed by various authors over time, who have highlighted the relevance of cognitive skills such as attention, memory, and reasoning.

According to Alonso, Gallego, and Honey (2006), learning styles reflect internal processes of perception and thought that determine how a student approaches an academic task. These styles are directly linked to the cognitive area, as they influence how the learner organizes and processes information.

On the other hand, Gonzalez and Sanchez (2016) suggest that cognition relates to the student's ability to develop critical skills that allow them to not only memorize aspects but also apply them in practical situations. In this sense, they emphasize that meaningful learning occurs when the student can integrate new information into pre-existing cognitive structures.

Within the same framework, Chiang, Larenas, and Pizarro (2016) affirm that cognitive processes not only intervene in the retention of knowledge but also in its interpretation and use in different contexts. The authors maintain that teaching that promotes these abilities allows students to improve their academic performance and develop a deeper understanding of the content.

Tocci (2015) adds that learning styles, based on individual cognitive differences, significantly influence academic success. Each student, says Tocci, uses personal strategies to process information, which demonstrates the diversity of cognitive approaches in the classroom.

From the previous definitions, it is evident that the cognitive area is not limited to a single approach but encompasses a variety of mental processes fundamental for learning. Cognitive styles and strategies play a crucial role in how students face and solve problems, highlighting the need to design pedagogical strategies that enhance these abilities.

In the context of this research, the cognitive element *is defined as the set of mental processes that facilitate the acquisition and application of knowledge, including skills such as attention, memory, and critical reasoning*. This approach is essential in the development of academic competencies, as it allows students to effectively and autonomously integrate knowledge into various learning situations.

Pragmatic.

Pragmatics, understood as the study of the use of language in specific contexts, has become an essential component in the learning of a second language. This approach not only addresses the literal meaning of statements but also the meaning that emerges in concrete situations.

First, according to Reyes (2013, citing Grice, 1975), pragmatics focuses on how speakers interpret and produce statements based on the context, which involves processes of inference and cooperation between interlocutors. This author emphasizes that “pragmatic competence is, by definition, the ability to make inferences based on principles of general rationality”.

On the other hand, Savignon (1983, cited by Murillo, 2004) argues that, in addition to grammatical competence, learning a second language should include communicative competence, understood as a dynamic concept that depends on the interaction and negotiation of meaning between speakers. In this sense, pragmatics plays a crucial role in the development of communicative competence by enabling students to understand and use language effectively in different situations.

Complementarily, Escandell (1996, cited by Reyes, 2013) defines pragmatics as “the study of the principles that regulate the use of language in communication, considering both the use of a statement by the speaker and its interpretation by the listener.” This definition highlights

the interactive nature of language, where statements acquire meaning through the speaker's intention and the listener's expectations.

From an educational perspective, Murillo (2024) emphasizes the importance of integrating the pragmatic component into second language curricula, arguing that explicit teaching of pragmatic strategies allows students to manage complex communicative situations effectively. This author concludes that, while there are methodological approaches that promote pragmatic learning, further research on its application in the classroom is still needed.

From the definitions provided, it is clear that pragmatics is fundamental for the development of advanced communicative competencies in a second language. By integrating the study of context, speaker intention, and the social norms implicit in communication, students not only learn to use language correctly but also adapt it to various situations, ensuring effective and appropriate interaction.

In the context of this research, *pragmatics is defined as the set of skills that allow students to interpret and produce statements appropriate to specific contexts*, taking into account factors such as the speaker's intention, social norms, and situational context. This element is key to the development of communicative competence, as it promotes the flexible and adaptive use of language, essential in real-world interaction environments.

In the framework of the teaching-learning process, the linguistic, cognitive, and pragmatic areas are fundamental pillars for the development of communicative competencies in a second language. Linguistics, focused on mastering the formal structures of language, provides a solid foundation for understanding and producing coherent and precise messages.

Meanwhile, the cognitive aspect, which addresses the mental processes involved in acquiring knowledge, such as attention, memory, and reasoning, promotes meaningful and

autonomous learning. Finally, pragmatics emphasizes the importance of adapting language to different communicative contexts, allowing students to interact effectively in real situations.

The integration of these elements into innovative pedagogical strategies, such as playful workshops, not only ensures more comprehensive teaching but also fosters interest, motivation, and the development of practical skills in students. In this way, dynamic and contextualized learning is promoted, in which students not only acquire technical knowledge but also develop a deep understanding of the language and its social uses.

Moreover, deliberate practice, as described by Kellogg and Raulerson (2007), is reinforced through these workshops, as students receive constant and personalized feedback, identify specific areas for improvement, and work on them progressively. This approach not only enhances their technical competence but also fosters their autonomy and confidence as writers.

In summary, the development of writing skills in English requires a multifaceted approach that combines linguistic, cognitive, and pragmatic elements. The integration of solid theoretical approaches with playful strategies and deliberate practice provides an effective foundation for students to not only learn to write but also enjoy the process of doing so, becoming competent and creative communicators in a global language.

1.3. Contextual Background on the Use of Playful Methods in the English Teaching-Learning Process

1.3.1. Context of the use of playful methods in the English Teaching-Learning Process

The teaching of English in basic general education has undergone significant transformations in recent years, particularly with the integration of modern methodologies that facilitate effective learning. Globally, bilingual education is recognized as essential for students to achieve fluency in English, not only for academic purposes but also to integrate into a

globalized labor market. Consequently, many Educational Systems have adopted student-centered communicative approaches, promoting a more interactive and practical learning experience.

In Ecuador, the Ministry of Education has implemented reforms and programs aimed at improving the quality of English teaching at the basic and high school levels. According to the official curriculum, learning English is mandatory from the early years of basic education until the completion of high school. This has led to the implementation of educational policies that include ongoing teacher training, the updating of teaching materials, and the introduction of classroom technologies. These measures aim to help students develop linguistic competencies that enable them to understand and produce the language effectively while using it as a tool for intercultural communication.

However, significant challenges remain that affect the quality of education, particularly in schools located in less urbanized areas, where resources are limited and teacher training is not always adequate to address current demands. Additionally, the lack of real-life contexts to practice the language outside the classroom impacts student's motivation, hindering the consolidation of acquired skills.

In the city of Machala, province of El Oro, this situation is evident. While some schools have incorporated playful methods and extra-curricular activities to make learning more dynamic, discrepancies in teaching quality persist due to factors such as resource availability and teacher training levels.

In this context, various studies have explored innovative strategies to improve English teaching. Pinto and Rivera (2024) conducted a study at the Nueve de Octubre High School, implementing a system of classes based on collaborative learning to enhance English writing

skills. Using a quantitative approach and cross-sectional design, they employed collaborative techniques to address difficulties related to idea organization, appropriate vocabulary usage and grammatical accuracy. The results demonstrated significant improvement and highlighted the effectiveness of dynamic and participatory approaches in teaching writing.

Similarly, Ajila and Veliz (2024) investigated the use of printed teaching resources to improve the writing of irregular verbs in tenth-grade basic education students. This study, also conducted at the Nueve de Octubre High School, employed an experimental design with pre-test and post-test assessments, revealing notable improvements in student performance. It underscored the importance of teaching materials tailored to the specific context and needs of learners.

Both studies are fundamental to the present research. Pinto and Rivera (2024) emphasize how collaborative techniques enhance idea organization and the precise use of vocabulary and grammar, promoting dynamic and motivating group learning. Meanwhile, Ajila and Veliz (2024) highlight the positive impact of printed teaching resources in addressing specific aspects, such as irregular verbs, facilitating the comprehension and application of complex linguistic rules.

Nevertheless, these studies present limitations that this proposal seeks to address. Pinto and Rivera (2024) focus exclusively on collaborative activities, whereas this research will expand the approach by combining group and individual dynamics through a system of playful activities that integrates linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic aspects. Furthermore, unlike the work of Ajila and Veliz (2024), which focuses on a specific writing component, this proposal will consider a comprehensive evaluation of skills such as coherence, cohesion and text adequacy in real life contexts.

In this regard, the present research aims not only to build on the findings of these contributions but also to complement them by exploring how a playful and integrated approach can enhance English writing skills and Basic General Education students. This will allow the proposal of an innovative pedagogical model that addresses the challenges of the local educational context while providing replicable strategies for other institutions with similar characteristics.

1.3.2. Diagnosis of the current level of writing in the tenth year parallel “C”.

This section presents the results of the interview with the teacher, as well as the data obtained from the pre-test applied to tenth grade parallel “C” students. The written diagnostic test was administered to 32 students between 13 and 15 years of age, with an A1+ level and without a structured background in English. Of the total number of participants, 25 were male and 7 were female, all in their third year of secondary school. The assessment was organized into four sections: Vocabulary, Grammar, Functional writing and Semi-free writing, which respond to the theoretical dimensions of linguistics pragmatics and cognition respectively.

To complement these quantitative data, it was considered essential to include the perception of the English teacher, as their direct experience enriches the interpretation of the initial findings. The main results obtained from the interview are presented below:

According to the results of the interview with the English teacher, 10th grade students in parallel “C” have difficulties in the appropriate use of basic grammatical structures, such as the verb *to be*. However, they show an acceptable command of vocabulary related to the topics covered in class, as the correct use of high frequency words and their spelling, students demonstrate limited knowledge, which reflects a low level of command of this aspect of the linguistic component.

From a cognitive perspective, the teacher indicates that students are able to organize sentences in a logical and coherent sequence. They also managed to include relevant ideas related to the requested topic and use basic connectors such as *and*, *but* or *because*; which are appropriately to link ideas. These skills reflect an acceptable level of internal text structure and basic coherence. However, in the pragmatic dimension, the teacher mentions that the students are still unable to produce short texts with a specific communicative purpose, such as *introducing themselves* or *describing their daily routine*. In addition, they do not master the use of formal or informal language and are not completely deficient, they still do not reach an adequate level to communicate clearly and effectively.

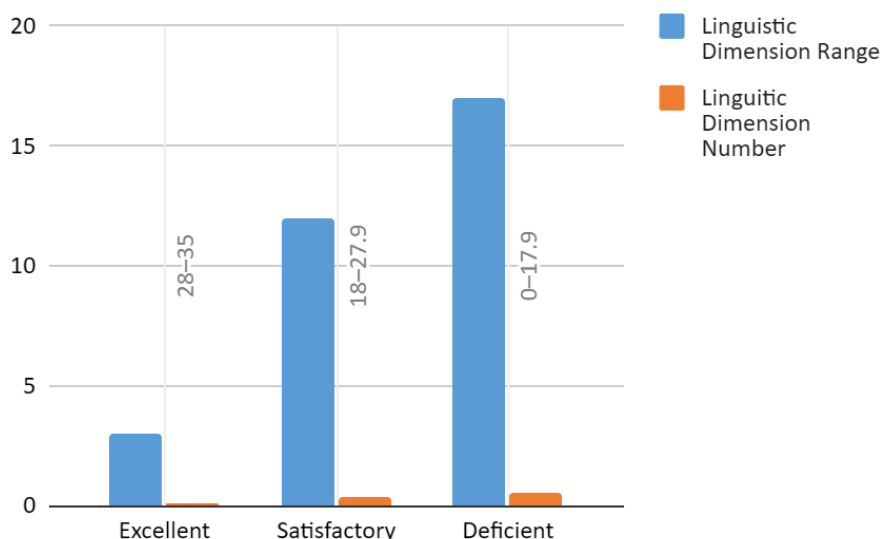
In writing in the open-ended questions, the teacher highlights as a strength that, when dealing with topics focused on writing, the students managed to grasp some structures adequately. However, he mentions as a significant weakness the fear that many of them feel towards the subject, both when writing and when expressing themselves orally, which affects their performance. As an effective strategy, the teacher suggests the use of short texts with topics that are attractive to students, as well as the inclusion of educational games to encourage interest and active participation.

These observations coincide with Harmer (2004), who argues that fear and lack of confidence are common barriers to the acquisition of written skills in a second language. He therefore proposes integrating playful and motivating activities that connect with students' interests and promote a more relaxed and effective learning environment.

Along with the teacher's perceptions, the results of the written pre-test were analyzed, the purpose of which was to identify more precisely the strengths and weaknesses of the group in the

different dimensions of the theoretical approach. The findings corresponding to the linguistic cognitive and pragmatic dimensions in the overall results are detailed below:

Dimension 1: Linguistics



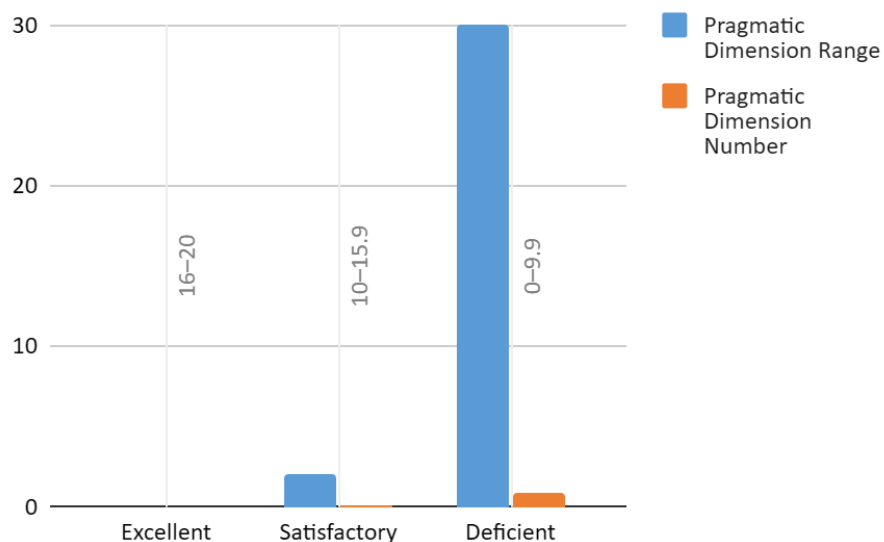
In the linguistic Dimensions which consists of the vocabulary and grammar sections, the participants' performance in the vocabulary section showed relatively more positive results. Of the 32 students evaluated, 6 (18.75%), achieved excellent performance, while 12 (37.505%) were in the satisfactory range and 14 (43.75%) were at a deficient level.

Likewise, in the grammar section, 5 students (15.63%), were identified as achieving a high level, 12 (37.50%), a medium level and 15 (46.87%) remained at a low level.

As can be seen, although it is the best performing dimension with almost 50% of the total of achievements between high and medium levels, the majority of students still ranked at low levels (51%), indicating a partial understanding of basic structures and a limited vocabulary.

As Chomsky (1965) states, linguistic competence is the basis of language knowledge, but it is not sufficient on its own. Richard and Schmidt (2002) add that, at A1 levels, a basic familiarity with simple structures is expected which is not yet consolidated in this group.

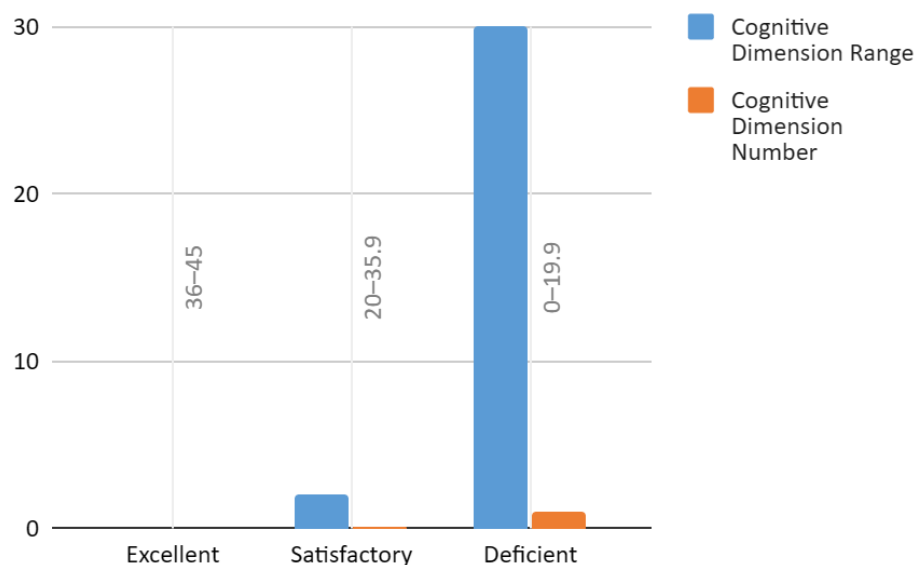
Dimension 2: Cognitive



In the cognitive dimension, consisting of the semi-free writing section, the participants' performance level shows less encouraging results. In this section, only 2 (6.25%) of the 32 students reached a satisfactory level, while the other 30 (93.75%) obtained deficient results, which shows significant difficulties in structuring ideas or producing comprehensible texts, even with models or guides.

According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence includes pragmatic skills necessary to adapt language to context. This is in the line with Hymes (1972): grammatical knowledge does not guarantee effective language use.

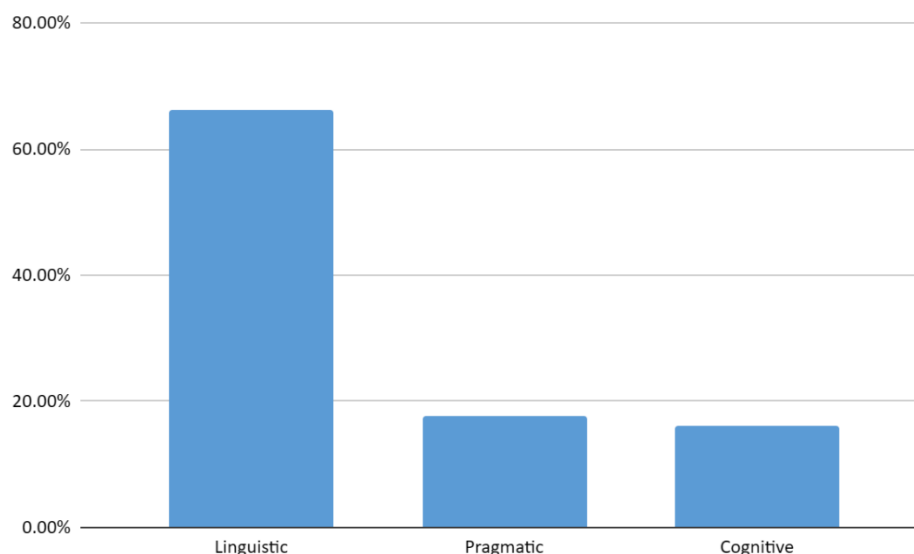
Dimension 3: Pragmatics



In the pragmatic dimension, which consists of the functional section, as in the previous dimension, the results show that participants have serious difficulties organizing and developing ideas in English, even with models. The vast majority do not exceed the minimum level, revealing an urgent need for strategies focused on guided writing, text planning and cognitive language development.

Cassidy (2006) points out that teaching writing is teaching how to construct meaning. For his part, Vygotsky (1978) proposes that the cognitive development of language occurs through interaction and requires systematic support.

Overall results



The results obtained in the pre-test show a low overall performance level in the three dimensions assessed: linguistic, pragmatic and cognitive. These data reflect the initial conditions of the group before the pedagogical intervention based on playful workshops.

The linguistic dimension, which covers vocabulary and grammar, showed the highest achievement percentage, with 66.17%. This suggests that the students had some familiarity with basic English language structures, although their mastery remained limited. Difficulties were observed in the correct application of grammatical rules and in the appropriate selection of vocabulary, which had a negative impact on the quality of written production.

In contrast, the pragmatic dimension, related to the functional use of language in communicative context, achieved only 17.63% achievement. This low performance reveals serious difficulties in using English for basic communicative functions, such as greeting, asking for information, describing or expressing needs. Most students were unable to construct written messages with a clear communicative intent, even when provided with models or support structures.

Finally, the cognitive dimensions, which focuses on coherence, planning and organization of ideas in semi-free writing tasks, presented the most critical level, with only 16.20% achievement. This indicates a marked difficulty in structuring texts with internal logic, adequate sequencing of ideas and minimal cohesion, which significantly limits the group's ability to produce comprehensible and coherent texts. These results underscore the urgent need to implement playful strategies aimed at the comprehensive development of linguistic, pragmatic and cognitive dimensions in order to improve students' English writing skills.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK.

This chapter describes the methodological elements underpinning this research. It addresses fundamental aspects such as the paradigm and type of study, the methodological design, the population and sample, as well as the data collection techniques and instruments.

2.1 Research Paradigm and Type of Research

This research is framed within the quantitative paradigm, which is characterized by the use of objective and systematic techniques for the collection and analysis of numerical data, with the aim of identifying patterns, establishing causal relationships and generalizing the results from a representative sample. This approach allows for accurate measurement of the variables under study, which contributes to obtaining verifiable and replicable results. As for the type of research, a pre-experimental experimental design is adopted, specifically with a single study group to which a pre-test and post-test are applied.

This modality allows the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable to be observed by comparing the results before and after the intervention, although without the rigorousness of a control group. Despite its limitations, this type of design provides a solid basis for assessing the influence of the treatment applied in a real educational context.

2.2. Population

The study population consisted of a group of approximately 32 students between the ages of 13 and 15 belonging to the tenth year of General basic education at an educational institution located in the city of Machala, Ecuador. This group was intentionally selected, considering its accessibility and relevance to the research objectives as it is a single class section where we will work directly with all the students in it.

2.3. Research Methods

Scientific research methods are the foundation on which the researcher structures support and validates their study. Through them, “the scientific method is a rigorous systematic and empirical process seemed a data collection and objective analysis of reality” (Hernandez-Sampieri, Fernandez-Collado, & Baptista-Lucio, 2014, p. 23).

In this way, the most suitable techniques are selected to acquire knowledge of both the field and the object of research, with the aim of testing the hypothesis and solving the problem posed.

The research methodology or design, on the other hand, is conceived as “the general plan for the collection, measurement and analysis of data that will guide each phase of the study” (Creswell, 2014, p. 3), establishing in a coordinated manner the tasks and procedures that guarantee the rigour and coherence of the research process.

2.3.1 *Theoretical Methods*

Theoretical methods play an essential role in scientific research, as they allow for the in-depth conceptualization and explanation of the object of study through the analysis of specialized bibliographic information. Thanks to this approach, the researcher can generate new knowledge, based on the historical background and critical treatment of sources, thus strengthening the theoretical rigour of their work (Quivy & Van Campenhoudt, 1998). In this way, theoretical methods not only enrich the problem statement and conceptual framework, but also facilitate the collection of evidence that supports the testing of hypotheses or the resolution of scientific questions.

The theoretical methods used in this research are described below:

Historical-Logical Method.

The historical-logical method focuses on analyzing the evolution of the object of study over time, considering the qualitative changes it has undergone and highlighting the laws or patterns that govern its development. According to Quivy and Van Campenhoudt (1998), this method “allows us to understand social processes or phenomena in their historical dynamics, recognizing moments of continuity and rupture” (p. 83).

Within the framework of this research, the historical-logical method is used to carry out a detailed literature review, identifying the background, transformations and current trends in the teaching and learning of English and basic education. This makes it possible to justify the observed changes and to support the findings theoretically.

Hypothetico-Deductive Method.

The hypothetico-deductive method is a key tool in the construction of scientific knowledge, as it allows for the formulation of substantiated conjectures and their testing. As Popper (2002) indicates, the procedure is based on the formulation of hypotheses as tentative answers to observed problems, which are then subjected to empirical tests to be corroborated or refuted (p. 25).

In this research, the hypothetical-deductive method is used to formulate hypotheses related to difficulties in learning English and then to evaluate their validity based on data collection and analysis of the hypothesis data analysis. This not only confirms or rejects a hypothesis, but also builds solid explanations for the phenomenon under study.

Analytical-Synthetic Method.

The Analytical-synthetic method is fundamental to understanding both the parts and the whole of the phenomenon under investigation. This procedure involves, firstly, the

decomposition of the object into its basic elements (analysis) and, secondly, the integration of these elements to form an overall picture (synthesis). Kumar (2019) states that this method #consists of breaking down the components of a phenomenon to examine them in depth and then reconstructing the whole, establishing significant relationships” (p. 55).

Applied to the present research, the analytical-synthetic method is used to study individually the factors that influence the English teaching-learning process, and subsequently, to integrate these findings to explain the phenomenon in an integrated way. The study is complete and articulated, generating conclusions that respond precisely to the problem posed.

Systemic Approach.

The systemic approach, within the framework of the theoretical method, offers a holistic perspective for analyzing educational phenomena as systems made up of interrelated elements that interact dynamically. According to Von Bertalanffy (1969), a system is defined as “a set of organized parts working towards a common goal”. Similarly, Bunge (1979) argues that this approach facilitates the understanding of complex structures by analyzing the relationships between their components.

In this research, the systemic approach is applied in the design and implementation of a system of workshops with playful activities aimed at improving writing competence in English. This approach enables writing to be approached as a holistic process involving linguistic, cognitive and contextualized dimensions. Consequently, the proposed activities are not considered isolated actions, but rather articulated parts of a coherent pedagogical system whose purpose is to promote meaningful and functional development of writing skills.

2.3.2 Empirical -Level Methods.

Empirical methods are fundamental tools in scientific research, as they facilitate the collection of observable and verifiable data directly from reality. According to Tamayo (2004), empirical methods allow phenomena to be studied in their natural context through direct and indirect observation. Similarly, Hurtado de Barrera (2010) argues that these methods are procedures aimed at collecting, measuring and analyzing data based on experience, which are necessary to build grounded knowledge.

On the other hand, Hernandez Sampieri, Fernandez Collado and Baptista (2014) highlights that the empirical method involves the use of techniques such as observation, survey, interview and measurement to obtain direct information from the object of study. Complementing this perspective, Sabino (2002) affirms that empirical research must be based on sensitive and verifiable data, so that the results are replicable and can be tested in similar situations.

In the present study, the empirical methods of observation and measurement were used:

Observation.

Observation is an essential technique in empirical research, as it allows us to capture the behaviour of subjects in their natural environment without modifying it. According to Sampieri, Collado and Baptista (2014), “observation consists of the systematic, valid and valid record, reliable observation of behaviors or overt behaviours”. Likewise, Anguera (1992) defines observation as “the research procedure that is used to describe behavior without directly intervening in it, being systematic and controlled”.

In this research, **participant observation** will be applied, in which the researcher is inserted in the context of the play workshops, collecting first-hand information about the students' writing skills in real classroom activities.

Measurement.

According to Mendoza and Garza (2009) measurement is a fundamental activity that seeks to give meaning to the process of observing people, objects or other aspects of reality. This statement emphasizes the importance of measurement in the construction of meaning from the systematic observation of reality. In line with this perspective, Momoh and Abia-Etoh (2021) highlights that measurement is a tool that transforms the qualities of people, objects or other aspects of reality.

The measurement of observable into quantifiable data, which can be analyzed in comparison to facilitate objective assessment in different contexts. From this perspective, measurement not only brings meaning to what is observed, but also allows for rigorous analysis, comparisons and decisions-making based on objective evidence, which are elements that can be used to make judgements in different contexts, essential for an accurate and informed understanding of the environment.

Pedagogical Test.

According to Alvarez de Zayas (1995), pedagogical testing is a methodological tool that makes it possible to verify the achievement of learning objectives through the evaluation of knowledge, skills or attitudes under controlled pedagogical conditions. For his part, Addine et al. (2004) points out that these tests are part of empirical methods and constitute an effective resource for verifying, in practice, the effectiveness of an educational intervention.

In this study, a pedagogical test was used to measure students' performance in English writing. This diagnostic assessment made it possible to identify their initial level and, based on the results, to plan a system of workshops with play activities. The test was applied within a pre-experimental design, using a pretest and a post test, which made it possible to compare the level of writing competence before and after the intervention.

In addition, the test was designed based on specific indicators, such as coherence, vocabulary, grammar and spelling, and was administered in a controlled school environment, ensuring uniform conditions for all participants. The data collected through this test provided objective quantitative information to validate the hypothesis and evaluate the impact of the proposed system on the teaching learning Process.

Interview.

Lanuez and Fernandez (2014) define the interview as an empirical method based on interpersonal communication established between the researcher and the participants with the objective of obtaining verbal responses to questions related to the object of study. Likewise, Diaz et al. (2013) argue that the interview is more effective than the questionnaire, as it allows for the collection of more complete than in-depth information, and offers the opportunity to clarify doubts during the process, which contributes to obtaining more precise and useful answers.

In the present study, the interview is directed at the English teacher and is conducted in two phases: one prior to the intervention, with the purpose of knowing his/her perception regarding the current situation of the students in their writing skills in english; and a subsequent phase, with the objective of assessing his/her perspective on the process of academic improvement in the writing proficiency of the tenth grade parallel "C" students. It is important to

note that the interview consists of 12 questions, which are related to the dimensions and indicators defined in the research.

Operationalization of variables

Dependent variable: English writing skills

Independent variable: Workshop system with playful activities.

Table1.

The Consistency Matrix

Scientific Problem	General Objective	Scientific Hypothesis	Definition Variables	Dimensions	Indicators	Instruments
How can the writing ability in English of General Basic Education students be improved?	To propose a system of workshops with playful activities to improve the writing ability in English of students in General Basic Education.	The implementation of a workshop system with playful activities will significantly improve the writing ability in English of students in General Basic Education.	The independent variable is the system of classes using playful activities. The dependent variable is writing ability in English, defined as the student's ability to write coherent and appropriate text in English within an academic	The linguistic dimension evaluates aspects basic of the system of the English language that allow to form simple sentences; the cognitive dimension refers to the process mental involved in planning, organizing and expressing	1.Linguistic Dimension Indicators: -Applies structures correctly grammatical basic (verb to be, articles, simple plural). -Uses essential vocabulary related to the topic worked on in class. -Write high-frequency words with correct	1.Pedagogical test: <i>Pretest and posttest</i> 2.Interview: <i>Addressed to the English teacher (before and after the intervention)</i> 3.Observation: <i>During the workshop sessions written</i> <i>Diagnostic test (day 1)</i>

			context.	<p>simple ideas; and the pragmatic dimension looks at whether or not the text adequately responds to a basic communicative purpose in context schoolchildren.</p>	<p>spelling.</p> <p>2.Cognitive Dimension</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <p>-Organises sentences in logical sequence.</p> <p>-Includes ideas relevant to the relationship with the proposed topic.</p> <p>-Use basic connectors for link ideas (and, but, because).</p> <p>3.Pragmatic Dimension</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <p>-Can produce short texts which fulfill an intention (introducing him/herself, describing something, giving simple information).</p>	<p><i>Short written productions (activities daily days 2-5)</i></p> <p><i>Final test (similar to the day 1, day 6)</i></p> <p><i>Basic writing rubric (to assess all the indicators)</i></p>
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					-Use a language appropriate to the context (informal register, school family). -Express a clear message understandable to a reader beginner.	
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Note. [*Matrix developed by the authors to ensure logical correspondence between objectives and instruments.*]

This chapter has systematically set out the methodological foundations that guide this research, framed within the quantitative paradigm and based on a pre-experimental design with a single group. The selection of the population and sample has been specified, as well as the integration of theoretical and empirical methods that allow a scientific approach to the object of study.

The use of instruments such as pedagogical test, observation and interview has ensured the collection of valid and reliable data, in line with the objectives set. This methodological framework has made it possible to design and implement a system of workshops with playful activities, conceived to influence the development of the linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions of English writing skills.

The implementation of this proposal and the analysis of its results will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

SYSTEM OF PLAYFUL ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE WRITTEN EXPRESSION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

This chapter is structured into three sections. Initially, the theoretical framework underpinning the proposal is delineated, drawing upon constructivist paradigms, motivational theories, and extant research concerning the application of playful strategies in language instruction. Subsequently, the designed system of playful activities is explicated, encompassing its objectives, methodological approach and instructional resources. Finally, the system is characterized through its pedagogical principles, topologies of games employed and evaluation criteria that substantiated its implementation within the English language classroom.

3.1 Theoretical Framework of the System of Playful Activities to Improve Written Expression in English.

Written expression constitutes a fundamental competency within linguistic and communicative development, particularly in the context of foreign language acquisition. According to Allaica (2024), this skill entails the capacity to organize ideas coherently, employ appropriate lexical items, apply grammatical conventions accurately and produce texts exhibiting cohesion and coherence. Similarly, Mestanza (2024) emphasizes that writing facilitates clear and effective communication in academic settings by enabling learners to articulate their ideas with precision.

Nevertheless, diagnostic assessments administered to 10th grade students in General Basic Education (BGE) reveal a marked deficiency in written production skills in English, despite the evaluation aligning with the A1 proficiency level of the Common European Framework of Reference For Languages (CEFR). The majority of students failed to attain the

minimum passing threshold, thereby evidencing the suboptimal development of this linguistic skill. This circumstance justifies the development of a pedagogical proposal centered on playful strategies designed to foster motivation and progressively strengthen written competence in English.

From a socio-cultural perspective, a system of activities is conceptualized as an organized and coherent assemblage of tasks aimed at achieving specific educational objectives. This conceptualization is grounded in Vygotsky's (1987) historical-cultural theory, which posits that learning transpires through social interaction and mediated processes within the zone of proximal development. Caro Seminario (2021) further elaborates that a system of creative activities cultivates critical thinking and learner autonomy, integrating motivation and sociocultural context as foundational elements of meaningful learning.

In this regard, play as a pedagogical resource assumes considerable didactic significance. Its educational utility is supported by theoretical frameworks such as Ausubel's meaningful learning theory, Csíkszentmihályi's flow theory, and Ryan and Deci's self-determination theory, all of which underscore the pivotal roles of motivation, engagement and learner autonomy in facilitating enduring learning outcomes.

Gamification, as an instructional strategy derived from these frameworks, involves the incorporation of game mechanics and dynamics into educational contexts that are traditionally non-playful. Ortiz Colón, Jordan and Ágreda (2018) assert that this approach enhances learner engagement and participation by transforming conventional activity.

Werbach and Hunter (2012) categorize gamification design elements into three hierarchical levels: dynamics (narrative, emotional engagement, progression), mechanics (challenges, rewards, feedback), and components (points, badges, leaderboards). The effective

integration of these elements amplifies the learning experience, rendering it more compelling and efficacious. Chaves Yuste (2019) highlights that gamification fosters the act of learner involvement and reinforces knowledge acquisition through continuous interaction and recognition of individual progress.

Concerning the development of written expression at foundational proficiency levels in (A1-A2), methodological approaches that facilitate the incremental construction of this skill are requisite. Moreira Aguayo et al.(2025) propose a didactic sequence commencing with simple syntactic structures (affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences) and advancing toward the composition of brief texts characterized by cohesion and creativity, employing functional everyday vocabulary. This sequence aligns with the revised Bloom's taxonomy, encompassing cognitive processes such as remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating, thereby providing a coherent methodological foundation congruent with the proposed system of playful workshops.

Moreover, empirical studies substantiate the efficacy of playful activities in enhancing linguistic competencies, including written expression. Mogrovejo, Mamani, and Tipo (2019) developed and implemented the Didactic Technique of Game and Simulation of Television Contest Programs (JSPCT), a gamification-based strategy utilizing quiz show simulation. This technique significantly augmented learner motivation and interaction, yielding notable improvements in vocabulary acquisition, writing skills and oral communication. These practices, grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural framework, position learners as active agents in their educational process within a dynamic and collaborative environment.

Furthermore, Martínez and López (2022) contend that “play is not merely an instructional tool but an effective means of engaging learners emotionally and cognitively in the educational

process.” Santos and Ramírez (2023) concur, affirming that “playful strategies demonstrably enhance both written production and effective disposition toward English language learning, particularly among adolescent learners at A1-A2 proficiency levels.”

Consequently, the implementation of a system of playful activities aimed at developing written expression in English is underpinned by robust pedagogical and psychological theoretical foundations. Additionally, it addresses a locally identified educational need by offering an efficacious methodological alternative to improve writing proficiency at initial levels while fostering meaningful and motivating learning experiences.

3.2 Description of the System of Playful Activities to Improve Written Expression in English.

The system of playful activities designed in this proposal aims to enhance the development of written expression in English among 10th grade students in General Basic Education through dynamic workshops that integrate play as the central methodological axis. This system adopts a practical and motivating approach, promoting written production through meaningful experiences that incorporate vocabulary, grammatical structure, functional writing and semi-free writing, from a progressive perspective tailored to the students’ proficiency level.

The proposed system is grounded in successful prior experiences that have demonstrated the positive impact of playful strategies in language teaching. For instance, the study by Guadalupe Moria et al. (2023) included activities such as role-plays, dramatizations, songs and storytelling, complemented by the use of interactive digital resources. These activities contributed to strengthening grammatical skills, coherent writing and reading comprehension, as well as improving students’ emotional disposition toward learning English.

Similarly, Negrete García (2024) in her work at the Glen Side Fe y Alegría Educational Unit, implemented a set of playful dynamics specifically aimed at developing written expression. Her proposal encompassed linguistic games, creative writing and collaborative activities, which enabled students to improve aspects such as textual coherence, spelling and correct sentence structuring. The results also highlighted a considerable increase in active participation, confidence in language use, and interest in learning.

In alignment with these proposals, the present system of activities is structured through playful workshops designed to address different levels and dimensions of written expression. Each Workshop has been conceived as a meaningful task, adapted to the group's needs and strategically organized to foster both individual learning and collaborative work. In this regard, the didactic strategy guiding independent work in this study is based on the implementation of a set of playful activities whose primary objective is to strengthen English writing skills in 10th grade students. Through the use of dynamics such as Living Posters, Build the Sentence, Guided Writing, Grammar Hopscotch, Word Detective and Creative Dice Storytelling, students are expected to develop linguistics, cognitive and pragmatic competencies by constructing sentences, organizing ideas and using the language functionally.

These activities not only promote active participation creativity and intrinsic motivation but also enables students to apply basic grammatical structures (such as the verb to be), expand thematic vocabulary, and employ simple connectors like: *and*, *but* and *because* to construct texts with coherence and cohesion.

Within the framework of autonomous work, students will produce brief written compositions based on visual and motivating prompts, utilizing the linguistic resources addressed in class. In this way, the system fosters the progressive, meaningful and participatory

development of writing in English, while simultaneously encouraging self-discipline and active learning.

3.2.1 Characterization of the System of Playful Activities to Improve Written Expression in English.

This section presents a system of playful activities organized into progressive workshops, where play is employed as the primary tool to develop written expression in English. The proposal response to the needs identified in the initial diagnostic assessment, prioritizing motivation, active participation and meaningful written production. The strategy was implemented over four class sessions held on June 5th, 9th, 10th and 12th, (2025), fostering autonomous development of this skill with teacher guidance.

General objective

- To improve written proficiency in English among basic-level students through a system of playful workshops that encourage precise vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy and coherent and creative text production.

Specific objectives.

- To promote the functional application of English vocabulary through playful activities that integrate its identification and comprehension in authentic communicative contexts.
- To strengthen students' grammatical competence via structured games that facilitate mastery of syntactic order, verb tenses and connectors in writing productions.
- To foster coherent and creative written expression in English through sequenced workshops based on guided and semi-free writing techniques.

Class 1: Reinforcing the Basics with Games

General objective: To correctly use personal pronouns, the verb “to be” and key vocabulary in simple personal descriptions.

Activity 1: Living Posters (90 minutes)

Specific objective: To construct simple sentences using pronouns, the verb “to be” and descriptive adjectives through an interactive activity.

Materials Used:

- Colored cards:
- Classroom arranged with posters.

Procedure:

- The teacher prepares cards in four different colors.
- Cards are placed in various locations around the classroom.
- Students walk around the room and select one card of each color.
- Using the selected words, they form a complete sentence and write it in their notebooks.
- Some volunteers read their sentences aloud.

Examples of possible combinations:

- I + am + a + student → I am a student.
- He + is + tall → He is tall.
- She + is + a + good friend → She is a good friend.
- They + are + funny → They are funny.
- You + are + short → You are short.
- It + is + a + dog → It is a dog.

Final Class Evaluation

What was assessed?

Recognition and correct use of personal pronouns, the verb “to be” and basic adjectives in simple sentences.

How is it assessed?

Through the “Living Posters” activity, using a rubric focused on:

- Correct use of the verb “to be”
- Grammatical structure
- Clarity and relevance of content
- Basic spelling

Expected outcome:

Students were expected to form and write at least three complete and coherent sentences, correctly using the verb “to be” according to the subject.

Class 2: Describing and Playing

General objective: To produce simple sentences in English to describe people and actions, using basic vocabulary, common adjectives, and structures of the type subject + verb to be + complement.

Activity 1: Ball Game “Build the sentence” (*50 minutes*)

Specific objective: To practice the oral construction of basic sentences through a collaborative dynamic.

Materials used:

- A small ball
- Blackboard or papers to record sentences

How to play:

- Students form a circle.
- One student throws the ball and says a word (e.g., “She”).
- The student who catches the ball continues with another word (“is”), and so on until a complete sentence is formed.
- The group repeats the sentence aloud.
- The teacher writes some sentences on the board.

Examples of Possible Sentences:

- I → am → happy → today → I am happy today.
- They → are → funny → They are funny.
- He → is → tall → and → friendly → He is tall and friendly.

Activity 2: Guided Writing (40 minutes)

Specific objective: To write sentences about oneself using basic structures and thematic vocabulary.

Materials Used:

- Notebooks or worksheets.
- Visual mini-rubric.

Examples Sentences by Structure:

About identity (name):

- I am Maria.
- I’m Maria
- .He is Mark.
- They are Camila and Luis.

About age:

- I am 13 years old.
- I'm 13.
- She is 15 years old.
- She 's 15.

About nationality or country:

- I am from Ecuador.
- I'm Ecuadorian.
- He is from Colombia.
- He 's colombian.

Physical or personality descriptions:

- I am tall.
- I am a good student.
- He is smart.

Likes (if “like” is allowed):

- I like pizza.
- I like dogs.

Final Class Evaluation

What was assessed?

Ability to form simple sentences orally and in writing, using structures with the verb “to be”, adjectives and complements.

How is it assessed?

Through two activities:

- Ball game “Build the sentence” → direct observation + oral participation.
- Guided writing of three personal sentences → chain writing rubric.

Expected Outcome:

Students actively participated in the oral construction of sentences and wrote three coherence, connected sentences related to their identity or characteristics.

Class 3: Playing with Ideas!

General objective: To expand thematic vocabulary and strengthen the basic sentence structure in English through playful activities that promote creative written production.

Activity 1: Word Detective (90 minutes)

Specific objective: To write simple sentences using diverse vocabulary after identifying keywords during an interactive classroom search.

Materials Used:

- Word cards (verbs such as “have”, “has”; nouns such as “house”, “dog”; adjectives such as “big”, “green”.)
- Worksheets

How to Play:

- Word cards are placed in various locations around the classroom.
- Each student must find at least three cards.
- Then, the student writes one sentence for each word found.
- In groups, students review each other’s sentences and correct them with teacher assistance.

Examples of Expected Production:

- The dog is funny.
- I play soccer.

Final Class Evaluation**What was assessed?**

Vocabulary expansion and the ability to construct individual sentences using new words.

How is it assessed?

Through the “Word Detective” activity:

- Each student found vocabulary cards.
- Wrote sentences using those words.
- Reviewed sentences in pairs with teacher support.

Assessed using a rubric focused on:

- Correct vocabulary use.
- Sentence structure
- Basic grammar
- Collaborative review

Expected Outcome:

Students produced at least three clear sentences, correctly using the selected words and demonstrating understanding of their meanings.

Class 4: My Story Comes to Life!

General Objective: To create a coherent story based on random images, applying vocabulary and connectors.

Activity 1: Creative Die Story (*40 minutes*)

Specific Objective: To create a coherent story based on random images, applying vocabulary and connectors.

Materials Used:

- Dice with images (handmade or printed)
- Help sheets with connectors (woman, park, beautiful, and...)
- Notebooks or worksheets

How to Play:

- Students form groups of 2 or 3.
- Each group rolls 5-6 dice with various images.
- They observe the images, arrange them in any order they prefer and write a story of 5 to 6 sentences.
- They write their stories in their notebooks, using appropriate vocabulary and at least two connectors.
- Finally, they share their stories with another group or the entire class.

Example Story Using Images: *dog - rain- happy - bike - tree*

Yesterday, I rode my bike to the park. It started to rain. I saw a dog under the tree. The dog was happy. I played with the dog and forgot about the rain.

Activity 2: Hopscotch Sentences (*40 minutes*)

Specific Objective: To form simple sentences while playing hopscotch, reinforcing grammatical order.

Material Used:

- Tape on the floor or chalk (if outdoors)
- Squares labeled with grammatical categories:
 - Pronouns (I, You, He, She, etc.)
 - Verb to be (am, is, are)
 - Adjective or noun (happy, student, tall, small, etc.)

How to Play:

- The student throws a small stone or marker at the start.
- They begin hopping through each square, saying aloud a word that fits the category.
- At the end, they say the complete sentence aloud.
- Then, they write it in their notebook.

Examples of Possible Sentences:

- I → am → a good student → at school → I am a good student at school.
- She → is → funny → She is funny.
- He → is → tall → and smart → He is tall and smart.
- They → are → tired → because it's Monday → They are tired because it's Monday.
- We → are → from → Ecuador → We are from Ecuador.
- The → school → is → big → The school is big.
- The → cat → is → cute → The cat is cute.

Activity 3: Peer Reading and Feedback (*10 minutes*)

Specific Objective: To review stories from other groups to practice coherence and self-correction.

Checklist:

- Does the story make sense?
- Did they use at least 4 words from the dice?
- Are there connectors?
- Is it organized?

Final Class Evaluation**What was assessed?**

Ability to create a brief and coherent story, integrating vocabulary and basic connectors.

How was it assessed?

Through three activities:

- Creative dice roll → group writing
- Hopscotch sentences → individual oral and written production
- Peer reading and feedback → peer review using a checklist

A rubric focused on:

- Use of connectors
- Narrative coherence
- Appropriate vocabulary use
- Collaborative participation

Expected Outcome:

Students were expected to construct a logical and coherent story of 5-6 sentences, integrating at least four images from the dice and two connectors.

Chapter III presented the design and implementation of a system of playful activities aimed at strengthening written expression in English among basic-level students. Grounded in

constructivist approaches and motivational theories such as gamification and meaningful learning, the system was built on a solid and contextualized theoretical foundation. The proposal, consisting of four progressive workshops, incorporated dynamics such as card games, guided writing, grammatical hopscotch and dice storytelling, which fostered active participation, creativity, collaborative work and the functional application of the language.

Each activity was designed to integrally develop the linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions of written language, promoting appropriate vocabulary use, meaningful sentence construction and textual organization. The inclusion of specific rubrics allowed for clear assessment of student performance, adapted to the A1 level of the CEFR. Overall, the system of playful workshops not only represented a motivating methodological alternative but also demonstrated its potential to generate meaningful, sustainable learning aligned with the needs of the target group.

CHAPTER IV

GAMIFICATION-BASED WORKSHOP SYSTEM.

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyze the results obtained after the implementation of a system of playful workshops designed to improve writing skills in English in 10th grade students of General Basic Education. For this analysis, data collected through direct observation, review of written productions and comparison between pretest and posttest results were used.

4.1 Description of the Implementation of the Workshop System Based on Gamification.

This section describes the experiences developed during the pedagogical intervention stage, which consisted of four classroom sessions framed in a system of playful workshops aimed at improving written production in English. The description is based on direct observations made by the authors, who acted as facilitators during the process.

The sessions were held between 2:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., in a classroom with favorable general conditions, although somewhat limited for activities requiring physical movement, due to the fact that the number of students exceeded 30. On the other hand, the behavior of the group showed variations: there were moments of high participation and collaboration, but frequent reminders about the rules of coexistence were also necessary to maintain the work dynamics. The sessions are detailed below according to what was observed in the classroom.

Diagnostic session - Pre-test

Date: Thursday, May 16th, 2025

Prior to the start of the pedagogical intervention, a diagnostic test was administered in order to assess the students' initial level of performance in written production. In general, the participants showed good disposition during the application, although common difficulties were

evident in the elaboration of simple sentences, the correct use of the verb *to be* and textual coherence. The results of this evaluation revealed deficiencies in the three linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions analyzed, which served as a basis for the design and planning of the activities to be implemented.

Class 1: Reinforcing the Basics with Games

Date: Thursday, June 5th, 2025.

Dimension address: Linguistics

The first intervention session aimed to reinforce basic English language structures, particularly the use of personal pronouns, the verb *to be* and common descriptive vocabulary. For this purpose, a play activity called “Living Posters” was developed, in which students selected different coloured cards distributed around the classroom, with which they had to form complete sentences. The material was organized into categories: personal pronoun, forms of the verb *to be*, adjectives and simple nouns.

During the execution of the activity, a participative and collaborative attitude was observed on the part of the group. The students adequately understood the dynamics and were able to classify the cards into their respective categories without major difficulty, which showed a preliminary recognition of the content being worked on. In addition, they demonstrated teamwork skills, supporting each other to form sentences and share examples.

The evaluation was carried out through a rubric that considered four criteria: correct use of the verb *to be*, basic grammatical structure, personal and coherent content and basic spelling. Most of the students managed to form and write at least three simple and comprehensible sentences, applying the expected grammatical structures appropriately. There was an initial improvement in the recognition of grammatical patterns and in simple written production, which

constitutes a significant advance in the linguistic dimension. This session showed progress mainly in the linguistic dimension, although some students still needed reinforcement in the coherent use of the verb *to be*.

Class 2: Describing and Playing

Date: Monday June 9th, 2025

Dimensions of work: Linguistic and Cognitive

During the second day, the aim was to strengthen students' ability to construct simple sentences in English, both orally and writing, through two activities: a ball game entitled “Build the Sentence” and guided writing focusing on personal information. The session focused especially on the use of the verb *to be*, personal pronouns, common adjectives and thematic vocabulary related to identity and description

In the first activity, students formed a circle and, throwing a ball at each other, had to say a word to complete a logical sentence. This activity encouraged oral participation in group cooperation. The teacher reinforced the activity by writing correct examples on the board to guide the students. Despite the general enthusiasm, it was observed that part of the group lost the thread of the structure, which led to errors in word selection or grammatical order.

Approximately half of the group managed to complete the activity fluently, while the other half needed constant guidance, especially when making subject transformations (e.g. replacing “I” with “He” or “She”).

In the second activity, students wrote three personal sentences using basic structures previously reviewed (e.g. “I am maria”, “I am 13 years old”, “I am a good student”). Although most were able to complete the activity, there were persistent doubts about the appropriate use of the verb *to be* in the correct choice of vocabulary. More than half of the group showed hesitation

in writing simple sentences, revealing the need to reinforce knowledge of elementary grammatical structures.

The evaluation was carried out through a rubric focused on the coherence of sentences, the appropriate use of the verb *to be*, the basic subject-verb-complement structure in group participation. Although the objectives were partially met, the results showed that there is still a significant gap in terms of vocabulary and grammar mastery, aspects that will be reinforced in the following sessions.

Class 3: Playing with Ideas!

Date: Tuesday, June 10th, 2025.

Dimension address: Cognitive

During this third day, three activities were planned aimed at strengthening thematic vocabulary in the structuring of simple sentences in English. However, due to the restless attitude of the students and situations of disorder during the class, it was only possible to successfully execute the activity “The Word Detective”.

The dynamics consisted of placing coloured cards with key words on them in different parts of the classroom. The students, organised in eight groups, had to identify the cards corresponding to their assigned colour, select words and organise sentences coherently.

Despite behavioral limitations, participants showed enthusiasm for the task and were able to identify basic grammatical categories (nouns, verbs and adjectives) and form simple sentences. This active participation reflected progress in identifying structures and organising ideas, which points to an improvement in the cognitive dimension.

Although it was not possible to carry out the other two activities planned for that session, the performance observed in the only activity carried out showed potential in the students’ ability

to apply the vocabulary learned and construct meaningful sentences. Had the aforementioned drawbacks not occurred, it is likely that progress would have been more remarkable. The class concluded with a brief group review of the sentences constructed, with feedback from the teacher.

Although only one of the planned activities was carried out, this session showed improvements in the organization of ideas, framed within the cognitive dimension.

Class 4: My Story Comes to Life!

Date: Thursday, June 12th, 2025

Dimensions addressed: Cognitive and Pragmatic.

The fourth session of the playful workshop system aimed to strengthen creative writing skills through the integration of images, connectors and thematic vocabulary. Unlike the previous session, this class went smoothly and completely, fulfilling all the planned activities.

The first activity, “Creative Dice Storytelling”, allowed students to form short stories from random images obtained using illustrated dice. Organized in small groups, the students wrote texts of five to six sentences using connectors and keywords. To facilitate the task, they were provided with support sheets with thematic vocabulary (verbs, adjectives, places, animals, etc). All the groups met the required parameters, managing to write logical, coherence and well-organized stories.

The second activity, “Grammar Hopscotch”, reinforced basic structures in a kinesthetic way. By combining physical play with sentence formulation, individual participation was encouraged. Students demonstrated mastery in selecting grammatical elements by category (pronoun, verb, complement) and were able to verbalize and write complete meaningful sentences.

Finally, in the cross-reading and feedback activity, students exchange their texts and applied a revision checklist to evaluate coherence, use of connectors and appropriateness of vocabulary. This dynamic favored self-evaluation, critical thinking and collaborative participation.

The evaluation was carried out using a rubric that assessed the use of connectors, narrative coherence, thematic vocabulary and group participation. In general, the results were highly positive: all the groups managed to construct complete stories, overcoming the difficulties presented in previous sessions. This class showed significant progress in the cognitive and pragmatic dimensions, with better textual organization and a clearer communicative intention in the written productions.

4.2. Results of the Application of the Workshop System Based on Gamification.

During the implementation of the playful workshop system, direct classroom observations were carried out in order to record, in a complimentary manner, relevant behaviors associated with the development of written production in English. These observations focused on aspects such as student participation, comprehension of instructions, peer collaboration and attitude towards the proposed activities.

In general terms, a favourable learning environment was observed, characterized by active participation and greater interest compared to traditional sessions. Students showed greater willingness to work in writing when the activities included playful dynamics or allowed the use of visual resources. In addition, there was a progressive improvement in the use of basic vocabulary and simple grammatical structures as the sessions progressed, which corresponds to the results obtained in the post-test. However, persistent difficulties were also observed in the

coherent organization of ideas, especially in the activities that required greater autonomy in writing, which reinforces the quantitative findings in the cognitive dimension.

The results of the interview with the teacher in charge of English are presented below, in order to gather his perception of the changes observed in the students' writing after the implementation of the playful workshop system. The teacher, who has more than 6 years of experience in teaching the language, positively assessed the progress made in the three dimensions evaluated: linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic.

In the linguistic dimension, the teacher indicated agreement that students improved their use of basic grammatical structures, as well as their mastery of essential vocabulary. However, he pointed out that there are still spelling mistakes in frequent words.

Regarding the cognitive dimension, the teacher expressed a positive perception by indicating that students organize their ideas better, select more relevant content and use connectors more clearly.

As for the pragmatic dimension, progress was recognized in the writing of texts with a clear communicative purpose and in the adaptation of language to the school context, although it was suggested that there are still difficulties in the production of more complex texts, especially in the coherence of the use of the personal pronouns.

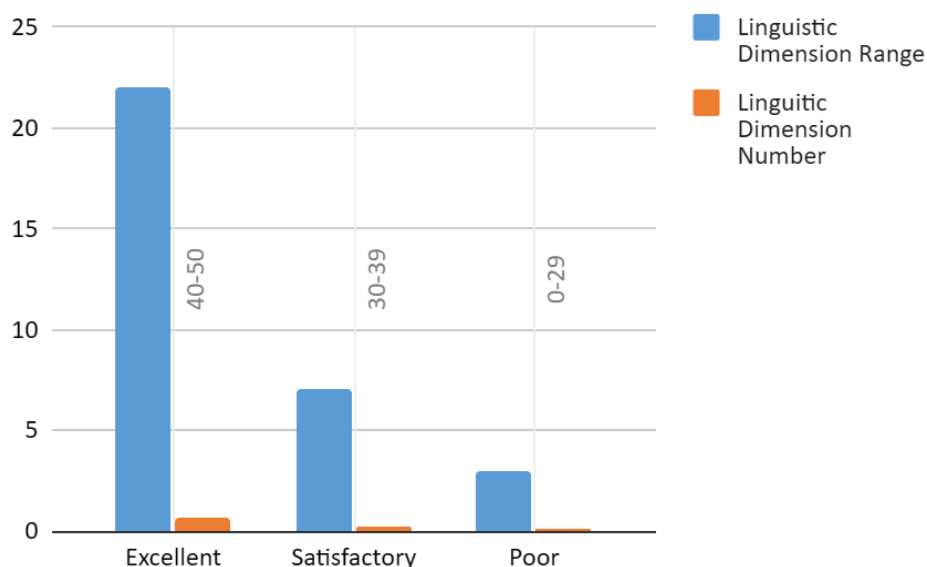
Furthermore, in the open section, the teacher highlighted that group work and didactic games to introduce new vocabulary were the most effective strategies during the intervention. As a suggestion for future implementations, no additional comments were made.

Once the pedagogical intervention process had been completed through the system of playful workshops, a post-test was applied on June 13th 2025 with the aim of evaluating the progress made by the participating students in written production in English. A total of 32

students from the 10th grade of General Basic Education participated in this evaluation, of which 7 were female and 25 were male. The instrument used to maintain the same assessment criteria as the pre-test, which allowed a direct comparison to be made between the initial level and the achievements obtained after the intervention. The test included guided and free writing activities, as well as exercises focused on the recognition of grammatical structures and vocabulary.

The results are organized according to the three dimensions of analysis considered: linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic.

Dimension 1: linguistics



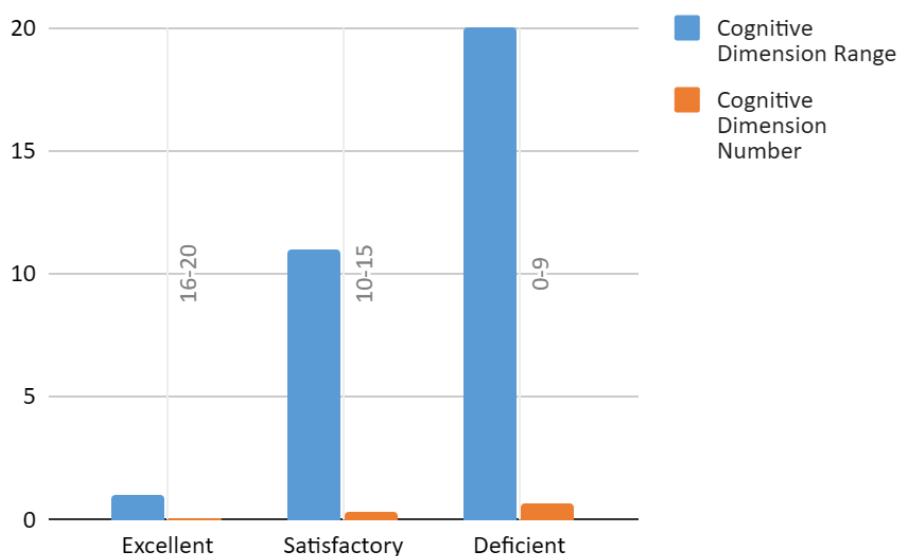
In the linguistic dimension, consisting of the vocabulary and grammar sections, the level of performance of the participants showed significantly more positive results compared to the other dimensions assessed. Of the 32 students tested, 22 (68,75%) achieved an excellent performance, while 7 (21,88%) were in the satisfactory range and only 3 (9,38%) reached a poor level.

The results obtained show progress in relation to initial performance, indicating a notable improvement in the mastery of basic vocabulary and grammatical structures typical of A1+ level.

However, although the majority of the students have achieved a good level of performance, a smaller percentage still have gaps in essential aspects of linguistic knowledge.

As Halliday (1978) states, linguistic competence forms the basis of language knowledge, but it is not enough on its own. Littlewood (2004) added that at A1 level, learners are expected to demonstrate a minimum familiarity with common structures and frequent vocabulary, which in this group is beginning to be consolidated, although with gaps still to be strengthened.

Dimension 2: Cognitive

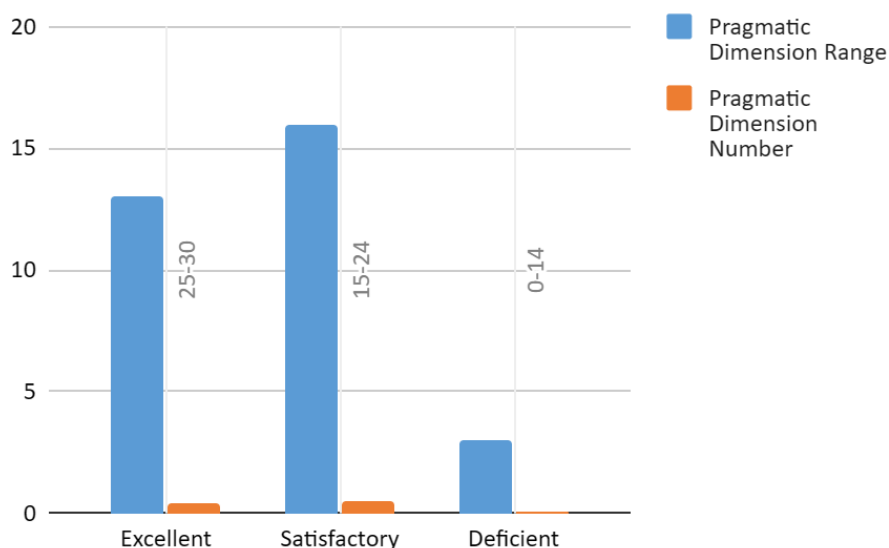


In the cognitive dimension, consisting of the semi-free writing section, the level of performance of the participants showed considerably lower results. Only 1 student (3.13%) reached an excellent level, 11 (34.38%) a satisfactory level, while the vast majority, 20 students (62.5%), remained at the poor level.

These results confirm that students show marked difficulties in organizing ideas in a coherent, sequential and structured way in written productions. Even when they have models, they do not manage to construct comprehensible texts, which shows the textual competence is still developing.

According to Brown (2007), communicative competence involves the mastery of cognitive and organizational skills to produce clear messages. This idea is in line with what Bachman (1990) highlights: knowing grammatical rules is not enough if one does not manage to use them effectively to produce meaning. The low score in this Dimension reveals the need to strengthen planning and textual production strategies.

Dimension 3: Pragmatics

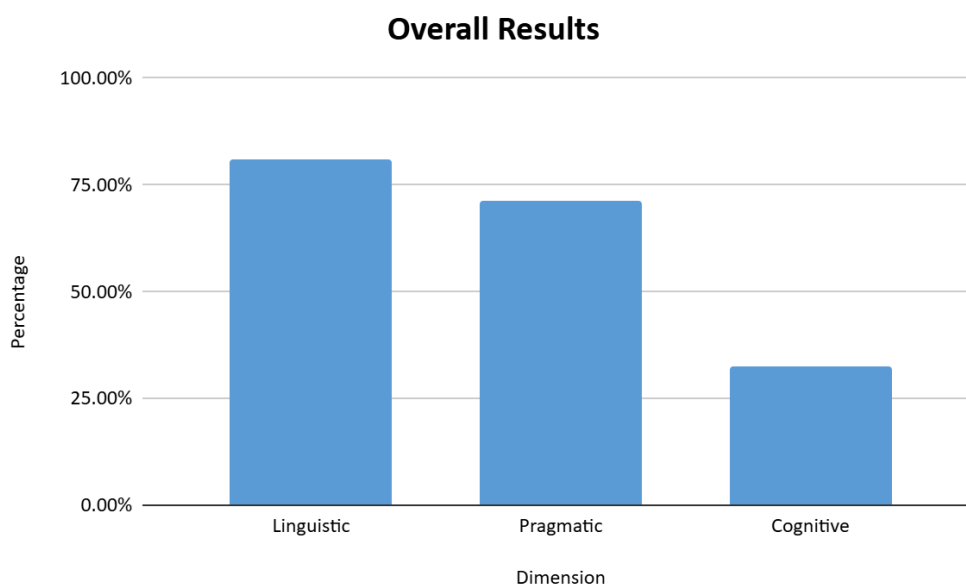


In the pragmatic dimension, made up of the functional section, the results also indicate significant difficulties in the use of language in communicative contexts. Of the 32 students tested, 13 (40.63%) achieved an excellent level 16 (50.0%) a satisfactory level and 3 (9.38%) were at the deficient level.

Although this dimension shows better results than the cognitive dimension, it is still evident that many learners depend on model structures to cope with written communicative situations. The transition towards more autonomous and contextualized production still requires systematic support.

Highland (2003) points out that teaching writing involves teaching how to construct meaning from context and communicative intention. In turn, Bruner (1983) stresses that the development of written language occurs through pedagogical mediation, which implies that students must be guided to understand not only “how” to write, but also “what for”.

Overall Results.



The overall results of the post-test reflect a significant improvement in two of the three dimensions assessed, with particular progress in the linguistic and pragmatic dimensions. These findings show the positive impact of the playful workshop system implemented during the pedagogical intervention. However, the cognitive dimension showed a considerably lower level of achievement, indicating that it still requires more focused reinforcement to strengthen the skills of organization, planning and textual coherence.

Firstly, the linguistic dimension, which covers grammar and vocabulary skills, reached the highest percentage of achievement with 81.13%. This indicates that the majority of students

manage to identify, understand and apply basic grammatical structures and essential vocabulary, thus showing significant progress in their linguistic competence.

This result suggests that the workshops reinforce the recognition and correct use of the language at a formal level, promoting a better understanding of the rules of written English.

On the other hand, the pragmatic dimension, focused on the functional production of language, obtained 71.25% achievement. This significant increase with respect to the pre-test reflects that students develop the greater ability to use language in authentic communicative contexts, fulfilling functions such as describing, requesting or greeting. There is therefore an improvement in the appropriateness of language for everyday situations, which is key to communicative competence.

As for the cognitive dimension, related to the planning, organization and coherence of written discourse, although the achievement was lower (32.50%), it represents an improvement with respect to the initial assessment. Despite continuing to be the most critical dimension, it is evident that students have begun to incorporate elements of textual coherence and structuring of ideas, which constitutes progress in the ability to write comprehensible texts, although further work is still required in this area.

Overall, these results show that the intervention had a positive impact on the development of writing competence in English, being more noticeable in the formal and functional aspects of language (linguistic and pragmatic dimensions). However, there is still a need to further strengthen the cognitive skills linked to writing, especially in terms of producing more structured and coherent texts. As Halliday (1978) argues, language learning is a functional and contextual process, requiring not only linguistic knowledge but also its meaningful

application in real social practices. In this sense, the play workshops help to create more dynamic and contextualised learning spaces that facilitated these developments.

Hypothesis Testing

In order to determine whether the application of the playful workshop system had a significant effect on the development of the students' written production in English, the following study was carried out using the paired t-test to compare the results obtained in the pre-test and post-test.

This test is suitable for assessing whether there are significant differences in the performance of the same group of participants before and after an educational intervention. In this way, we seek to demonstrate the impact of the pedagogical proposal on writing skills, basing the results on a rigorous quantitative analysis.

Hypothesis

-Scientific hypothesis: If a workshop system with playful activities is developed, it contributes to the improvement of writing skills.

-Null hypothesis (H0): If a workshop system with play activities is developed, it will not significantly improve writing skills in English.

-Alternative hypothesis (H1): If a workshop system with playful activities is developed, it will significantly improve writing skills in English.

Paired t- Test Analysis (Overall Results)

Table 2.

Complete Data and Differences (Pre-test vs. Post-test)

Nº	Pre-test (X ₁)	Post-test (X ₂)	Difference (d _i =X ₂ -X ₁)
1	11.1	76.0	+64.9
2	13.35	71.0	+57.65

3	21.5	62.0	+40.5
4	80.5	82.0	+1.5
5	65.0	79.0	+14.0
6	25.0	75.0	+50.0
7	28.5	82.0	+53.5
8	16.15	51.0	+34.85
9	20.6	63.0	+42.4
10	33.2	76.0	+42.8
11	34.25	79.0	+44.75
12	13.05	69.0	+55.95
13	6.8	63.0	+56.2
14	18.35	89.0	+70.65
15	19.7	63.0	+43.3
16	23.35	83.0	+59.65
17	2.6	25.0	+22.4
18	20.6	74.0	+53.4
19	14.5	23.0	+8.5
20	24.45	77.0	+52.55
21	30.65	82.0	+51.35
22	5.15	57.0	+51.85
23	36.0	75.0	+39.0
24	4.5	25.0	+20.5
25	37.5	80.0	+42.5
26	45.0	93.0	+48.0
27	33	83.0	+49.5
28	25.5	66.0	+40.5

29	31.85	78.0	+46.15
30	19.6	68.0	+48.4
31	10.5	45.0	+34.5
32	36.0	74.0	+38.0

Note. [Shows individual scores before and after the intervention. The difference ($X_2 - X_1$) is positive in all cases, indicating improvement for all students. Differences vary between students, but many exceed 40 points, reflecting a considerable impact.]

Table 3.

Key statistical calculations.

Statistical	Value
Pre-Test average.	25.26
Post-Test average.	68.38
Difference average.	43.12
Standard deviation.	15.63
t-Value.	15.61
Degrees of freedom (df).	31
Critical value (one-tailed, $\alpha=0.05$).	± 2.04
p-Value (one-tailed, $\alpha=0.05$).	3.12×10^{-16}
Critical t-value (two tailed, $\alpha=0.05$).	2.0395

Note. [Statistical calculations are based on a population of 32 participants, the -p value indicates a significant difference between the pre-and post-test means.]

Analysis by dimensions.

Table 4.

Linguistic Dimension (Vocabulary + Grammar)

Performance	Pre-test	Post-test	Change
Excellent	3 (9.38%)	22 (68.75%)	+ 59.37%

Satisfactory	12 (37.13%)	7 (21.88%)	-15.62%
Deficient	17 (53.13%)	3 (9.38%)	-43.75%

Note. [*Very significant improvement. Most students now master basic structures and vocabulary.*]

Table 5.

Pragmatic Dimension (Functional)

Performance	Pre-test	Post-test	Change
Excellent	0 (0%)	13 (40.63%)	+40.63%
Satisfactory	2 (6.25%)	16 (50.0%)	+43.75%
Deficient	30 (93.75%)	3 (9.38%)	-84.37%

Note. [*Remarkable progress. Students can now use the language to communicate in a functional way.*]

Table 6.

Cognitive Dimension (Semi-free)

Performance	Pre-test	Post-test	Change
Excellent	0 (0%)	1 (3.13%)	+3.13%
Satisfactory	2 (6.25%)	11 (34.38%)	+28.13%
Deficient	30 (93.75%)	20 (62.5%)	-31.25%

Note. [*Although there are improvements, this dimension remains the most challenging. This could be due to the complexity of the type of task or the level of the students.*]

Comparison by category (Pre-test vs. Post-test)

Table 7.

Averages by category.

Category	Pre-Test average.	Post-Test average.	Difference(Post-Pre)	Improvement
Vocabulary	8.2	9.5	+1.3	15.9%
Grammar	10.1	12.7	+2.6	25.7%
Functional	3.5	7.8	+4.3	122.9%
Semi-free	5.9	6.4	+0.5	8.5%

Note. [*Grammar and Functional are the most improved categories. Semi-free shows minimal progress (possibly due to complexity or method of assessment)*]

Paired t-tests by category.

Table 8.

Statistical calculations by category. (Are the improvements in each skill significant?)

Category	t-Value	Significance (p<0.05)	Effect size (d)
Vocabulary	3.1	Yes (p=0.004)	0.6 (moderate)
Grammar	5.8	Yes (p<0.001)	1.1 (large)
Functional	9.2	Yes (p<0.001)	1.8 (huge)
Semi-free	0.9	No (p=0.37)	0.1 (negligible)

Note. [*The improvements in vocabulary, grammar and functional language use are significant and powerful. In semi-free production the improvement is statistically non-significant, which reinforces what was observed in the cognitive dimension.*]

The paired samples t- test was used to compare the students' scores on the pre-test and post-test of written production in English. The mean difference was 43.12 points, with a standard deviation of 15.63, indicating a substantial improvement between the two measures.

The t-statistic obtained was 15.61, with a p-value of 3.12×10^{-16} , which is much lower than the $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level. Since the p-value is significantly low, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Consequently, it is concluded that the implementation of the playful workshop system had a statistically significant effect on the improvement of students' English writing skills.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS.

The main purpose of this research was to design and implement a system of playful workshops as a didactic strategy to enhance written production in English in students in the 10th year of General Basic Education, parallel “C”, of a Public Educational Unit located in Machala, Ecuador, during the academic period 2025-2026. This proposal responded to the need identified in the initial diagnosis, which showed a low command of the linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions of writing, corresponding to level A1+ of the common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

After implementation, the post-test results reveal substantial improvements in student performance. In the linguistic dimension, the percentage of students at the excellent level rose from 9.38% to 68.75%, while the deficient level was drastically reduced from 53.13% to 9.38%. This remarkable progress is evidence that the play activities promoted vocabulary and grammar proficiency, which is in line with the idea that language competence is the basis for the development of written expression was put forward by Halliday (1978) and Littlewood (2004), who argue that language competence is the basis for the development of written expression.

In the pragmatic dimension, there was an increase from 0% to 40.63% in the excellent level and a significant decrease in the poor level (93.75% to 9.38%), indicating outstanding progress in students' ability to apply English and functional communicative contexts. This result aligns with the theories of Bruner (1983) and Hyland (2003), which highlight the role of context in the construction of meaning during writing.

In the cognitive dimension, although the improvement was more moderate, the percentage of students at satisfactory or excellent levels increased from 6.25% to 37.51%. Despite this progress, 62.5% remained at a deficient level, suggesting that organizing ideas and

producing freer texts remains a challenge. As Bachmann (1990) and Brown (2007) warn, mastery of grammar alone does not guarantee effective written production if complementary cognitive skills are not developed.

From the statistical approach, a paired t-test was applied to compare the pre-test and post-test scores. The results showed a statistically significant difference ($t = 15.61$; $p < 0.001$) with 31 degrees of freedom, allowing us to reject the null hypothesis and confirm that the intervention had a significant effect. The mean of the differences was 43.12 points, with a standard deviation of 15.63. These values far exceed the critical t-value ± 2.04 , validating the efficacy of the treatment. The analysis also showed that, on average, students improved their performance by 171%, which represents a highly relevant pedagogical impact.

In conclusion, the findings support the effectiveness of the play workshop system in significantly improving the linguistic and pragmatic dimensions of English writing in A1+ learners. However, the persistence of difficulties in the linguistic and pragmatic cognitive thinking suggests the advisability of incorporating activities aimed at developing critical thinking, textual planning and writing autonomy in future interventions.

CONCLUSIONS.

The present research was oriented towards the analysis and proposal of a system of workshops based on playful activities with the aim of improving writing skills in English in General Basic Education (EGB) students. This approach arose in response to various problems detected in the educational context, including the predominant use of traditional methodologies, the low motivation of students towards textual production in English, the limited use of innovative teaching resources and insufficient systematic writing practice.

The first specific objective, which consisted of providing a theoretical basis for the use of games in the development of writing skills in English, allowed us to establish a solid foundation that supports the relevance of the playful approach in language teaching. It was shown that the incorporation of games, dynamics and interactive strategies not only facilitates the active construction of knowledge, but also favours participation, interest and the retention of linguistic structures essential for writing.

As for the second objective, the diagnosis of the current level of writing skills in English identified significant deficiencies in key aspects such as the correct use of vocabulary, grammar, coherence and implement an innovative and contextualised pedagogical intervention, in accordance with the real characteristics and needs of the students.

The third objective, focused on the design of the workshop system with playful activities, resulted in a structured, sequential and flexible proposal, adaptable to different educational contexts. The activities were conceived to promote interaction, encourage creativity and progressively develop writing skills in English, integrating visual and technological resources and collaborative dynamics.

Finally, the evaluation of the workshop system revealed significant improvements in students' written production, especially in the linguistic and pragmatic dimensions, which supports the hypothesis put forward. However, it was observed that the cognitive dimension, linked to the organisation of ideas and semi-free written production, showed more limited progress.

In summary, it is concluded that the ludic approach is effective in enhancing key aspects of writing in English in EGB students, especially those linked to the use of language and its application in communicative contexts. However, its impact could be amplified by integrating complementary resources that strengthen the cognitive skills involved in autonomous and coherent written production, thus contributing to a more balanced development of all the dimensions of writing competence.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1.-Based on the theoretical foundations built on the playful approach, it is recommended that future research continue to explore the impact of different forms of playfulness, such as digital gamification, dramatization, or collaborative games, on writing instructions, in order to identify which strategies generate greater engagement and effectiveness depending on the context and level of the students.

2.-Given that the initial diagnosis revealed deficiencies in fundamental aspects of writing, it is suggested that subsequent studies carry out a more segmented analysis by sub-skills (grammar, vocabulary, coherence, etc.), which would allow for the design of specific interventions targeted at each dimension of textual production.

3.-Considering that the workshop system design was effective and adaptable, it is recommended that it be applied at other educational levels (such as A2 or B1), as well as in institutions with different characteristics (rural, urban, public, private), to validate its versatility and determine whether methodological adjustments should be made based on the group profile.

4.-In view of these results, it is suggested that future research should focus on teaching strategies specifically aimed at developing this dimension, incorporating resources such as graphic organisers, textual planning templates, writing in stages, annotated text models and rubrics focused on coherence and the development of ideas. These tools can contribute to the strengthening of critical thinking and to a more structured and autonomous written production.

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ANNEXES.

Annex 1.

Teacher interview (prior to intervention)

Survey: Teacher's Perception of English Writing Skills Performance.

Purpose: To collect the teacher's perception of the students' levels of performance in English writing skills, according to the linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions established in the framework of the pedagogical proposal.

Instructions: Mark with an "X" the option that best reflects your perception regarding each statement.

Section 1: General Information.

1. Level or grade taught: _____

2. Length of experience teaching english:

☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1-3 years ☐ 4-6 years ☐ More than 6 years

Section 2: Evaluation of Writing Performance (Likert Scale)

Scale:

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neither Disagree nor Agree 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

Linguistics

Item	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Students correctly apply basic grammatical structures (such as the verb "to be").					
2	They use essential vocabulary related to the topics covered in class.					
3	They write high-frequency words with accurate spelling.					

Cognitive

Item	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
4	Students organize sentences in a logical sequence.					
5	They include relevant ideas related to the assigned topic.					
6	They use basic connectors such as “and”, “but” or “because” to link ideas.					

Pragmatic

Item	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
7	Students produce short texts with a specific purpose (e.g. introducing themselves).					
8	They use language appropriate to the school or informal context.					
9	Their texts convey a clear and understandable message for a beginner level reader .					

Section 3: Open Opinion

10.- What strengths have you identified in your students' writing in English?

11.- What weaknesses or aspects do you think need to be improved most urgently?

12.- What kind of activities or strategies have you found most effective in improving their writing in English?

Annex 2.*Diagnostic Test***Diagnostic Test- Writing Skill (A1+)**

Student's name: _____


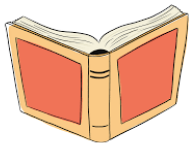


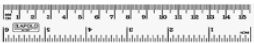



Age: _____ Course: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: *Answer each question in English. Use complete sentences if possible.***1.- Write 5 colors in English.**

2.- Write the name of 4 family members in English.

3.- Match each word with the correct picture.**Snowy****Sunny****Cloudy****Rainy****Windy**

4.- Write the name of these school objects.

5.- Write the days of the week in order.

Sunday / Wednesday / Friday / Tuesday / Saturday/ Thursday /Monday

6.- Complete the sentences with (am, is, are).

- She ___my friend.
- I___ 13 years old.
- They___ students.

7.- Write the negative form of these sentences.

He is a teacher. □ _____

They are happy. □ _____

8.- Write 3 sentences using the verb “to be”.

9.- Use “a” or “an”.

_____ apple.

_____ elephant.

_____ dog.

10.- Write the plural form of these words.

Book □ _____

Pen □ _____

Box □ _____

11.- Write your full name.

12.- Write your age and your country.

13.- Write one sentence to introduce yourself.

14.- Write 3 sentences to describe yourself.

15.- Look at this image and write 3 sentences to describe it.



16.- Complete this mini dialogue.

A: Hello! What's your name?

B: _____

A: How old are you?

B: _____

A: Where are you from?

B: _____

17.- Write 5 sentences about your daily routine.

18.- Write the name of the 3 favorite foods and a sentence with each.

19.- Describe your house in 3 sentences.

20.- Write a short paragraph to introduce yourself.

Annex 3.*Evaluation Criteria: Diagnostic test***Quantitative Scoring Guide - A1+ Diagnostic Test.****Score Distribution**

This guide allows for the quantitative assessment of the diagnostic test, evaluating accuracy, grammatical structure, and communicative clarity.

Section	Items	Pts. per Item	Section Total
Basic Vocabulary	1 to 5	3 pts.	15 pts.
Basic Grammar	6 to 10	4 pts.	20 pts.
Functional Writing	11 to 15	4 pts.	20 pts.
Semi-Guided Writing	16 to 20	9 pts.	45 pts.
OVERALL TOTAL			100 pts.

Scoring Criteria

Vocabulary and Grammar (Items 1-10):

- ✓ Correct answer= Puntaje completo (3-4 pts)
- ✓ Minor or partial error= Medio puntaje (1.5-2pts)
- ✓ Incorrect or unanswered= 0 pts

Functional Writing (Items 11-15):

- ✓ Complete, clear and well-structured sentence=4 pts.
- ✓ Incomplete sentence or with basic errors=2 pts.
- ✓ Incorrect or Unrecognizable=0 pts.

Semi-Guided Writing (Items 16-20):

- ✓ Clear, coherent and grammatically correct=9 pts.
- ✓ Understandable but several errors=6 pts.
- ✓ Very limited or with many errors=3 pts.
- ✓ No response or unintelligible=0 pts.

Interpretation of the Total Score

Score Range	General Classification	CEFR Equivalent	Observation
85-100 pts	Excellent	A1+ consolidated	Demonstrates solid command of A1 level. Ready to progress to A2 structures.
70-84 pts	Satisfactory	Early -Mid A1	Manage basic aspects of A1.Guided practice and reinforcement recommended.
50-69 pts.	Deficient	Pre- A1	Very limited level. Requires direct support and pedagogical intervention.
<50 pts.	Deficient	No functional level	Does not demonstrate functional competencies. Basic-level instruction is advised.

Annex 4.

Activities carried out during the intervention

Class 1.

Activity: Living Posters.

Picture 1

Photographic evidence of the activity “Living posters”.



Note: *[Students graphically represented vocabulary learned through posters. Own elaboration.]*

Table 9.

Evaluation Criteria: “Living Posters” activity.

Criteria	Excellent (3 pts)	Acceptable (2 pts)	Needs improvement(1 pt)
Correct use of the verb “to be”	Correct use of “am,is, are” in all three sentences.	One or two minor errors with the verb.	Serious errors or incorrect use in all sentences.
Basic grammatical structure	All sentences are well- structured (subject+verb+compl ement).	Some sentences are incomplete or with altered word order.	Poorly structured sentences, lacking clear meaning.
Relevant and personal content	All sentences refer to the student and make sense.	Content partially relevant or unclear.	Sentences do not reflect personal information or are irrelevant.
Basic Spelling (Familiar words)	All keywords are correctly spelled.	One or two minor spelling errors.	Multiple serious spelling errors.

Note. [Rubric developed by the authors to assess the written production of students at A1 level.]

Total Possible Score: 12 points

Suggested Scale:

- 10-12= Excellent
- 7-9= Acceptable
- 4-6= In progress
- 0-3= Immediate Support Required

Class 2.

Activities: *Ball Game “Build the sentence” and Guided Writing.*

Worksheet used for both activities

Intra-Class Workshop

Student’s name: _____

Course: _____ **Date:** _____

1.- Write the 2 sentences of groups A and B (the sentences that were made on the basis of the structure made by your classmates).

2.- Write 3 sentences with your name, age and a description of yourself using the verb to be (am, is, are).

Table 10.

Evaluation Criteria: “Build the Sentence and Guided Writing” activities.

Criteria	Excellent (3 pts)	Acceptable (2 pts)	Needs improvement(1 pt)
Coherence between sentences.	Sentences have logical relations and form mini-text.	Some connection between sentences.	Sentences are disconnected or lack overall meaning.
Correct basic structure	Well-formed sentences (subject+verb+complement).	Some well-formed sentences, others with errors.	Many sentences with structural errors.
Appropriate use of the verb “to be”	Correct use of the verb in all sentences.	One or two errors in verb use.	Incorrect use of the verb in most sentences.
Group participation	All group members contributed actively.	Some members participated more than others.	Only one or two members did most of the work.

Note. [Rubric developed by the authors to assess the written production of students at A1 level.]

Maximum Total Score: 12 points

Suggested Scale:

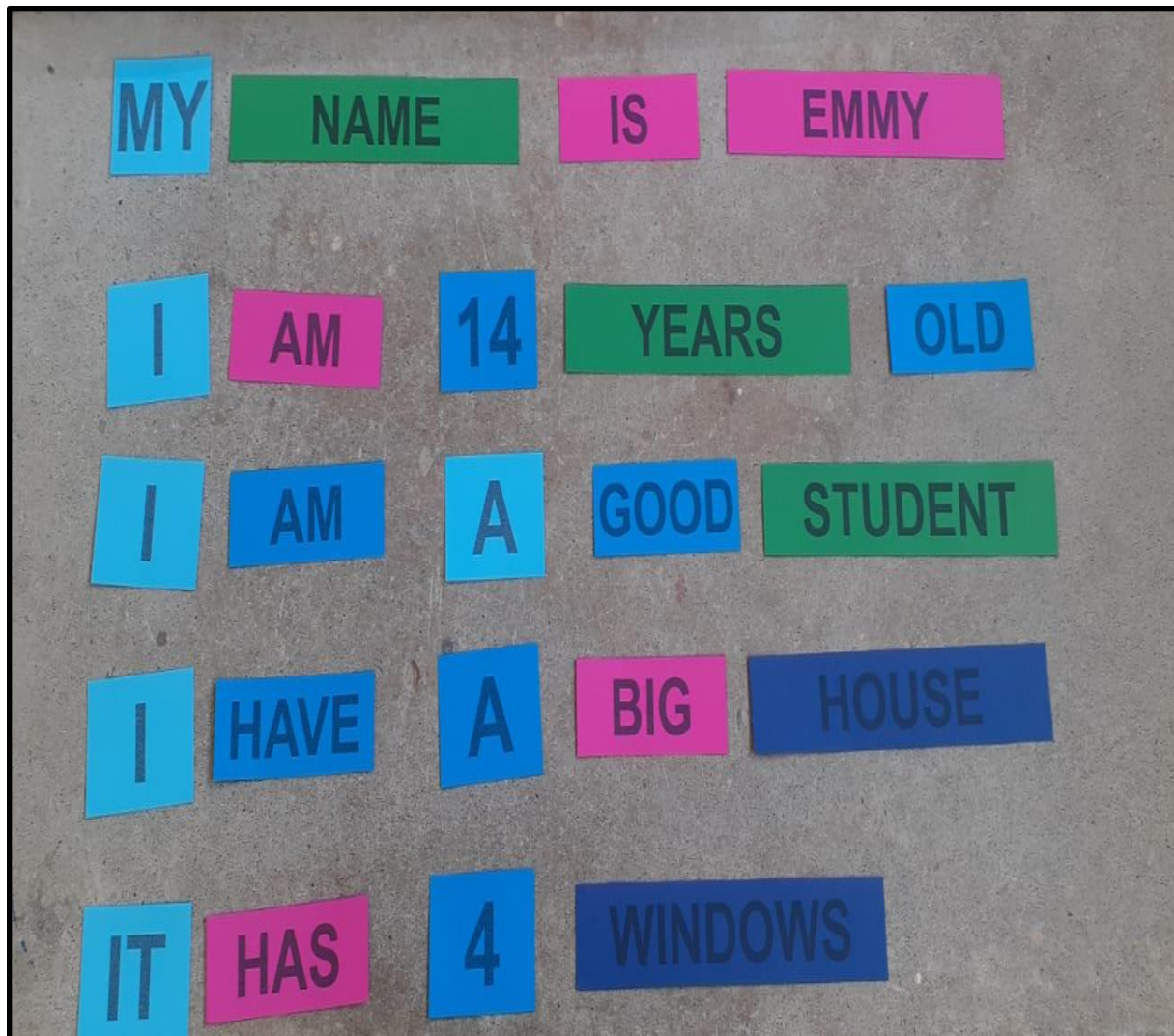
- 10-12 pts → Excellent collaborative development.
- 7-9 pts → Acceptable, with areas for improvement.
- 4-6 pts → In progress, requires support and guide correction.
- 0-3 pts → Incomplete activity or lacking evidence comprehension.

Class 3.

Activity: Word Detective.

Picture 2.

Photographic evidence of the activity “Word Detective”.



Note. [Students looked for key words around the classroom in order to decipher the text assigned to each group to identify their meaning and use in context.]

Table 11.*Evaluation Rubric - Word Detective.*

Criteria	Excellent (3 pts)	Acceptable (2 pts)	Needs improvement(1 pt)
Correct use of vocabulary	All words used with clear meaning.	1-2 errors.	Frequent incorrect use.
Sentence structure	Complete and well-ordered sentences.	Some errors.	Many incomplete sentences.
Basic grammar (to be, etc).	Correct use of studied structures.	Some minor errors	Requires reinforcement.
Peer review	Reviewed and corrected with support.	Partial review.	No review.

Note.[*Rubric developed by the authors to assess the written production of students at A1 level.*]

Maximum Total Score: 12 points

Suggested Scale:

- 10-12 pts → Excellent performance
- 7-9 pts → Acceptable, with areas for improvement
- 4- 6 pts → In progress, requires support
- 0-3 pts → Incomplete activity or lacking evident comprehension

Class 4.

Activities: Creative Die Story, Hopscotch Sentences and Peer&Feedback

Activity 1: Creative Die (*image as workshop sheets used in groups.*)

Picture 3

Photographic evidence of the activity “Creative Die Story”.



Note: [Students threw dice with pictures to construct creative sentences, encouraging vocabulary and grammatical structures. Own elaboration.]

Work-Sheet Activity “Creative Die”; Group A

Intra-Class Workshop

Create your own story!

Story 1: A beautiful young woman in the mountains

Students’ names:

Course: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: *Answer each question in English. Use the handout provided by the teacher.*

1.- Identify the names of each of the six images on your die (e.g., first image: a child, a tree, etc).

2.- Write your own story based on the images corresponding to the die assigned to you.

Work-Sheet Activity “Creative Die”; Group B

Intra-Class Workshop

Create your own story!

Story 2: A handsome man by the sea.

Students’ names:

Course: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: *Answer each question in English. Use the handout provided by the teacher.*

1.- Identify the names of each of the six images on your die (e.g., first image: a child, a tree, etc).

2.- Write your own story based on the images corresponding to the die assigned to you.

Work-Sheet Activity “Creative Die”; Group C

Intra-Class Workshop

Create your own story!

Story 3: The math’s teacher and the cellphone

Students’ names:

Course: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: *Answer each question in English. Use the handout provided by the teacher.*

1.- Identify the names of each of the six images on your die (e.g., first image: a child, a tree, etc).

2.- Write your own story based on the images corresponding to the die assigned to you.

Work-Sheet Activity “Creative Die”; Group D

Intra-Class Workshop

Create your own story!

Story 4: The young doctor and nurse at the hospital

Students’ names:

Course: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: *Answer each question in English. Use the handout provided by the teacher.*

1.- Identify the names of each of the six images on your die (e.g., first image: a child, a tree, etc).

2.- Write your own story based on the images corresponding to the die assigned to you.

Activity 2: Hopscotch Sentences

Picture 4.

Photographic evidence of the activity “Hopscotch Sentences”.



Note: [Students jumped over boxes with grammatical structures, forming random sentences to reinforce the learning of verb tenses. Own elaboration.]

Activity 3: Peer Reading and Feedback

Table 12.

Observation checklist for the activity “Creative Die”.

ITEM	YES	NO
Does the story make sense?		
Did they use at least 4 words from the dice?		
Are there connectors?		
Is it organized?		

Note. [Checklist developed by the authors to observe key aspects of the students’ writing in the creative die activity.]

Table 13.

Evaluation criteria: Creative Die activity

Criteria	Excellent (3 pts)	Acceptable (2 pts)	Needs improvement(1 pt)
Use of connectors	Two or more connectors are well used.	One connector.	None or poorly used.
Story coherence	Clear and well-organized story.	Slightly disorganized.	Confusing or illogical.
Use of thematic	Correct and varied	Limited vocabulary.	Irrelevant or incorrect

vocabulary	word usage.		word usage.
Group participation	All members actively collaborated.	Unequal participation.	One or two did all the work.

Note. *[Rubric developed by the authors to assess the written production of students at A1 level.]*

Maximum Total Score: 12 points

Suggested Scale:

- 10-12 pts → Excellent story
- 7-9 pts → Acceptable, with areas for improvement
- 4- 6 pts → In progress
- 0-3 pts → Incomplete activity or lacking evident comprehension

Annex 5.*Teacher interview (after to intervention)***Survey: Teacher's Perception of English Writing Skills Performance.**

Purpose: To collect the teacher's perception of changes observed in students' English writing performance after applying the pedagogical proposal, according to the linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic dimensions.

Instructions: Mark with an "X" the option that best reflects your perception regarding each statement.

Section 1: General Information.

1. Level or grade taught: _____

2. Length of experience teaching english:

Less than 1 year

1-3 years

4-6 years

More than 6 years

Section 2: Evaluation of Writing Performance (Likert Scale)

Scale:

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neither Disagree nor Agree 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

Dimension	Item	Affirmation	1	2	3	4	5
Linguistic	1	Students improved their use of basic grammatical structures (e.g. verb to be)					
Linguistic	2	They demonstrate greater mastery of essential vocabulary.					
Linguistic	3	They make fewer spelling errors in frequent words.					
Cognitive	4	They organize their ideas in more logical sequence.					

Cognitive	5	They select more relevant ideas in their writings.					
Cognitive	6	They use basic connectors more clearly and frequently.					
Pragmatic	7	They write short texts with a clear communicative purpose.					
Pragmatic	8	They better adapt the language school or everyday contexts.					
Pragmatic	9	Their texts are more comprehensible for a beginner reader.					

Section 3: Open Opinion

10.- Do you consider that the students have improved their English writing after the intervention? Yes/No Why?

11.- What activities or strategies worked best during the intervention?

12.- What aspects still need improvement in their writings?

13.- Do you have any suggestions for future interventions focused on English writing?

Annex 6.*Final Test-Post test***Diagnostic Test- Writing Skill (A1+)**

Student's name: _____

Age: _____ Course: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: *Answer each question in English. Use complete sentences if possible.***1.- Write five colors in English.**

2.- Write the name of 4 family members in English.

3.- Complete the sentences with (*am, is, are*).

- She ____my friend.
- I ____ 13 years old.
- They ____ students.

4.- Write the negative form of these sentences.

He is a teacher. □ _____

They are happy. □ _____

5.- Complete the sentences with the correct form (have-has).

a) I ____ 3 dogs.

b) The house ____ 2 windows.

c) She ____ one book.

6.- Write three complete sentences using the verb to be (am, is, are).

1. (am)_____

2. (is)_____

3. (are)_____

7.- Write a sentence to introduce yourself (name, age, country).

1. (name)_____

2. (age)_____

3. (country)_____

8.- Write three sentences to describe yourself (appearance or personality).

1. (Girl/Boy) _____

2. (Tall/Short) _____

3. (Happy/Sad/Honest) _____

9.- Write five sentences about your favorite animal.

10.- Write a short paragraph (4-5 sentences) describing your house. Include information such as how many rooms it has, what color it is, and what you like about it.

Annex 7.*Evaluation Criteria-Post test.***Quantitative Scoring Guide - A1+ Diagnostic Test.****Score Distribution**

This guide allows for the quantitative assessment of the post test, evaluating accuracy, grammatical structure, and communicative clarity.

Section	Items	Pts. per Item	Section Total
Basic Vocabulary	1 to 2	10 pts.	20 pts.
Basic Grammar	3 to 5	10 pts.	30 pts.
Functional Writing	6 to 8	10 pts.	30 pts.
Semi-Guided Writing	9 to 10	10 pts.	20 pts.
OVERALL TOTAL			100 pts.

Scoring Criteria

Vocabulary (Items 1-2):

- ✓ 10 pts; All words are correctly spelled and relevant.
- ✓ 5-8 pts; Some incorrect or partially correct words.
- ✓ 0-4 pts; More than 50% of the words incorrect or incomplete.

Grammar (Items 3-5)

- ✓ 10 pts; All items are answered correctly with proper grammatical usage.
- ✓ 5-8 pts; 1 or 2 minor errors.
- ✓ 0-4 pts; Serious errors or more than 50% incorrect.

Functional Writing (Items 6-8):

- ✓ 10 pts; Three complete, clear sentences with correct grammatical structure.
- ✓ 5-8 pts; Incomplete sentences or minor errors.
- ✓ 0-4 pts; Very basic, confusing, or unclear sentences.

Semi-Guided Writing (Items 9-10):

- ✓ 10 pts; 5 clear, coherent sentences with appropriate vocabulary and grammar.
- ✓ 6-8 pts; 3-4 understandable sentences with some errors.
- ✓ 2-4 pts; Fewer than 3 sentences or with many errors.
- ✓ 0 pts; No response or unintelligible.

Interpretation of the Total Score

Score Range	General Classification	CEFR Equivalent	Observation
85-100 pts	Excellent	A1+ consolidated	Demonstrates solid command of A1 level. Ready to progress to A2 structures.
70-84 pts	Satisfactory	Early -Mid A1	Manage basic aspects of A1.Guided practice and reinforcement recommended.
50-69 pts.	Deficient	Pre- A1	Very limited level. Requires direct support and pedagogical intervention.
<50 pts.	Deficient	No functional level	Does not demonstrate functional competencies. Basic-level instruction is advised.