



**UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL PENÍNSULA DE SANTA ELENA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND LANGUAGES
PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

**“THE BENEFITS OF JOURNAL TO IMPROVE
WRITING SKILLS”**

RESEARCH PROJECT

As a prerequisite to obtain a:

**BACHELOR´S DEGREE IN PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL
AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

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ADVISOR'S APPROVAL

In my role as Advisor of the research paper and title **THE BENEFITS OF JOURNALS TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS** prepared by **SANDOVAL BERNAL JOYCE LUISANA** an undergraduate student of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major, at School of Educational Sciences and Languages at Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, I declare that after oriented, studied and reviewed the project, I approve it in its entirety, because it meets the requirements and is sufficient for its submission to the evaluation of the academic tribunal.

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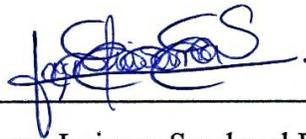


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Declaration

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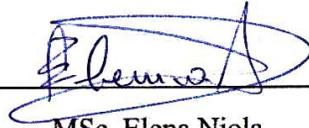
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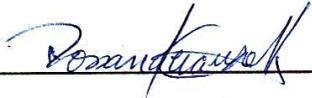
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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this to my parents who have always made me feel loved and supported to fight for my dreams, to my uncle Francisco who has accompanied me at every stage of my life since I was very little, to my grandmothers Loly and Aracely who always pray for me. I also want to dedicate it to someone important and special to me: Jerry Asencio, my best friend, the one who always believed in me, motivated me and was my greatest support in my moments of stress and anguish but, above all, he taught me what a friend for life is, this achievement was also thanks to you, Jerry.

With love

Joyce Luisana Sandoval Bernal

ABSTRACT

The journal is a tool that serves as a strategy to improve English language skills, especially writing skills. Several aspects interrupt this improvement process for students, for the same reason this research objective is to describe the use of the journal as a didactic resource to improve writing skills in English language teaching students. The methodology applied to this research is qualitative, phenomenological. The information was collected through interviews based on opened-ended questions that were directed to teachers of the Universidad Estatal Peninsula de Santa Elena. The analysis of the research results was collected through keywords according to the interviews. As a result, the teachers consider that the use of the journal allows students to enrich their writing skills, since, through this strategic tool, students can practice, learn, organize, study, and revise their writing more and more for improvement.

KEY WORDS: Journals, writing skills, teaching strategy, English language learning.

RESUMEN

El diario es una herramienta que sirve como estrategia para mejorar las habilidades del idioma inglés, especialmente las de escritura. Varios aspectos interrumpen este proceso de mejora para los estudiantes, por lo mismo este objetivo de investigación es describir el uso del diario como recurso didáctico para mejorar las habilidades de escritura en los estudiantes de la enseñanza del idioma inglés. La metodología aplicada a esta investigación es cualitativa, fenomenológica. La información se recolectó a través de entrevistas basadas en preguntas abiertas que fueron dirigidas a docentes de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena. El análisis de los resultados de la investigación se recogió a través de palabras clave según las entrevistas. Como resultado, los profesores consideran que el uso del diario permite a los estudiantes enriquecer sus habilidades de escritura, ya que, a través de esta herramienta estratégica, los estudiantes pueden practicar, aprender, organizar, estudiar y revisar su escritura cada vez más para mejorar.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Diarios, habilidades de escritura, estrategia de enseñanza, aprendizaje del idioma inglés.

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Introduction.

English is one of the most widely spoken languages globally, it is an open field of opportunities, even in the academic field. Students or people from all over the world seek to learn this language as a way of looking for new opportunities, be it in employment, education, economics, politics, and culture; or even as a way of getting to know the world and being able to communicate with others (Melitz, 2016).

English is used in most Latin American countries as a second language, and its importance has increased over the years, becoming the most widely used language for communication with native speakers, for education, work or even for social status, opening up new opportunities. In Ecuador, the English language has had several shortcomings and also great benefits for students who have prepared themselves by studying a language that is global. In education it is often difficult to include all the skills of a language, in this case, English, as it is difficult to try to practice all the skills of a language such as writing, speaking, listening, and reading. It is important to take each of them into account, in order to develop the student's skills and to have a better acceptance of the language.

Some of the difficulties students of the Universidad Estatal Peninsula de Santa Elena have in writing are: lack of resources and time, limited grammar and vocabulary, and few strategies to develop writing skills. All these aspects are problems that limit the development of writing skills, as writing skills require practice. The aim of this research work is to analyze and describe the use of journals as a tool to facilitate the learning of writing skills in the students of the degree course Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages (PINE).

In order to carry out the research, this research work was divided into five chapters; the first chapter explains the problem statement, the barriers that students encounter when learning writing skills, the objectives, and the justification of the topic. The second chapter is the theoretical framework, this chapter is based on research on important topics and subtopics related to the learning of writing skills. The third chapter is composed of the methodology applied, the methods and type of research, as well as the tool that collects valuable data to enrich this research work, in this case the interviews with teachers of the first and second semester of UPSE. The fourth chapter presents the results obtained from the interviews, in this case, the results obtained from the teachers who were interviewed on the subject and the last chapter, which is chapter five, reflects all the knowledge and results acquired through the topic that was investigated, to complement the research work.

Chapter I: The problem

Research Topic

Didactic Resources and Writing Skills

The benefits of journal to improve Writing Skills

Problem Statement

In the writing skill it is important to take into consideration some techniques and tools to be applied in a way that helps the development of this skill. The journal is a facilitating material where we can divide it into several sections depending on how the teacher wants the students to use this tool to improve their writing skills.

According to Lopez (2015) who carried out research at the University of Ambato; English language teaching explains that this language is one of the most important and essential languages in the world. Lopez mentions that English provides many opportunities in various fields such as: work, education, culture, etc. Therefore, it is an important and essential language for the world.

Jabali (2018) explains that over the years, writing has been seen as the most complicated skill and a part that really challenges people in learning a foreign language. Most of the time, this can happen because of learners' expectations and the actual methods or teaching strategies used in class to students of different levels. Also, several factors may play a role such as: different

backgrounds and knowledge, attitudes, opinions, experiences of individual students' writing skills and abilities, the emotional side, which is also an important part within learning.

According to Matingwina (2018) from the department of Library and Information Sciences, National University of science and Technology, explains that there is a rather complicated relationship between health and academics, because many educational institutions are concerned with providing the knowledge for students to learn but there is no study of why students fail in learning, relating to this study with the emotional part or emotional health of the student.

The problem today is that there are deficiencies and limitations in developing and understanding writing skills when developing activities related to this ability. This may be due to various aspects within the methodology used, whether the system used academically, the strategies established in the institution, the interest of the students; it could also be the use of dictation or perhaps the overuse of translation. It may also be that students limit themselves to the teaching, that is, they acquire the information provided by the teacher but do not investigate or go deeper into the subject, which is called passive learning.

Passive learning focuses only on the teacher's instructions, this means, teacher provides and transmits knowledge and experiences to the students in a classroom and this knowledge becomes limited learning, as the students do not take notes or ask questions to avoid doubts or confusion (Minhas et al., 2012). Due to these limitations on the development of writing skills, students fail performing and /or expanding this skill. At the beginning, learners usually do not

have a clear idea on how to start writing a text, a paragraph and they even have difficulties with writing simple sentences.

Also, other problems on developing this skill are the lack of vocabulary on specific topics, limited knowledge of the linguistic components of the language, problems on selecting the audience to write for, differentiating formal or informal levels of writing, among others, all these aspects makes it difficult to write something that is clear, specific and understandable. The lack of preparation and practice of this skill is what does not allow us to have the expected results within the profile of the students of the first and second semester of the Pedagogy degree in National and Foreign Languages of the Peninsular University of Santa Elena.

Problem question

Why are there deficiencies in writing skills in language learning? And what is their relationship with the teaching methods and strategies applied?

Specific questions

- Can journals be implemented as a teaching strategy to improve the current methodology used for teaching writing?
- What are the techniques applied by English teachers to develop writing skills in students of first and second semester in major PINE?
- What are the benefits that journals could bring for the development of writing skills?

General Objective

To describe the use of journals as a didactic resource for the improvement of writing skills in English language teaching.

Specific objectives.

- To analyze teaching methods and strategies applied for the development of writing skills in language teaching through bibliographic research.
- To determine the techniques applied for teaching writing skills in first and second semester students of PINE major.
- To identify the benefits and/or challenges of journals as a technique to improve writing skills.

Justification

The present research work is carried out to analyze and explain in detail the benefits of using a journal to improve writing skills as a different methodology. It is important to carry out this research since there are students with deficiencies in this ability, due to very diverse situations and aspects. Some students lack practicing writing skills, so do not even like to write in their native language, some do not like to read, and there will be other students who do not like to talk much, and others who do not like to listen to audio or podcast; this should not be an impediment for students to learn the four skills of a language, though. With this research work, it is possible to present and explain how the use of a journal helps to improve writing skills with the purpose that students can change the perspective of what they normally consider what learning to write entails. Learning to write can be difficult but it does not have to be monotonous and boring learning but to look for a different meaning, to allow students and teachers to develop a better way that allows them to express themselves, where the teacher is a guide and the student is an active learner. Students can identify their emotions and feelings when writing while they acquire new vocabulary and adapt it to their abilities.

Chapter II: Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the arguments of this research, taking into account other studies related to the topic and arriving at a defined and enriching approach for this study.

English is a global language; nowadays English has a great importance in many fields such as: labour, academic, economic, political, among others. In the English language all four skills are essential (listening, writing, speaking and reading), each skill has its own method and strategy for acquiring it, and it is often difficult to integrate them due to various factors such as: teacher planning, educational system, organization, and lack of time.

Willis (2009) explains in his book *A Framework for Task Based Learning*, "Many secondary school students who have studied a foreign language leave school unable to communicate in it" (p.04). When studying a second language, students might become demotivated for different aspects, among them: limited vocabulary, grammar, lack of interest, teaching method, and educational system. For example, in writing skills by focusing on the first aspect which is vocabulary, what happens in this part is the lack of vocabulary, many students find it difficult to write something because they do not have enough vocabulary on various topics or a specific topic. Laufer (2013) explained that it is necessary and to know the detailed meaning of the words to be able to transmit the message well.

In the mother tongue, vocabulary and lexicon are relevant, since when the person wants to convey a message or explain something complex, the appropriate lexicon is taken into account; likewise, when studying a language, skills should be developed at the same time, writing skills are included here. When lacking the necessary or extensive vocabulary, learners

are not able to transmit the message correctly. When not mastering the lexicon in the target language, communication might be limited and incomprehensible. Even more so when it comes to writing skills, as in writing the information used is always a bit more formal. Valbuena (2018) said in her research work, which was based on surveys about the reasons why young students lack vocabulary and the results were that few students practice reading, out of a percentage of 100%, only 40% answered that they practice reading and learn new words to build up a wide vocabulary, and 60% of students do not practice reading and are therefore unable to expand their vocabulary.

Another aspect to develop writing skills is grammar. According to Rossiter (2021) Grammar was considered elitist or superfluous, that is, it did not have or fulfill a function. Chomsky on the one hand proposed the theory of universal grammar, which is that the brain of children is ready to understand grammar by intuition; on the other hand, Chomsky's linguistic theory was considered "not without reason" that is to say that it was out of reach for students and even teachers. Because of these theories, several experts said that grammar should not be taught, but upon further analysis of the study of grammar, they came to the conclusion that it was not elitist to teach grammar, but the importance in which it was presented or taught, since it is important that the student, beyond needing grammar, must understand it in order to learn and apply it.

Interest is an important part of the teaching-learning process. Many of the reasons why students have deficiencies in the academic field is due to an important factor such as lack of interest. In this part, if the student is not interested in learning the language and improving writing skills, there will be consequences within the education such as: poor performance, few hours of

decision to study, failing the subject and the most important lack of prior knowledge to move forward. If the student does not have previous knowledge about the topic and the subject, it will be more difficult for him to learn something advanced (Gamboa et al., 2020).

The methods used are important, as this part includes all the activities that take place in the classroom. Intarapanich (2013) mentions that the methods and strategies used provide students with different opportunities, such as better communication through the use of language. This author explained that, through observation, he analyzed that the use of flash cards, games, books and the blackboard play a fundamental role in a classroom because they enhance education.

The system depends on the organization of each institution that is discussed in the administrative meetings. These meetings also have the function of raising problems and future problems to be able to share ideas among all and seek solutions that benefit the educational society. This system aims to improve education for students, that is, this system needs to be studied and designed to achieve the desired goal, within the objective are: teachers and directors, fulfilling an important role, the strategies and tools that must be applied in the teaching-learning process (Magrath et al., 2019).

Planning is also essential since there are situations in which the institution's system tends to limit the teaching process of teachers, when an activity must be carried out within the theme and this activity is rejected because it is not aligned with the educational profile of that institution or when the use of different tools or strategic methods is required, but they cannot be applied for reasons or rules that the institutions have. In such a way that it limits in many occasions the

teaching that a teacher wants to integrate, because students learn in different ways through different methods and strategies (Magrath et al., 2019).

2.1 Pedagogical basis

2.1.1. Journals.

Journals are a tool to facilitate the improvement of students' writing skills and also help the development of other skills. It is important to apply the journal because it brings several benefits within the teaching-learning of students.

According to Herrero (2022) journals are a very useful tool to develop writing skills; in fact, in his study, each student had to have a journal and this journal was divided into three parts. The first, reading: consisted of reading a book and freely writing in the journals their ideas, thoughts, feelings, favorite phrases, motivational messages or recommendations. The second part was reading control/registration: consisted of writing the author of the book, the title, the number of pages they read per week, and the date they finished it. The last part was, vocabulary: as the name indicates, the students put the words they did not know and created their vocabulary list. This diary was delivered to the teacher fortnightly, for respective review and the vocabulary words were taken as lessons.

The result of this study is that, the students were motivated since they could freely write what they thought, they could write with a broader vocabulary and more related to real life; on the other hand, teachers with this tool, have a clearer vision of each student, and they can give feedback, they can also follow up during the semester if necessary, to be successful with this strategy is that the teacher does the follow-up and feedback, in this way the results will be seen.

The use of the journal serves a number of purposes, including: organizing ideas and time, developing and learning new words, using short or long sentences, and creating accountability. This tool allows students to make informal writing in which they can express themselves freely to write about any feelings or thoughts they have, or also formal writing while learning the English language. The main objective of this tool is for students to improve their writing skills by adapting new and innovative strategies for them to learn and be interested in the process.

2.1.2 Journal implementation in higher education.

The use of the journal allows students to have a space for self-exploration and reflection, which leads them to develop not only the ability to write, but also, other skills. In addition, by implementing a journal in the classroom, students are able to share ideas, exchange information, self-prepare, learn from their own mistakes, make connections from old information with new information gained, and get to know themselves and their way of interacting or expressing themselves using interpretations, comments, questions and answers, justify, illustrate, pose, describe, classify, assume, and divide (Judith, 2022).

2.1.3 Journal implementation in higher education.

The implementation of the journal is of great value as it enhances learning and growth in students practicing and developing writing skills in the English language. In the process of implementation, it is essential to mention that this type of tool is an essential part of teaching and learning, because for teachers it is a way of arranging teaching where students can be creative, can collaborate, create experiences and express them through this support material. In addition, it is a useful tool for teachers as they keep track of each student's writing improvements.

Within the process of applying the journal, critical self-reflection is developed, where the student feels free to question, analyze, discuss, contradict and evolve, being this tool even an escape or relief from their problems, because of the way they express and express it, at the same time as they learn the language and improve their writing skills (Hiemstra, 2002).

2.1.4. Constructivism.

The theory of constructivism is learning based on learners' construction of knowledge, either individually or together with the teacher. In this theory, various strategies are applied for the construction of concepts and knowledge such as: summaries, concept maps, word maps, Venn diagram, analogies, use of questions, textual structures, semantic networks, and readings which play a very important role in education, in the classroom as they are dynamic activities and allow ideas and knowledge for the formation of concepts that can be used and shared in any situation and in turn encourage interaction and motivation of students (Alviárez et al., 2010).

2.1.5 Language acquisition.

According to Guillermo Lopez (2011) there are different ways to acquire and develop a second language such as subconscious learning and language learning. The way of subconscious learning is the way children learn and develop this ability in the first language. In this type of learning, people do not know that they are acquiring a language even though they are, that is, they are not aware of it. However, what people can notice is that they use the language for the purpose of communication, be it with someone who speaks the language, be it for work, a trip, or a meeting with friends from other places, that is, in this same subconscious process, they also have a conscious part, which is, the using the language.

2.1.6. English language learning.

Learning a language is an active process, from the moment a person is born and as he or she grows up, hearing words for the first time and relating them to other words until he or she learns the meaning, this is how language learning unfolds.

Jin Cho (2020) explains that students who are going to learn a foreign language have too many expectations, whether good or bad. In this part of learning English, factors such as: motivation, attitude and aptitude, difficulties and learning strategies, methods and planning come into play. The teacher has to know the beliefs or expectations that their students have, for this step it is useful to use evaluations or diagnostic tests as tools that facilitate the information that is required. The objective of these evaluations is that the teacher can look for strategies, methods with specific activities to advance with his class, thus avoiding deficiencies in learning the language.

2.1.7. Writing process.

In the process of writing skills, there are several stages and steps, in which the teacher must assume the role of guide for the students, while the writing process is active in the classroom, in different activities carried out by the teacher, this ability becomes freer, more adaptable and understandable. It is also important to include steps such as: write, review and edit, this purpose makes the writing skills process motivating, more productive and collaborative.

Here the guide, that is, the teachers are the ones who teach students to look for topics to write, raise ideas, point out main ideas, important phrases, choose and formulate the title well, how to plan, such as structuring a paragraph, the procedure for writing, creating drafts,

modifications, deleting information, adding more vocabulary on the topic, taking into account grammar, formal or informal text, punctuation marks, etc. absolutely everything related to the writing process. (Fernando Macías & Zúñiga, 2022, págs. 331-332)

2.2. Theoretical basis

2.2.1. Writing skills.

Writing is not a skill that develops naturally but is based on a lot of practice and dedication, this will help the student to be successful in his personal, social, academic, and work life. Writing is an important skill in learning a language and in communication in general since without it the students could not complement their communication or finish the language process, therefore they would feel frustrated for not being able to perform well in language. When it comes to practicing writing, it is not simply asking students to write about a specific topic, but changing that way. For example, brainstorming is a good strategy for using vocabulary and writing, sharing ideas, expressing feelings and emotions, capturing creativity, invent stories depending on the taste of each student, desire to entertain others, passion for writing poems, conveying motivational messages to people, also express fears or try to heal wounds whether psychological, verbal and even physical, the student should feel motivated and inspired to write, because writing is not just another skill, it is the art of capturing what the human being is (Graham, 2019).

2.2.2. Teaching writing skills.

The teaching of writing is based on practice and is linked to other skills such as reading, listening and speaking, to complement language learning. In the teaching of writing, it is

important to set objectives because pupils plan the time for the individual development of each learning process in each of them. These objectives allow each student to have a purpose to achieve, whether it is to improve writing, to learn, to write better, to organize ideas, to analyze critical criteria, to express feelings and emotions in an appropriate way. (Blanka, 2014)

2.2.3. Vocabulary.

In writing there are important aspects to take into account when teaching and learning, such as vocabulary. It is essential when writing because when students are writing about a topic they can easily find the right word or phrase or the meaning they need and they can flow more in the topic that you want to present. For that reason, it is important that vocabulary must be learned in a way that the learner retains it in the long term.

There are strategies for having a long-term vocabulary such as: linking words, repetition of words, use, creativity and imagination. Likewise, a strategy to remember the vocabulary learned is visual ability, which consists of drawing something and relating it to the difficult word to remember, so that the student remembers the image and in turn can remember the word every time he needs to write it. Also, memory games such as: associate, remember and order so that the vocabulary remains longer in the mind. Furthermore, vocabulary is not an end in itself; on the contrary, expanding vocabulary allows learners to develop different skills at the same time: writing, reading, speaking and listening (Nation, 2015).

2.2.4. Reading skills.

It is necessary to understand what is read, for academic learning and life in general, for all aspects. When a foreign language is taught along with its skills, teachers have to look for

strategies, in this case in reading skills, the teacher must look for and propose to the student strategies that improve the reading of the students. It is important because this skill is closely related to writing, because by reading students get new vocabulary, they can analyze grammar, punctuation marks, correct use of formal and informal writing, how to reach the audience depending on the age and the topic (Acosta et al., 2010).

2.3. Legal basis

The present research work is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador, as it is important because this law indicates the rights of students within the education programme.

2.3.1. Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior. (LOES)

This law is the law that regulates the education system in the country. It is concerned with the rights, obligations and duties of each individual, as well as determining the sanctions in the event of non-compliance (Salinas, 2014).

Art. 27:

The current Constitution establishes that education will focus on the human being and it will guarantee its holistic development, within the framework of respect for human rights, the sustainable environment and democracy; will be participatory, compulsory, intercultural, democratic, inclusive and diverse, of quality and warmth; promote gender equality, justice, solidarity and peace; will stimulate critical thinking, art and physical culture, individual and community initiative, and development of skills and abilities to create and work. (LEY ORGANICA DE EDUCACION SUPERIOR, LOES, 2018, pp. 4-5)

It is related to education since LOES establishes that education prioritizes the human being, protecting their rights, providing them with a democracy and an inclusive and diverse society, protects and highlights culture, gender equity, and will promote development to create and work. People will not feel excluded from receiving their education or within education, for any reason, since the LOES affirms their total protection

Art. 350.- The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador states that the Education System Superior aims at academic and professional training with a scientific and humanistic vision; scientific and technological research; innovation, promotion, development and dissemination of knowledge and cultures; the construction of solutions for the problems of the country, in relation to the objectives of the development regime. (LEY ORGANICA DE EDUCACION SUPERIOR, LOES, 2018, pág. 5)

LOES affirms professional and academic education, seeking solutions to problems in the country so as not to interfere in the education process of students and future professionals.

Variables of the study

Independent variable.

Didactic resources such as the use of the journal for students to improve their writing skills and to be able to perform better in writing. This is the independent variable because it is a strategy that might modify the results; however, it does not change or is not affected by the study.

Dependent variable.

Lettering skills: The development of the improvement and growth of the students for the skill of writing based on the use of didactic resources. This is the dependent variable because the writing process is affected by the use of a strategy, journals.

Chapter III: Methodological framework

In this research work, the qualitative method is applied to describe the processes and views or opinions of lived experiences to obtain quality results, using techniques and tools to collect important data, relevant information and above all results to improve the study. The qualitative method focuses on finding out through interviews the benefits of using a journal for university students of English to improve their writing skills.

3.1. Methods

In order to carry out a research that is based on experiences and phenomenological situations is used the qualitative method, since, qualitative research can use several useful tools to investigate a topic in-depth and in detail, including observation or focus groups, in-depth interview sheets, and may even include techniques or strategies such as sampling and analysis of the data or results, giving as a conclusion a detailed description of the topic under study and how qualitative research can be improved (Johana Moriarty, 2015).

According to Aspers (2019) the qualitative method seeks to collect information and describe the study to provide a solution for a research project. These qualitative methods provide many useful and specific contributions to research, thus developing more complete and organized data.

The qualitative method is specifically used to study complex and complicated phenomena in depth, such as research that lacks information or is difficult to find and understand. Within the qualitative method there must be determination to investigate in depth in order to understand a topic either through observation, interviews or monitoring of a particular topic or object (Njie & Asimiran, 2014).

3.2. Type of Research

3.2.1. Phenomenological studies.

This research is carried out through a phenomenological study. Neubauer (2019), phenomenological studies represent qualitative research, which is mostly used for health and academic research. This research methodology explains the study of the lived experiences of an individual. Therefore, it is an effective method to carry out and apply to obtain specific results to prove or confirm and look for answers or solutions to a problem that needs to be studied. This research studies how to improve writing through the use of journals, it is important because it provides information about the benefits of a journal in the teaching-learning field. It is a useful technique and tool for both teachers and students when experiencing writing improvement through a strategic tool.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques

3.3.1. One on one interview.

Interviews help to collect information on a certain topic, the interviewee should answer the questions based on his or her thoughts, point of view and experiences. Interviews have one purpose and that is the conversation or dialogue with the interviewee and the interviewer, these interviews should be planned in a way that captures the interviewee's attention so that it is of

interest to them. The interviews will provide the information needed to determine and complement a qualitative approach to the work (Turner, 2022).

Through this interview, important data will be collected about the research that is about the benefits of applying a journal in the first and second semester PINE (UPSE). In this way, the interviewees will give their point of view based on their experience and the information collected will enrich this investigative work.

3.4. Instruments

3.4.1. Questionnaire.

The "one-on-one interview" consists of 7 questions that are open-ended questions. In the open questions, the interviewee, in this case, first and second semester teachers of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages, respond based on experience and points of view on the questions that are based on the topic: "the benefits of journal to improve writing skills".

3.4.2. Data Collection Processing and Resources.

The interview is used as a tool that will provide information on the benefits of using the journal with first and second semester students of the National and Foreign Pedagogy career. This interview is scheduled to be conducted virtually through the Zoom application which allows meetings to be recorded and information to be retained, since the first semester of PINE for the 2022 period is virtual as a precautionary measure against contagious disease after the pandemic that broke in two years ago. The interviews are applied in the academic period 2022-1, and this collected information will serve to enrich the research with real data.

3.5. Population and sample

The sample chosen for this research is a group of teachers from the first and second semester in PINE major. The samples are to obtain information on the use of the journal in the first and second semester PINE and in this way, it will be possible to obtain results to study and describe the benefits of the journal to improve writing in PINE students in the first and second semester.

Chapter IV: Analysis of findings

4.1. Interpretation of data from the interview

The interviews were carried out with 4 professors from the first and second semester of the PINE major, with the purpose of collecting important and necessary information on why the use of the journal brings benefits to PINE students. These interviews were carried out through zoom meetings, and to make sure that the right words were used so that there is no confusion when analyzing the information obtained for this research.

Interview question

1. - Do you think that the use of a journal in the classroom motivates students to improve their writing skills?

Figure 1

1 The journal motivates students



Note. The figure represents the keywords from the interviews.

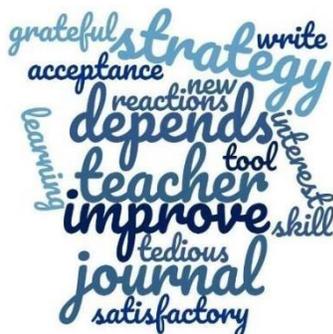
Source: Elaborated by the author.

The key words found in this question are: Writing, journal, students, skills, and improve. The interviewees from different points of view consider the journal to be a tool for students to improve their writing skills.

2. - How do you think students react to the application of a journal?

Figure 2

2 Students' reaction to the journal.



Note. The figure represents the keywords from the interviews.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The key words found in this question are: depends, teachers, improve and strategy. The interviewees consider that students' reactions are varied, and not all will react well or positively to this tool, there will be students who may react negatively. Depends on how the teacher presents the journal as a strategy to improve writing skills.

3. - What do you think the students' experience of writing a journal is like?

Figure 3

3 Students' experience with journal.



Note. The figure represents the keywords from the interviews.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The keywords found in question 3 are: write, experience, organize and students. Also, other keywords are enriching, communicative, therapeutic, and valuable, because the students' experience with the journal will allow them to communicate what is written. This tool can be therapeutic and valuable also for expressing thoughts. In the experience of the interviewees, when students finish writing the diary, they realize their mistakes and progress in improving the writing skills.

4. - What happens to the language and vocabulary of the students in the teaching-learning process with the application of the journal in the classroom?

Figure 4

4 Language and vocabulary in writing.



Note. The figure represents the keywords from the interviews.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

The key words in this question are: Language, tool, vocabulary, increase, learning and teacher. From the information gathered, the use of a tool such as the journal could help to

4.2. Interpretation of bibliographic review.

In chapter 2, emphasis was given to the study of the journal and the benefits it brings. One of the benefits of using this tool is that it helps students increase vocabulary and learn grammar. When the diary is used as a strategic tool, it must be based on a specific theme, defined by the teacher or by impulse (free topic). Whatever the topic chosen, the learner must vary the vocabulary, expressions, sentences, and for this purpose must carry out a search for new words. When the student starts to write a journal, the student starts to have the responsibility of self-education and self-learning, because when writing about a specific topic, it is necessary for the student to have knowledge about that topic, because when the student writes about a specific topic, he/she needs to do research in order to know and have enough information about that topic. Therefore, when researching, this process brings with it the learning of new vocabulary, new words, and even new phrases that the learner will begin to grasp, learn and capture so that the learner's vocabulary is expanded in a rewarding way and his or her writing has adequate words so that the message becomes quite clear and concise.

Grammar is important when learners write the journal, because with it the text will make sense. In this part, grammar helps the learner to express what pupils want to communicate in a correct way. In addition, through the journal the student learns verb tenses, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, connectors, formal and informal words which are of great help for writing because the learner needs to know how to express correctly what he/she wants to write in the journal. Therefore, the learner will be linked to grammar.

It is important that when the teacher presents the tool to be used (journal), does it in an assertive way, as the reaction of the students will depend on it. Some students may not like the

idea of writing very much because of their tastes and interests, but it is a tool that will facilitate the learning of this skill. In addition, the journal application is a useful tool for both teachers and students, as teachers can use the journal to find out which students are doing better in writing in English and which students need a bit more guidance to practice more and improve their English writing skills.

The journal is also considered a tool that can serve as therapy and relief for the students' process. Students can write something about their problems, feelings, emotions, or negative thoughts, allowing each student to feel free to vent in the journal and in this way also avoid holding back and collapsing. The journal is a very useful tool that brings many benefits in and out of education.

4.3. Analysis and discussion of the interview or focus group vs bibliographic review.

The journal in the classroom and outside the classroom is a tool used by teachers to help pupils develop their different skills, especially writing. This tool helps to improve students' writing skills by increasing their vocabulary and grammar knowledge needed for writing in the English language. It is important to know that journal writing allows learners to acquire new words, new definitions, as they explore new words they need to complete and complement a sentence, or a phrase according to what is written in the journal.

In chapter 2, according to Gamboa (2020), interest is a fundamental part of the teaching-learning process because if students do not pay much attention to the projects, in this case to the application of the journal, it is very difficult for students to improve their writing skills, because which becomes a barrier to learning.

The interviewees consider that it depends very much on the attitude of the students and their willingness to accept the journal as a tool for improvement and that pupils do not see the journal as just another task like other subjects, but that they can take it as a tool for improvement and that they can take advantage of it to obtain satisfactory results.

This type of strategy to improve students' writing skills is related to the theory of constructivism. As mentioned in chapter 2, according to several authors Alvarez (2010), explained that constructivism is based on the construction of concepts through ideas, sentences, summaries, concept maps, etc., in order to build knowledge about a topic. In this case, the journal is related to constructivism theory as the journal is created on the basis of knowledge, it is a tool that learners use to acquire writing improvement to learn the English language.

According to Graham (2019), writing is not a skill or process that flows by itself; on the contrary, to develop it, it requires practice. Writing is an important skill in the development of learning a foreign language because it is a means of communication that allows the information to be received clearly.

From the interviews carried out, from the teachers' point of view, writing is a process in which the student begins with little or no knowledge, as the student advances, improves the writing ability, reaching more understanding about what is written and when reading. At the end of this process, when the journal comes to an end, the students can reread the first works or the first writings and realize for themselves the errors and improvements they have had in the writing process. Thus, having the enriching experience and satisfactory results, where the students will be able to give an account of their process and progress feeling proud of the achievements obtained.

Chapter V: Reflexions of the study

This chapter presents a summary and reflections of the study based on the researcher's experience, the challenges, skills, and lessons learned during the implementation of this project. Through this qualitative research, enriching and valuable data and results were obtained for the topic "the benefits of journal to improve writing skills". The main objective of this research was to find data to analyse and describe about the implementation of a tool such as journaling that greatly helps to improve the writing skills of English language learners.

This type of information can implement the tool as a strategy to advance the writing skills process. Therefore, it is necessary to look for a method, strategy or tool that helps both the teacher and the student in the teaching-learning process. From the research, an important aspect to take into account is that not all students learn in the same way, nor do they react in the same way to the presentation and application of a tool to improve writing skills. However, it is important to know how the teacher should present it, in this research the journal as a tool is discussed, the teacher should be assertive, creative and inspire confidence in the students when presenting this tool. It is known that not all students will have a positive reaction to the application of the journal due to different factors such as lack of interest in writing, lack of knowledge, lack of vocabulary and grammar, lack of ability to organize important ideas, or even lack of time. On the other hand, there will also be students who accept and use this tool with a positive attitude either because they like to write, they like to create stories, poems, histories, experiences, to let off steam through writing, knowing that someone else might read the journal and identify with a student's writing, or they simply like this way of learning the language.

This research unravels the information that a journal is a tool both to improve writing and to awaken the art in students. When students make a journal, they use their imagination, creativity, kindness, discoveries, and search. In addition, they develop and organize their time, ideas, reading comprehension, and even other skills such as reading, listening, and speaking. Moreover, when writing a text, they need to read it over and over again until they understand what is written. Regarding the listening because by listening to the journal themselves or listening to the journal of other classmates, they allow the listening to develop an understanding of the topic, and speaking. As it was mentioned, students at some point will have to read their journals aloud practicing new words, phrases, sentences and their pronunciation.

It is important that the teacher, as a guide, looks for different strategies for learning and developing writing skills. Based on this research, journals are a tool that can be used as a new methodology for students to improve writing skills. With the implementation of the journal, the problems and deficiencies that the students have can be solved and improved to write.

In my experience, the results of this research are very satisfying because the journal is a tool that I applied for my own learning, and it helped me a lot to improve my writing skills. Through this research, I learned that writing is the art of putting into words what the student wants to express, either to convey to other people or for academic purposes.

The perk is that I learnt to look for reliable information, check the issues carefully so as not to take wrong information and raise it in the research. The challenges during this research process were that certain topics were not clear when analyzing the information. When it came to conducting the interviews, it was difficult to contact the teachers. The interviews were done

through Zoom, so sometimes there were connection problems. Also, an interview requires some contact and the information flows better when it is done face to face; unfortunately, because of the pandemic, the education setting is working online. It was a bit difficult to face all these challenges, but in the end I got the expected results, realizing that there is always an option and learning to adapt to certain situations is crucial.

It is necessary to mention that as students we go through many difficult things and we acquire experiences from each stage. The life lesson of this project is not to give up, to give everything until the end, because through this process, I see the importance of constant learning and effort for professional development.

At the beginning of this research, I had previously read about the importance of creating a journal for academic purposes. On the internet, there is a lot of information about this, where it explains in detail what the journal can improve in people and in students, but I had not done such deep research as now. The journal is not simply a tool that can be used by students but in addition to helping students improve their writing, it helps teachers get to know their students. With this tool the teacher can identify which are students who do not like to write, or the students who have shortcomings in writing.

In an upcoming research opportunity, I would like to look for extensive information to collect more in-depth data. That could be achieved by applying the interviews to more participants because the results obtained were rewarding and interesting. Furthermore, I would actually implement this strategy, journals, in my future students, and make it part of my teaching methodology. This topic has influenced greatly on me and my preparation as a future educator.

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Annexes

MEMORANDO REFERENCIA: PINE-054-2022 -Aprobación de tema de Trabajo de Integración Curricular

Carrera Ingles UPSE <pine@upse.edu.ec>

Fri 6/3/2022 4:37 PM

To: JOYCE SANDOVAL <joyce.sandovalbernal@upse.edu.ec>; Niola Sanmartin Rosa Elena <rniola@upse.edu.ec>

MEMORANDO

REFERENCIA: PINE-054-2022

DE: Lcda. Sara González Reyes, MSc.
DIRECTORA DE CARRERA

PARA: Sandoval Bernal Joyce Luisana
CC: Elena Niola Sanmartín, MSc

ASUNTO: Aprobación de tema de Trabajo de Integración Curricular

FECHA: 03 de junio del 2022

Por medio de la presente y cumpliendo con la normativa existente para estudiantes de Pregrado de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, me dirijo a usted para informarle que mediante Resolución de Consejo de Facultad RCF-SO-FCEI-2022-015 Sesión ordinaria del 26 de mayo del 2022, fue aprobado el tema de su trabajo de integración curricular denominado "The benefits of Journals to improve writing skills"; siendo designado como tutor la docente:

DOCENTE	CORREO	TELÉFONO
MSC. Elena Niola Sanmartín	rniola@upse.edu.ec	0986350535

En caso de existir alguna observación con respecto al tutor, por favor notificar oportunamente con el fin de resolver cualquier situación que impida cumplir con el objetivo propuesto.

Recordarle que los docentes tutores deben enviar mensualmente el informe de avance de los estudiantes así como también que las tutorías deben ser registradas en el Formato de Registro de Asistencia a Tutorías.

Atentamente,

Lcda. Sara González Reyes, MSc.

Directora Carrera Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros (e).

Plagiarism certificate**UNIVERSIDAD ESTATAL PENÍNSULA DE SANTA ELENA BIBLIOTECA****Formato No. BIB-009****CERTIFICADO ANTIPLAGIO**

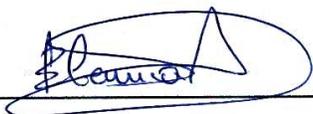
La Libertad, 15 de mayo del 2023

TUTOR 2022

En calidad de tutor del trabajo de titulación denominado **"THE BENEFITS OF JOURNAL TO IMPROVE WRITING SKILLS"**, elaborado por la estudiante **Sandoval Bernal Joyce Luisana** egresada de la Carrera de **Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros**, de la Facultad de **Ciencias de la Educación e Idiomas** de la **Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena**, previo a la obtención del título de Licenciatura en inglés, me permito declarar que una vez analizado en el sistema anti plagio URKUND, luego de haber cumplido los requerimientos exigidos de valoración, el presente proyecto ejecutado, se encuentra con 2% de la valoración permitida, por consiguiente se procede a emitir el presente informe.

Adjunto reporte de similitud.

Atentamente,

(f)  _____

C.I. 0105193676**DOCENTE TUTOR**

Lcda. Elena Niola, Msc.



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CERTIFICADO ANTIPLAGIO

Reporte Urkund

Certificado Sistema Antiplagio

En calidad de tutora del Trabajo de Integración Curricular denominado “**The Benefits of Journal to Improve Writing Skills**” elaborado por el estudiante Joyce Luisana Sandoval Bernal, de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros, de la Facultad de Ciencias de la Educación e Idiomas, de la Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, me permito declarar que una vez analizado en el sistema anti plagio ORIGINAL, luego de haber cumplido los requerimientos exigidos de valoración, el presente trabajo de investigación, se encuentra con 2% de la valoración permitida, por consiguiente se procede a emitir el informe.

Atentamente,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elena", is written over a horizontal line.

Lcda. Elena Niola Sanmartin, MSc.

ADVISOR

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ABSTRACT The journal is a tool that serves as a strategy to improve English language skills, especially writing skills. Several aspects interrupt this improvement process for students, for the same reason this research objective is to describe the use of the journal as a didactic resource to improve writing skills in English language teaching students. The methodology applied to this research is qualitative, phenomenological. The information was collected through interviews based on opened-ended questions that were directed to teachers of the Universidad Estatal Peninsula de Santa Elena. The analysis of the research results was collected through keywords according to the interviews. As a result, the teachers consider that the use of the journal allows students to enrich their writing skills, since, through this strategic tool, students can practice, learn, organize, study, and revise their writing more and more for improvement. KEY WORDS: Journals, writing skills, teaching strategy, English language learning.

Interview questions

- 1. - Do you think that the use of a journal in the classroom motivates students to improve their writing skills?**
- 2. - How do you think the students reacted to the application of a journal?**
- 3. - How do you think the experience of the students is when writing a journal?**
- 4. - What happens to the language and vocabulary of the students in the teaching-learning process with the application of the diary in the classroom?**
- 5. - Do you think that the journal makes students organize their ideas, feel safer and can improve the problems they have when writing?**
- 6. - According to your experience, what happens when a student finishes a journal and rereads the first works?**
- 7. - Why is it important to apply teaching resources such as a journal in the first semester?**

Interviews transcript

1. - Do you think that the use of a journal in the classroom motivates students to improve their writing skills?

Interviewed 1.- It is necessary to use as many tools as possible, above all to develop writing in the students, it is an activity that cannot be left aside, because on many occasions teachers focus on developing listening and speaking or even grammar which is not part of the skills but is very much focused on this, one says that speaking is the most important because you demonstrate everything you can master in the language but nevertheless writing is useful for many other things, above all in the academic part.

Interviewed 2. - The use of a journal in the classroom motivates students to improve their writing skills because in a way it forces them to review and use new vocabulary and grammatical forms learned in class.

Interviewed 3. Indeed, the use of the journal can help students above all to improve their writing skills, that is to say, that through this activity they can develop a love or affection for writing.

Interviewed 4.-Yes, but it all depends on how the student takes it. If the journal is going to be very informal then the writing will not improve but if the journal is written following some kind of guidelines that the instructor has already given us in advance, it is a tool that can be very valuable.

2. - How do you think the students reacted to the application of a journal?

Interviewed 1. - When applying any type of tools or strategies, the children will put some but those who are eager to learn and improve will use any type of strategy that the teacher presents them with. Perhaps by writing down everything they do or all the activities they carry out during the day, no matter how little they do, they can put: "I slept all day and did nothing", then it is a sentence that helps the development of this skill, if the student has the desire to learn and improve, he/she will be extremely grateful to the teacher for presenting them with this strategy.

Interviewed 2. - At the beginning, it may be tedious because they take it as one more task, they have to carry out within the multiple activities they have to do in each of their subjects. Once they write about topics that interest them, without realizing it, they will be improving their writing, which will be satisfactory for the student.

Interviewed 3. - Not all reactions will be positive, it all depends on how the teacher can sell the idea of writing a journal, and we can have 50% who react positively or 50% negatively.

Interviewed 4.-If the student takes it as a learning tool he/she will take it with a lot of acceptance but if the student takes it as another task of any teacher, any subject always the students have a little bit of restriction for new tasks, even though diary making is already in the student's knowledge since high school.

3. - How do you think the experience of the students is when writing a journal?

Interviewed 1.- They will have to concentrate and write things that can be read or that can be presented to the public, so they will have to organize their ideas, they will have to revise and read and reread what they write because the fact of telling an experience is not easy, or the experiences is not easy, or the fact of telling what is done during a day or during a week is not easy either, so they will have to give feedback and the experience will be very enriching for them.

Interviewed 2. - I think it is interesting for students to write a journal on different topics where personal experiences are mixed with learning English. It is a way of opening up their thoughts and it can also be therapeutic for the student to deal with topics that may be difficult to communicate orally.

Interviewed 3.- Based on my experience, the students as such, at the end of their work it is a satisfactory experience and in the process it is a learning experience, also to organize their ideas, to organize their time because we know that writing the diary as such is to see what we do every day, we take notes, we remember so maybe the experience at the end is positive both to organize their ideas or to keep a record of what they do and at the end also because they develop a skill in this case writing.

Interviewed 4. - It is a very valuable tool, the experience that students gain from writing journals is that they write and they can correct it themselves, there is no teacher. The student writes something at night for example, and if the next day he/she wants to read what he/she

wrote, he/she can notice any mistakes, this is something that everyone does, so the student will improve.

4. - What happens to the language and vocabulary of the students in the teaching-learning process with the application of the diary in the classroom?

Interviewed 1. - It increases completely because words that they don't know and that they want to write and want to express, they have to look for, they have to research and as they use the new vocabulary, these new words stay in the students' minds and are used, not only in writing but also in other skills, so they can improve 100%, both in written language and oral language, so I think it is very important.

Interviewed 2. - Language and vocabulary are put into practice and the learner remembers them and makes them part of his or her knowledge and learning.

Interviewed 3. - The vocabulary and language of the students will effectively increase in these two parts, because as they are writing, they will feel the need to investigate things that they probably don't know, so they will have a satisfactory increase in learning by applying this type of activity.

Interviewed 4.-It all depends on the guide given by the teacher, if the teacher demands a more sophisticated vocabulary, the diary will be quite acceptable, but if the student takes the journal as something very informal with a very shy vocabulary, quite a low vocabulary, then it will not be used as a learning tool, it will be used as a tool that the student uses informally, but if we follow the guides, follow the standards that the teacher has given us, it is a very valuable tool.

5. - Do you think that the journal makes students organize their ideas, feel safer and can improve the problems they have when writing?

Interviewed 1.- Yes, It helps them a lot, they have to organize and they have to make clear all their ideas so that they can be written down and described in this diary.

Interviewed 2. - The student learns to organize his/her ideas in order to write them in an orderly and coherent way, which improves any problems he/she may have when writing. The student adopts a writing style guided by the teacher, which is beneficial for him/her.

Interviewed 3. - Students organize their ideas, they organize their daily life, so this will help them not only to develop their writing skills but also to start thinking about language as such, when we know that we need to write then we start to think, we don't become translators which is what normally happens, so they will improve the different problems they have when writing because they will apply this skill.

Interviewed 4. - For the student it takes two things, number one: the student will really dedicate something to writing, which is the main thing, and number two: if the student gets the teacher's guides, he/she will learn a lot, he/she will choose what to put here because that guide, that journal, the teacher will review it at some point, so he/she should attach importance to it, the teaching-learning is captured there.

6. - According to your experience, what happens when a student finishes a journal and rereads the first works?

Interviewed 1. - You will definitely realize or you can say how horrible as I wrote at the beginning! But as he goes through and rereads what he has written, he will realize his progress and his development in terms of this skill, in terms of the vocabulary he uses, in terms of the language he also uses and in terms of the way to express yourself, then you will feel completely proud of yourself and will want to continue with that experience of using the journal to continue improving.

Interviewed 2. - It is very pleasant to have a record of your evolution in your writing. The student can appreciate how it started, surely the number of errors at the beginning is higher than the errors that can be observed at the end of the journal.

Interviewed 3.- When a student finishes writing a journal in the end they will find satisfaction because at the beginning they will see that they made different mistakes, as long as the process has been carried out correctly, the student in the end what will find is a satisfaction of how he has improved, how he has increased the development of the skill, then he will see how peculiar his mistakes were at the beginning, in the middle and in the end he knows that he can still continue advancing in that process, then they will see students with a pleasure to write or this skill that is sometimes difficult to develop in students.

Interviewed 4. - Here comes something called prove- reading. When one reads what one wrote a day before, a week before or a month before, one realizes the mistakes one makes, one does it as a teacher and as students, it is very important that whatever we write we must do

something called test reading. Prove-reading is that a classmate reads to him or that another teacher reads to him and tells him that this is fine, it is well formulated, I am using the standards that are being asked of me, I am using the correct adjectives, the correct verbs.

7. - Why is it important to apply teaching resources such as a journal in the first semester?

Interviewed 1.-It should be applied in all, in all semesters and not only in the university but it can be a strategy that could be used by teachers in schools as well, or not only in schools but also in institutes and academies because in The moment you use this type of information as an A1 level student, for example in English, you can start writing very general things like: today I studied such a thing, or you can use it in the present tense or you can use it in the past tense and then the next day if you don't have a lot of information, put the same sentences in the future tense, so I think that not only in the first semester is it important, I think that in all semesters and at all times because it helps us first of all to maintain contact with the language, secondly it helps us to develop and expand our vocabulary, in third place is the information that we have at our hand to be able to express them verbally over time and develop speech skills then It is if you realize that all the skills go hand in hand or perhaps they could be born from this skill and from this strategy that in this case it mentions, the diary or perhaps from other resources and didactic strategies.

Interviewed 2. - It is important to apply a journal from the first semester because as the student increases their knowledge in both grammar and vocabulary, they can apply that

knowledge and strengthen it. In this way, the student acquires discipline in writing and security, which allows him to correct errors from his early training.

Interviewed 3.- In the first or second semester, which is where the student begins in the Pine career, the students begin their learning process, so from that moment it is important that the student begins to develop the skill because if he leaves it aside, what is what normally happens is that we do not apply all the skills, we leave aside the skill of writing in the fourth, fifth, sixth semester we are going to have students who no longer want or who find it difficult to be able to develop the skill so from the beginning it is important so that the student learns, gets to know, develops this skill and if it would be good if that were implemented in each of the parallels of the first and second semester, teachers who teach within this subject that would be English as such because perhaps there is no writing, because then we find academic writing so when students get to academic writing they are quite shocked because they have not developed the skill function started from the beginning, so it is important that this type of activity be applied from the first semesters.

4.-This question is very important. In the first and second semester, the standards and guidelines that the student will develop for the following semesters are met. It is very important that the teacher who teaches how to write has to identify himself very well with the students. There are students who do not have the ability to write English so you have to pay attention there, but right there the teacher has the ability to say this student has the ability to write in English and can continue, this question and the application of a journal is very important in the first and second semester.