



CARTA DE AUTORIZACIÓN

CÓDIGO

AP-BIB-FO-06

VERSIÓN

1

VIGENCIA

2014

PÁGINA

1 de 1

Neiva, 24 de noviembre de 2017

Señores

CENTRO DE INFORMACIÓN Y DOCUMENTACIÓN

UNIVERSIDAD SURCOLOMBIANA

Ciudad

El (Los) suscrito(s):

Duván Andrés Mosquera Núñez, con C.C. No. **1.117.504.683**,

Autor (es) de la tesis y/o trabajo de grado titulado: **Teacher Made Materials Based on Meaningful Learning to Foster Writing Skills** presentado y aprobado en el año **2017** como requisito para optar al título de **Magister en Didáctica del Inglés**;

Autorizo (amos) al CENTRO DE INFORMACIÓN Y DOCUMENTACIÓN de la Universidad Surcolombiana para que con fines académicos, muestre al país y el exterior la producción intelectual de la Universidad Surcolombiana, a través de la visibilidad de su contenido de la siguiente manera:

- Los usuarios puedan consultar el contenido de este trabajo de grado en los sitios web que administra la Universidad, en bases de datos, repositorio digital, catálogos y en otros sitios web, redes y sistemas de información nacionales e internacionales “open access” y en las redes de información con las cuales tenga convenio la Institución.
- Permita la consulta, la reproducción y préstamo a los usuarios interesados en el contenido de este trabajo, para todos los usos que tengan finalidad académica, ya sea en formato Cd-Rom o digital desde internet, intranet, etc., y en general para cualquier formato conocido o por conocer, dentro de los términos establecidos en la Ley 23 de 1982, Ley 44 de 1993, Decisión Andina 351 de 1993, Decreto 460 de 1995 y demás normas generales sobre la materia.
- Continúo conservando los correspondientes derechos sin modificación o restricción alguna; puesto que de acuerdo con la legislación colombiana aplicable, el presente es un acuerdo jurídico que en ningún caso conlleva la enajenación del derecho de autor y sus conexos.

De conformidad con lo establecido en el artículo 30 de la Ley 23 de 1982 y el artículo 11 de la Decisión Andina 351 de 1993, “Los derechos morales sobre el trabajo son propiedad de los autores” , los cuales son irrenunciables, imprescriptibles, inembargables e inalienables.

EL AUTOR/ESTUDIANTE:

Firma: 

Vigilada Mineducación



TÍTULO COMPLETO DEL TRABAJO: Teacher-Made Materials Based on Meaningful Learning to Foster Writing Skills.

AUTOR O AUTORES:

Primero y Segundo Apellido	Primero y Segundo Nombre
Mosquera Núñez	Duván Andrés

DIRECTOR Y CODIRECTOR TESIS:

Primero y Segundo Apellido	Primero y Segundo Nombre
Téllez Téllez	María Fernanda

ASESOR (ES):

Primero y Segundo Apellido	Primero y Segundo Nombre
Núñez Pardo	Astrid

PARA OPTAR AL TÍTULO DE: Magister en Didáctica del Inglés

FACULTAD: Educación.

PROGRAMA O POSGRADO: Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés.

CIUDAD: Neiva

AÑO DE PRESENTACIÓN: 2017

NÚMERO DE PÁGINAS: 133

TIPO DE ILUSTRACIONES (Marcar con una X):

Diagramas Fotografías ___ Grabaciones en discos ___ Ilustraciones en general Grabados ___
Láminas ___ Litografías ___ Mapas ___ Música impresa ___ Planos ___ Retratos ___ Sin ilustraciones ___
Tablas o Cuadros



SOFTWARE requerido y/o especializado para la lectura del documento:

MATERIAL ANEXO:

PREMIO O DISTINCIÓN (*En caso de ser LAUREADAS o Meritoria*):

PALABRAS CLAVES EN ESPAÑOL E INGLÉS:

Español

Inglés

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Desarrollo de Materiales. | Materials Development. |
| 2. Aprendizaje Significativo. | Meaningful Learning. |
| 3. Habilidades de Escritura. | Writing Skills. |

RESUMEN DEL CONTENIDO: (Máximo 250 palabras)

Este estudio de investigación acción explora la contribución de materiales de enseñanza diseñados por el docente, con base en el aprendizaje significativo para el desarrollo de las habilidades escritas en estudiantes de grado décimo. Fue realizado con 35 estudiantes de la Normal Superior de Florencia, una institución pública en la ciudad de Florencia Caquetá, Colombia. Tres principales intereses guían este trabajo: la conveniencia y efectividad de los materiales diseñados por docentes en el desarrollo de las habilidades escritas de los estudiantes, el rol del enfoque de aprendizaje significativo en el desarrollo de las habilidades escritas de los estudiantes; y las habilidades escritas desarrolladas por los estudiantes a través de la implementación de los materiales diseñados por el docente. Los instrumentos para recolectar la información fueron los materiales de los estudiantes, notas de campo del profesor y dos encuestas. Los resultados muestran que la implementación de materiales diseñados por el docente y fundamentados en un marco de referencia para el diseño de los mismos contribuye al desarrollo de las actividades de aprendizaje y fomenta el aprendizaje y el uso del lenguaje. Además, el aprendizaje significativo ocurre como resultado de contenido contextualizado y de experiencias localizadas y personalizadas en cada actividad de aprendizaje propuesta en el taller a fin de involucrar a los estudiantes en su desarrollo. Finalmente, las habilidades de escritura de los estudiantes mejoraron notoriamente a través de la construcción de los textos mediante los estadios del enfoque de escritura por procesos; el trabajo cooperativo como el enfoque de aprendizaje en el que se apoyó el desarrollo de las actividades de escritura, permitiendo a los estudiantes involucrarse en la solución de las actividades escritas y ayudarse mutuamente y simultáneamente; y el dar y recibir realimentación estudiante-estudiante y de profesor estudiante como identificación inicial del estado del progreso en los escritos del estudiante.



ABSTRACT: (Máximo 250 palabras)

This qualitative action research study explores the contribution of teacher- made materials, based on meaningful learning, to the development of tenth graders' writing skills. It was carried out with 35 students from Normal Superior de Florencia, a public institution in the city of Florencia Caquetá, Colombia. Three main concerns underlie this work: the suitability and effectiveness of teacher-made materials in the development of students' writing skills, the role of the meaningful learning approach in fostering students' writing skills, and the writing skills developed by the student through the implementation of teacher-made materials. The instruments to collect data were students' artefacts, teacher's field notes and surveys. The findings evince that the implementation of well-informed teacher-made materials, based on an MD framework, contributes to the development of the learning activities and fosters language learning and use. Besides, meaningful learning occurs as a result of contextualizing content, and localizing and personalizing experiences in each of the learning activities proposed in the workshop to engage students in their completion. Moreover, the students' writing skills enhance by scaffolding the construction of their texts through the process approach procedures and the cooperative work, as the learning approach that underpinned the development of the writing activities, allowing the students to support each other while being involved in the completion of the written assignments; finally, giving and receiving feedback served as the source of learner-learner and teacher-learner identification of the state of progress in students' writings.

APROBACION DE LA TESIS

Nombre Presidente Jurado: MARIA FERNANDA TELLEZ TELLEZ

Firma:

Nombre Jurado: María Fernanda Jaime Osorio

Firma:

Nombre Jurado:

Leonardo Herrera M.

Firma:

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Teacher-Made Materials Based on Meaningful Learning to Foster Writing Skills

Duván Andrés Mosquera Núñez

Master thesis presented as a partial requirement to obtain the degree of Magister in
English Didactics

Thesis Advisor:

Astrid Núñez Pardo M.A.

Universidad Surcolombiana

School of Education

Master's in English Didactics

Neiva

2017

Note of Acceptance

Master with Distinction

Maria Fernanda Tellez Tellez
External Examiner's Name

Universidad Externado de Colombia
Institutional Affiliation

Date of Approval: December 1st, 2017

Dedication

To my beloved kids Miguel Angel Mosquera and Kathleen Sofia Mosquera, the most precious treasure God gave me and to whom I consider my emotional support that encourages me to reach my goals. This achievement is for you!

Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my thesis director, Professor Astrid Núñez Pardo, who committedly guided my whole research process; her academic support and suggestions were fundamental to enrich and accomplish my research study. Additionally, I would like to thank all professors from the Master's Program for their theoretical contributions to enhance my abilities in the research field. Finally, thanks to my family for their support and a special acknowledgement to my students and institution for their involvement and compromise towards the implementation of the pedagogical intervention of this study. They made this study and its results possible.

Abstract

This qualitative action research study explores the contribution of teacher-made materials, based on meaningful learning, to the development of tenth graders' writing skills. It was carried out with 35 students from Normal Superior de Florencia, a public institution in the city of Florencia Caquetá, Colombia. Three main concerns underlie this work: the suitability and effectiveness of teacher-made materials in the development of students' writing skills, the role of the meaningful learning approach in fostering students' writing skills, and the writing skills developed by the student through the implementation of teacher-made materials. The instruments to collect data were students' artefacts, teacher's field notes and surveys. The findings evince that the implementation of well-informed teacher-made materials, based on an MD framework, contributes to the development of the learning activities and fosters language learning and use. Besides, meaningful learning occurs as a result of contextualizing content, and localizing and personalizing experiences in each of the learning activities proposed in the workshop to engage students in their completion. Moreover, the students' writing skills enhance by scaffolding the construction of their texts through the process approach procedures and the cooperative work, as the learning approach that underpinned the development of the writing activities, allowing the students to support each other while being involved in the completion of the written assignments; finally, giving and receiving feedback served as the source of learner-learner and teacher-learner identification of the state of progress in students' writings.

Keywords: materials development, meaningful learning, writing skills

Resumen

Este estudio de investigación acción explora la contribución de materiales de enseñanza diseñados por el docente, con base en el aprendizaje significativo para el desarrollo de las habilidades escritas en estudiantes de grado décimo. Fue realizado con 35 estudiantes de la Normal Superior de Florencia, una institución pública en la ciudad de Florencia Caquetá, Colombia. Tres principales intereses guían este trabajo: la conveniencia y efectividad de los materiales diseñados por docentes en el desarrollo de las habilidades escritas de los estudiantes, el rol del enfoque de aprendizaje significativo en el desarrollo de las habilidades escritas de los estudiantes; y las habilidades escritas desarrolladas por los estudiantes a través de la implementación de los materiales diseñados por el docente. Los instrumentos para recolectar la información fueron los materiales de los estudiantes, notas de campo del profesor y dos encuestas. Los resultados muestran que la implementación de materiales diseñados por el docente y fundamentados en un marco de referencia para el diseño de los mismos contribuye al desarrollo de las actividades de aprendizaje y fomenta el aprendizaje y el uso del lenguaje. Además, el aprendizaje significativo ocurre como resultado de contenido contextualizado y de experiencias localizadas y personalizadas en cada actividad de aprendizaje propuesta en el taller a fin de involucrar a los estudiantes en su desarrollo. Finalmente, las habilidades de escritura de los estudiantes mejoraron notoriamente a través de la construcción de los textos mediante los estadios del enfoque de escritura por procesos; el trabajo cooperativo como el enfoque de aprendizaje en el que se apoyó el desarrollo de las actividades de escritura, permitiendo a los estudiantes involucrarse en la solución de las actividades escritas y ayudarse mutuamente y simultáneamente; y el dar y recibir realimentación estudiante-estudiante y de profesor estudiante como identificación inicial del estado del progreso en los escritos del estudiante.

Palabras clave: desarrollo de materiales, aprendizaje significativo, habilidades de escritura

Table of contents

Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
Abstract	v
Resumen	vi
Table of contents	vii
Introduction	1
Chapter I	3
Research Problem.....	3
Statement of the Problem	3
Research Question	4
Research Objectives	4
General objective.	4
Specific objectives.	4
Related Studies.....	5
Setting and Rationale.....	9
Chapter II	11
Literature Review	11
Materials Development.....	11
Materials development as a field of study.	11
Aspects involved in MD.	12
Materials.	14
Typology of materials.....	14
Authentic material vs. teacher-made materials.....	16
Meaningful Learning	19
Principles for meaningful learning.	20
Meaningful learning in EFL lessons.....	21
Literacy.....	22
Writing.....	23
Writing as a skill.....	24
Writing approaches.....	25
Writing as a process.....	25
Writing as a product.....	26
Giving and receiving feedback.....	27
Chapter III	29
Methodological Design	29
Research design	29
Type of research approach.....	29
Type of study.....	30
Participants.....	32

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Students.....	32
Teacher-text developer-researcher.....	33
Instruments for data collection gathering.....	33
Students' artefacts.....	34
Field notes.....	35
Focus group interview.....	36
Surveys.....	36
Instructional Design.....	37
Pedagogical intervention.....	37
Second language acquisition principles.....	37
Achieve impact through novelty, variety, attractive presentation, and appealing content.....	38
Be perceived as relevant and useful by the learner.....	38
Offer plenty of free practice.....	38
Provide opportunities for communicative purposes in L2, fostering thereby language use, not just usage.....	39
Help learners feel at ease.....	39
Facilitate student's self-investment.....	39
Provide opportunities for outcome feedback.....	40
Instructional objectives.....	40
General objective.....	40
Specific objectives.....	40
Innovation of the intervention.....	41
Theory of the nature of language.....	43
Vision of language learning.....	43
Methodological approach underlying the pedagogical intervention.....	44
Connection of the pedagogical intervention with the research question.....	45
Suggested instructional phases.....	45
Proposed materials development framework.....	45
Informed consent.....	47
Sensitization.....	47
Implementation of the materials.....	47
Workshop Sample.....	49
Chapter IV	67
Data Analysis and Findings.....	67
Data Analysis Procedures.....	67
Research Categories.....	70
Exposure to informed teacher-made materials as an anchor for language learning and use.....	72
Informed teacher-made materials favor language learning and use.....	73
Exposure to contextualized materials as an anchor for language learning and use.....	78

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Personalized local experiences: A source for meaningful learning	82
Personalized experiences as basis of meaningful learning.	84
Local information at the core of meaningful learning.	87
Writing through the process approach, feedback and cooperative work.	91
Enhancing writing skills through cooperative work.	92
Building the writing experience via the process approach.....	95
Chapter V	102
Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications	102
Conclusions	102
Pedagogical Implications.....	104
Limitations.....	105
Questions for Further Research	105
References	106
Appendixes	116

List of Tables

Table 1. <i>Research categories and sub-categories</i>	71
--	----

List of Figures

<i>Figure 1. Source: Kemmis and McTaggart, (1988) Action Research Cycle from Burns' Perspective.</i>	32
--	----

Introduction

This qualitative action research study focuses on the development and implementation of teacher-made materials, a workshop composed of five lessons based on meaningful learning, to foster the writing skills among tenth-grade students at a public school. The contextualization of the materials used for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL hereafter) is a central concern if meaningful learning is considered, due to the close relationship between the learners' needs and the content of the materials for learning to take place. Teaching EFL to a population with particular contextual needs, demands materials supported by “an informed methodology that allows validating the efficiency, appropriateness and relevance of materials within the context of learning a language” (Núñez, Téllez & Castellanos, 2012, p. 10). For these reasons, this study seeks to increase the use of the English language by fostering the writing skills since it is one of the productive skills of the language to be fostered in public institutions and education, as stated in the basic standards of competences and “Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje” (D.B.A its acronym in Spanish).

This research study aimed to implement teacher-made materials as a pedagogical intervention to foster the students' use of the language in a Colombian educational context, observing the national policies, and specially, the students' needs. The government has established many policies for teaching a foreign language; in 2013, the law 1651 finally determined English as the foreign language to be taught in Colombia, which was not initially specified in the General Law of Education (Law 115, 1994). In 2006, the basic standards of competences and in 2016, and the D.B.A. are reference documents for teachers to guide their teaching practice and achieve the EFL proficiency requirements.

When reading students' writing compositions, there were grammar and vocabulary mistakes, their ideas were not clear and seemed not to make sense, despite the permanent

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

feedback given in terms of correcting mistakes; thus, the problem seemed to be that students do not find the way to present and clearly structure their ideas in compositions. As EFL is the Target Language (TL henceforth) contemplated in this study, it considers the national standards for language learning regarding the use of English for communicative purposes in written form. Nevertheless, the implementation of these policies demands innovative pedagogical interventions to accomplish those standardized objectives.

This document is structured into five chapters as follows: The first one sets out the problem, mentioning the way in which it was identified, the research question, the research general and specific objectives, the related studies, and the setting and rationale. The second chapter corresponds to the literature review that addresses the theoretical constructs informing this study, namely materials development, meaningful learning and the development of writing skills. The third chapter deals with the methodological design that includes the research and the instructional designs. Chapter four addresses the findings and results obtained from data collection and analysis. Finally, chapter five presents the conclusions, pedagogical implications, limitations, and questions for further research in the field of teacher-made materials for ELT.

Chapter I

Research Problem

Statement of the Problem

Tenth- grade students at Normal Superior de Florencia are usually interested in and willing to learn English. They usually understand and follow instructions in English and get the main idea of what is mentioned, described and explained in the EFL classroom. However, they show lack of interest and their disposition diminished when they are asked to work on written activities. This might be the result of not knowing how to state, present and structure their ideas clearly in written texts, besides the number of grammar and vocabulary mistakes and the lack of clarity in the statement of their ideas to have them make sense.

To tackle this problem, the design and administration of an entry survey for the needs assessment (See Appendix E) and the registry of classroom observation notes, kept in a reflective journal, allowed me to determine that learners would prefer to learn English with materials that address aspects that are familiar to them, and that belong to their own context. This suggests that learners can make a connection between what they understand and what they can produce in written form using the English language. This connection could be made if the learners are exposed to contextualized teacher-made materials that respond to the needs of specific contexts and purposes.

Nowadays, that the English language has become important for the life of Colombian learners, there is a visible lack of contextualized textbooks and materials for the public sector in Caquetá. On this subject, Howard and Major (2004) claimed that nonspecific commercial materials do not meet the specific needs of the diverse cultural and educational setting. Therefore, the use of teacher-made materials, (a workshop composed of five lessons that respond to the particularities of the students' context, in the EFL classroom would not only help to the

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

development of the classes, but also to reach the learning goals set out in the lessons for the progress in language skills. Besides being a duty of teachers to be informed and invest time developing their own materials and stop using non- contextualized teaching resources (Kumaravadivelu, 2014), alternatively Littlejohn (2012) stressed the importance of “resisting the manner in which uniformity is being imposed, and by wrestling back curriculum decisions into the hands of those directly involved – teachers and learners” (p. 295). Thus, developing materials that addresses learner’s interests, needs, desires, and expectations may offer teachers an opportunity to make English look more appealing and interesting to the learners, and the students the possibility to learn English by connecting this process with personal interest and their contextual realities.

Research Question

How do teacher- made materials, based on meaningful learning, develop tenth graders’ writing skills at a public school?

Research Objectives

General objective. To explore the contribution of teacher- made materials based on meaningful learning to the development of tenth graders’ writing skills.

Specific objectives. (a) To appraise the suitability and usefulness of teacher-made materials in the development of students’ writing skills; (b) to describe the role of the meaningful learning approach in fostering students’ writing skills; and (c) to identify and describe the writing skills that students used while interacting with the teacher-made materials.

In the previous fragment, I have stated the research problem that guides this qualitative action research study. In the next section, relevant related studies are reported with their corresponding contribution to the present study.

Related Studies

This section presents some related studies that are relevant to this study since they contemplate important aspects regarding materials development, meaningful learning and writing skills, which are the main constructs in my research work. Additionally, these studies provide diverse perspectives, interpretations and analysis of what these theoretical foundations entail to develop writing skills through contextualized materials.

Regarding materials development and meaningful learning, Becerra and McNulty (2010) carried out an action research study to formulate significant learning goals by the redesigning of a topic-based unit. The study took place with tenth grade students at a public high school in Bello, Antioquia. The data gathering instruments the researchers used for collecting their data were, students' perceptions, observations rating checklist and journals. The findings showed that learning goals and significant learning are achieved when students assume different active roles in the design and implementation of the unit. Additionally, conclusions allowed to determine that significant learning takes place when students are involved in the process of the design of a topic based unit for their own language learning process. This study is pertinent to mine because it exalts the contribution of materials development (a topic-based unit) in the process of fostering meaningful learning on students especially when they are directly involved in the development or implementation of such materials.

Similarly, a qualitative action research study conducted by Castañeda (2015) showed the interest on both, materials development and meaningful learning. This study aimed to contribute to reading comprehension process through the development and implementation of a reading booklet based on the meaningful learning approach. This study was conducted with fifteen eleventh graders from a public school in Bogotá. The instruments for gathering data were, field notes, video recordings and students' artifacts; also, a needs analysis survey and a questionnaire

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

were applied before the pedagogical implementation. The findings evidenced that the use of contextualized materials and the proper reading strategies may increase students' motivation towards language learning especially in the process of reading comprehension. This study was considered as pertinent because it addresses the relevance of materials development and its impact on meaningful learning in the target language.

In reference to meaningful learning and writing skills, Rojas (2011), in her qualitative action research study dealt with using blogs for developing the writing skill engaging students in meaningful communication. Teacher's journal, an interview and the blog created for the study were the data collection instruments used by the researcher. The researcher developed a blog to follow up students' writing skill and meaningful communication. The study was carried out with ninth grade students at la Castilla high school in Kennedy zone in Bogotá – Colombia. The findings showed how students made use of the writing skill when interacting in the blogs and set the characteristics of interaction that took place when using them. The contribution of this research study lies on the need to refine writing skills to communicate in a meaningful way via technological interactions, and the relevance of activities that require writing in English to make student learn meaningfully.

Correspondingly, Daza (2017) conducted a qualitative action research to analyze the contribution of the design and implementation of task-based lessons to students' writing accuracy. The study was carried out in a public school with eleven ninth graders. The instruments the researcher used for collecting data were, teacher's field notes, students' artifacts and semi-structured interviews. The findings showed that the use of task based learning lessons contribute positively to writing accuracy development in the learners. Also, the writing was fostered by the constant practice and the establishment of personal goals that allowed students to promote motivation and self-assurance. Even though this study does not relate to meaningful learning, it

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

sets writing skill development in the contexts where my own research study is also developed. Furthermore, meaningful learning can be perceived in the sense of the development of materials that contribute positively to language learning and writing development in learners.

In relation to writing skills and materials development, Solórzano (2013) carried out a qualitative action research study, whose main purpose was to determine the incidence of controversial-topic songs, addressed in teacher-designed workshops, and students' voices in their writing process. The study was conducted with thirty-six students from tenth grade at a public school in Bogotá-Colombia. The instruments used for data gathering were field notes, the students' artifacts, and entry and exit surveys. The findings showed that motivation and self-confidence are raised when students' likes and opinions are considered. Also, English as a foreign language writing experience is more effective when developing contextualized material for doing so. This study is pertinent in relation to my own because it emphasizes on the importance of context-bound materials for fostering the writing skill as a whole process in the target language. In respect of materials, the study describes their direct impact on the development of students' writing skills in EFL.

Likewise, the qualitative action research study done by Ciprian, Farfán and Ramos (2014), analyzed and described the written performance in a group of students through the implementation of writing workshops. The study was conducted with complementary training program students at Normal Superior Santiago de Tunja. The instruments used for gathering information were an interview, students' artifacts and field notes. The results determined the characteristic of students' writings, considering the writing skills and the writing performance as a process. The findings show that workshops helped students to strengthen their written performance, elements of the language such as vocabulary and grammar, and the development of the English language. This study is relevant because it argues the development of students'

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

writing skills as a process that can be enhanced during the implementation of materials to further promote language proficiency.

It is important to consider international research in the field of materials development since it is not just a local or regional concern in research but also an international one. Meraji's and Zamanian's (2014) qualitative action research study aimed to identify the extent to what the use of L1 culture can be included on L2 learning process and its implications on students learning through the development of materials that include the L1 culture in EFL lessons. The participants were a group of 48 female pre-university students, from two groups in Shiraz, Iran.

Questionnaires were used to collect the data regarding students' perception of the designed materials. The researchers concluded the usefulness of culture-based materials and the incorporation of L1 culture as a trigger for language proficiency of EFL learners. This study is pertinent because it shows the importance of using materials with cultural content which offers EFL learners the possibility to learn meaningfully and to improve their English proficiency.

Regarding meaningful learning, the international longitudinal study conducted by Habók (2009) aimed at analysing how the meaningful learning approach helps fourth and seventh grade-students to learn Hungarian grammar. The instruments employed for data collection were tests, questionnaires and inductive thinking tests. The results showed that the learning styles and strategies only influenced the concept mapping exercises to a small degree; besides, students continued using their memorisation skills, so there were not significant differences among the groups. This study is relevant to mine research project since it highlights the importance of implementing alternative EFL strategies to give learners the possibility to learn the language significantly. Additionally, it provides information regarding students' attitudes when using the meaningful learning approach.

Setting and Rationale

The Normal Superior is a public institution located in Florencia in the department of Caquetá, Colombia. With a total of 2,500 students approximately, five English teachers and an English program that offers two hours of English per week, exception made for ninth grade that attends three hours per week, whose main purpose is to educate students, not to instruct them. Its vision and mission seek positioning the institution as a leading one in the process of preparing teachers that generate pedagogical knowledge at a national level by taking advantage of the use of the context and students' background as a source for the construction of knowledge that contribute to the regional development. The curriculum of the institution aims at teaching educators with expressive and creative aptitudes, and humanistic, scientific and pedagogical knowledge, who are empowered to transform the regional, national and international education community.

The institution is focused on the mandatory areas of Colombian primary and secondary education, in a perspective of learning to teach what they are learning. The Institutional Educational Project (PEI, its acronym in Spanish) of our school highlights the importance of developing the communicative competence in EFL as one of the basic competencies for students of basic education, and the teachers training program (PFC, its acronym in Spanish). The communicative competence must integrate the development of the four language skills in relation to the regional and institutional needs. The students' English proficiency is attained in accordance with national requirements and despite the short time devoted to the English classes; they have a good command of English. The English curriculum considers the standards established by the MEN (2006) in terms of the basic learning principles, a set of cognitive, linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic communicative competencies and other institutional activities that encourage our students to learn and experience the English language. Among them, I have the production tasks

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

like the spelling contest, the fashion show, the song festival and the English day that are held at the end of each academic period.

The current action research study contributed to my professional development since I became a better English teacher, a materials developer and a researcher, which at the same time, prepares me to conduct further research on the field of materials development for the development of language skills. Similarly, this study helped my students to become aware of the importance of English as a universal language used to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings in a meaningful way. In other words, my students noticed that the English language can be more effectively understood and produced when learned in context, using contextualized materials, especially developed to meet students' language learning and contextual needs.

This study is also intended to inspire both the institution and the English teachers at Normal Superior to expand their knowledge, promote educational changes that enrich the school curriculum, develop, implement and evaluate contextualized learning materials that favor the conscious application of learning strategies to enable the students to scaffold their learning process, find the language useful for life, and foster their talents in the English language too.

Finally, this study contributed to the local, regional and national academic EFL community of teachers who wish to foster the production of local knowledge by means of sourcing teacher-made materials, based on meaningful learning, to refine students' writing skills. In light of this, teachers can innovate through materials development, which implies becoming aware of their contextual needs and been encouraged to create their own materials while fostering the learning of English in a contextualized and meaningful way.

In the subsequent section, we discuss the three theoretical constructs that underpin this study.

Chapter II

Literature Review

The main purpose of this section is to conceptualize the theoretical constructs that inform this study. The first one related to materials, which is framed within the field of materials development. The second is the concept of meaningful learning and its influence in the development of materials to promote writing. Finally, the concept of writing skills is addressed as an important element to help students use the English language to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings.

Materials Development

Materials development as a field of study. Materials Development (MD hereafter) refers to the process of creating or adapting material to be used in EFL contexts. To this respect, Tomlinson (2003) asserted:

Materials Development is both a field of study and a practical undertaking. As a field, it studies the principles and procedures of the design, implementation and evaluation of language teaching materials. As an undertaking, it involves the production, evaluation and adaptation of language teaching materials, by teachers for their own classroom and by materials writers for sale or distribution. (p. 1)

In this sense, MD involves all the procedures that EFL teachers can perform to foster language learning and use through the implementation of helping resources in the teaching practice into the classroom. It is important to highlight that MD favours language teaching and learning in a positive way. Furthermore, developing materials, according to the author, “Is now not only undertaken by practitioners but is also a field of academic study” (Tomlinson, 2012, p. 2). In the same line of thought, Núñez and Téllez (2015) affirmed that, “MD is a field of study focused on the effect of materials on the teaching-learning process of a foreign language” (p. 57).

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Likewise, Núñez, Téllez and Castellanos (2013) asserted that, “(MD) demands an informed methodology that allows validating the efficiency, appropriateness and relevance of materials within the context of learning a language” (p. 10) and generates effective learning environments (Núñez & Téllez, 2009). Then, MD plays an important role in language teaching and learning since it provides us with solid insights on what should be done, and especially, on how it should be done to come up with materials that respond to the genuine needs, interests, and expectations of learners. Ideally, materials should be theoretically informed, implemented, evaluated, and adjusted to validate their suitability, pertinence and effectiveness in language learning and teaching contexts.

All the procedures involved in the field of MD capitalize both learning processes and teaching practices, and drive attention toward researching on materials in use. In fact, Núñez, Téllez and Castellanos (as cited in Núñez & Téllez, 2015) stated: “Materials development is a rationale process and artistic inspiration that together perform a central role in attaining appealing teaching-learning resources” (p.175). Likewise, as declared by Tomlinson (2012), “Materials development refers to all the processes made of by practitioners who produce and/or use materials for language learning, including materials evaluation, their adaptation, design, production, exploitation and research” (p. 2). This assertion leads me to conclude that the reasoning and creative process entailed in designing materials help them to engage and motivate the students in learning the language, and to encourage and commit teachers to the creation of a better teaching practice.

Aspects involved in MD. There are several demands entailed in the field of MD. Such aspects include students’ attitudes toward materials use. As expressed by Núñez and Téllez (2009), “It is relevant to highlight the valuable element of enjoyment in our practices and in the materials being produced for our students” (p. 173). Thus, the materials play a central role in

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

learner's motivation to learn the language in safe and friendly ways. As the authors further claimed, "Language learning materials constitute a key factor in creating effective teaching and learning environments" (p. 173). This is because we, as materials developers, are responsible for designing appropriate, meaningful, and challenging materials that guarantee an effective language learning process.

Some of the advantages of creating our own materials are that they have far more possibilities to suit learners' preferences, needs, motivations and expectations. With reference to students' profiles, Montijano (2014) stressed "even when the materials seem very far removed from our students' current circumstances, needs, motivations or goals, teachers can still alter and adapt the textbook in order to enhance our students' classroom learning experience" (p. 275). In this way, the gap between students' needs and the materials used in class is narrowed down and effective learning settings (Núñez & Téllez, 2009) and outcomes can be accomplished. Hence, creating teacher-made materials that take into consideration the students' profiles and perspectives, allows teachers to address the teaching-learning context appropriately and brings far more possibilities to obtain better learning outcomes.

There are also relevant components of MD. Teachers' perceptions in regard to language learning theories and approaches, theoretical foundations for the development of materials, and imaginative abilities that give account of the materials produced by teachers. Indeed, for Núñez and Téllez (2015), "Reflection, awareness of a MD rationale, affect, motivation, teachers' beliefs, creativity, and commitment are the components that interplay in MD" (p. 57). With so many aspects to consider, teachers should be careful and well-informed to be able to produce materials that support and offer possibilities for the language teaching and learning processes to occur in the EFL classroom in an effective manner.

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Materials. Materials can be currently seen in many ways. According to Tomlinson (1998), “Materials are anything which is done by writers, teachers or learners to provide sources of language input and to exploit those sources in ways which maximize the likelihood of intake” (p. 2). Additionally, the author contends “materials include anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language” (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 2). In light of this, the language teaching resources used by the EFL teachers continue being considered a valuable means that guides and facilitates students’ achievement of language learning goals.

Materials are also closely connected to the fact of bringing culture knowledge, understanding and learning together. As respects materials, Rico (2012) defined them as: “Key tools that help learners develop the language competences required for the acquisition of any language or culture” (p. 5). The author also finds “materials allow us to connect students with cultures, learn a language and develop some skills” (Rico, 2012. p. 6). As well as this, Núñez et al. (2013) conceptualized language teaching and learning materials as “socio-cultural resources that facilitate not only linguistic interaction but also cultural exchanges between the various human groups. Moreover, they are forms of social mediation that allow flow of knowledge” (p. 10). Consequently, materials should foster respect for the difference and diversity to avoid limiting the spread of cultural knowledge and understanding worldwide; they should also take advantage of the flow of content or discipline knowledge they promote to augment and enrich transdisciplinary inquiry and research on the best interest of the society.

Typology of materials. Materials serve multiple purposes. Some of those purposes are to nurture the acquisition of a foreign language, to foster the development of the communicative competence in the target language, to expose learners to the target language providing, as Krashen (1988) would suggest, understandable input for students to speed up their recalling,

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

interpretation, understanding, application, analysis, and productions of language with communicative purposes.

Several authors have identified a wide variety of EFL materials. At a broader level, Tomlinson (2012) recognized five types of materials:

Informative (informing the learner about the target language), instructional (guiding the learner in practicing the language), experiential (providing the learner with experience of the language in use), eliciting (encouraging the learner to use the language) and exploratory (helping the learner to make discoveries about the language). (p. 143)

Accordingly, the teacher-created materials proposed for the pedagogical intervention of this study, fit into four of these categories: they provide language practice, allow the learners to experience the language, motivate the learners to think in and use the language, and foster learner's self-discovery of language in use.

At a more specific level, there exists other kinds of materials that teachers use in their classes. Materials are, as typified by Tomlinson (2003), "Linguistic, visual, auditory or kinesthetic, ... [which] ... can be presented in print, through live performance or display, or on cassette, CD ROOM, DVD, or the internet" (p. 1). The researcher also identified "course books, videos, graded reader, flash cards, games, websites and mobile phone interactions, though, inevitably, much of the literature focus on printed materials" (p. 1). In the same breath, McGrath (2002) contends that, "Materials could include realia: real objects such as a pencil, a chair or a bag and representations such as a drawing, a photograph of a person, house or scene" (p. 7). Bearing the authors' definition in mind, there is an array of materials that can be used by teachers in the EFL classroom since they offer a variety of options to choose the one that best fits the students' language learning and emotional needs within their contexts. This notion goes in accordance with the printed teacher-made materials developed for this study since they address

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

the four learning styles, include audio recordings, illustrations, and hand-craft work, and are context-bound.

Materials produced by renowned foreign publishing houses do not considered the specific needs of the context where the foreign language is being taught and learnt. These commercial materials rather regulate and homogenize the way in which teachers teach and learners learn a language, neglecting the social, cultural and historic background of contexts (González, 2010, Kumaravadivelu, 2014, Núñez et al. 2013; Rico, 2012). For the previous reasons, “This task should not be confined to text developers exclusively since there is not a complete textbook that fulfils both learners’ and teachers’ expectations” (Núñez, Pineda and Téllez, 2004. p. 172). Conveniently, this study proposed teacher-made materials that are responsive to the contextual language learning and affective needs where the language is learned to foster better language learning outputs.

In reference to teacher-generated materials, Núñez and Téllez (2009) contemplated “a learning-teaching exercise, a task, an activity, a lesson, a unit or a module composed by one or two units” (p. 175). Similarly, Núñez and Téllez (2015) considered “a book, a module, a didactic unit, a workshop, a worksheet, a lesson, or a learning task. This typology responds to local needs of teaching settings” (p. 57). Finally, Núñez, Téllez, Castellanos, and Ramos (2009) included “a learning teaching exercise, a task, an activity, a lesson, a unit, or a module” (p. 16). Based on the types presented, the language learning activities, comprised in the teacher-made workshop, are framed under the meaningful learning approach, informed with the corresponding Second Language Acquisition (SLA hereafter) principles, and structured under a theoretical framework for MD to assure their suitability and effectiveness in the EFL classroom.

Authentic material vs. teacher-made materials. Language resources can also be authentic or inauthentic materials. In Tomlinson’s (2012) words, “An authentic text is one which

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

is produced in order to communicate rather than to teach” (p. 162). On the other hand, Montijano (2014) defines authentic material as “Those not produce specifically for language teaching purposes” (p. 281). Finally, Gómez (2010) provides a more complete insight on authenticity:

It refers to the language is used in communication to fulfill a social purpose in a particular context. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that bringing authentic materials into the classroom demands the teacher be prepared pedagogically to create tasks in which such materials become purposeful in simulated situations of everyday life. (p. 5)

As a result, teachers need to be educated with a critical view to properly select authentic materials to complement the non-authentic materials they develop and implement in the EFL teaching context. In other words, authentic materials like photographs, brochures, songs, or postcards, despite being produced for general communication, can be exploited and used as an important complementary resource for language teaching and learning, and for the continuing exposure of learners to the English language, which results in fostering its use for communicative purposes.

Regarding teacher-made materials, they can be created or adapted in the quest of helping students learn. Tomlinson (2003) pointed out some issues about inauthentic or contrived material. He contends that they evade encouraging learners for genuine language practice. However, inauthentic materials are more suitable since they are contextualized to the reality of the language learners. To this respect, Núñez (2010) asserted that, "Developing ... materials makes it more feasible to address the demands of the institutional context and students' profiles and to achieve academic and language learning goals" (p. 37). This kind of materials connects what is taught in the classroom to the learners' contextual realities, personal and academic preferences and interest in the world surrounding them. In the same way, teacher-made materials can be far more

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

motivating for students since they find useful to learn English using topics that are familiar to them; and they are specially designed to fulfill specific instructional objectives that are generally stated considering students' language learning academic and affective needs.

Based on what has already been argued, it is important to consider the contributions that both, authentic and inauthentic materials make to language learning and, especially, the basis given to planning instructional goals. In fact, as Carter asserted, "Both inauthentic as well as authentic texts can inform the curriculum" (as cited in Harwood, 2010, p. 5). Because of this, materials development in the sense of creating and developing resources may always meet students' language learning needs and voices for teachers to realize what and how they need to learn (Núñez & Téllez, 2008; Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Núñez & Téllez, 2015; Núñez, et al., 2009). This is basically one of the most important objectives of using materials in language instruction. Thus, authors like Allwright; Hutchinson and Torres; and O'Neill admitted that, "No-prepared materials can ever meet the needs of any given class precisely, some level of adaptation will be necessary" (as cited in Harwood, 2010, p. 4). Thus, developing or adapting materials serve the purpose of meeting students' genuine needs within a particular context.

Nonetheless, it is not precise to favor one over another. Both of them provide specific tools and advantages when learning and teaching a language. For this consideration, authors like Carter or Shortall, contended "Inauthentic as well as authentic texts are pedagogically exploitable. ... These artificial texts may intentionally contain a high frequency of a particular language item to alert learners to its existence and to provide them with practice in manipulating it" (as cited in Harwood, 2010, p. 5). However, Clarke (1989) stressed "the elevation of 'authentic' materials to the level of what appears to be a categorical imperative... of the language classroom" (p. 73). Therefore, more than using authentic materials in EFL classrooms, teachers

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

should focus on their creation or adaptation to respond to the particularities of the context, and expose learners to the target language in a meaningful way.

For the aforementioned reasons, this proposal has been built over the conception that teacher-made materials are more appropriate and meaningful to teach and learn EFL. Thus, this proposal includes the design and implementation of a teacher-created workshop, whose theme was selected by the students, composed of five lessons (vocabulary, reading, listening, speaking and writing), informed by six SLA principles, and underpinned by the meaningful learning approach to learn a language, and the process approach to foster the writing skills,

Having addressed the first theoretical construct that supports this study, the following section is devoted to meaningful learning.

Meaningful Learning

Meaningful learning may be seen as a pillar to build knowledge. It relies on the construction of knowledge and language development, based on the relation established between the learners' previous knowledge and their cognitive structures. Ausubel (1961) found that "a cognitive structure is meant an individual's organization, stability, and clarity of knowledge in a particular subject-matter field relative to meaningful new learning tasks in this field" (p. 500). Since meaningful learning occurs when new information is linked to previous cognitive structures of the learner, the pedagogical intervention envisioned for this study, contemplates the presentation of both new information and organization of learning activities in an appealing and engaging way, so the learners relates it to what they already know, maximizing thereby the possibility for better learning outcomes. In sum, the theory of meaningful learning suits the materials that were designed and implemented for this research study.

Reception also plays an important role in meaningful learning; this is mainly because this theory focuses more on the intake and its relation to preconceptions the learner has, than on what

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Ausubel calls 'rote learning'. For clarifying purposes, it is necessary to state that meaningful learning is opposed to rote learning and rote memorization (Ausubel, 1961). This distinction is important because the former implies the incorporation of new knowledge in cognitive structures, while the latter is based on mere recalling of stored and memorized information without any meaningful use. For the purpose of this study, meaningful learning is understood as the use of local culture and students' local background, and its relation to materials development in language learning. Likewise, meaningful learning in the field of materials development and, especially in the design of the materials for the pedagogical intervention of this study, is always present as the underlying methodology of the teacher-made five-lesson workshop aimed to achieve impact. As Tomlinson (2003) affirmed, "Impact is achieved when materials have a noticeable effect on learners that is when the learner's curiosity, interest and attention are attracted" (p. 8). Hence, the impact is provided by the connection of students' previous knowledge and their new mental representations, and how they link this knowledge to language use when writing, which ensures a successful completion of learning activities proposed in the teacher-made materials.

Principles for meaningful learning. Three tenets support Ausubel's (1961) theory of meaningful learning: (a) general ideas of a subject, (b) instructional materials and (c) advance organizers. General ideas must be presented at first and then, they can be separated in terms of details and specificity. Instructional materials must include appealing content so learners can get engaged with it and thus, assume it as a source of further knowledge. Finally, advance organizers are used as Ausubel's (1961) asserted, "a mechanism to help to link new learning material with existing related ideas. Advance organizers are helpful in the way that they help the process of learning when difficult and complex materials are introduced" (p. 02). These principles ensure meaningful learning processes in our learners. Besides that, Ausubel gives importance to the role

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

of instructional materials as a pillar to enhance learning, which is a key issue in the teacher-made materials proposed here, as they privilege content of interest to students that lead to their engagement and meaningful learning, as a resulting fact in this process.

However, advanced organizers are performed through two categories, comparative and expository. A comparative organizer according to Ausubel's (1961) "Integrates new ideas with basically similar concepts in cognitive structure, as well as increase discriminability between new and existing ideas which are essentially different but confusable similar" (p. 03). Expository organizers "Provide new knowledge that students will need to understand the upcoming information. Expository organizers are often used when the new learning material is unfamiliar to the learner" (p. 03). Both elements allow for a clear perspective of language learning; they contribute to understand how learners scaffold language learning by being able to understand their learning process, as a result of previous language conceptions and new forms of language use.

Meaningful learning in EFL lessons. It seems clear that meaningful learning leads to language development. Meaningful learning affects not only students' cognitive structure but also language performance and domain. In fact, the content of materials selected from the local socio-cultural background may probably encourage students to learn new things related to their already known context. Nonetheless, this can only be achieved if teachers perform the role of materials developers for their own context. Unfortunately, as Rico (2010) manifested, "Most language materials adopted for classroom use are designed by international publishing houses without necessarily having any input from current teachers who have a better understanding of the day to day teaching of the subject" (p. 89). Based on this assertion, it is necessary that English teachers run the risk of developing their EFL materials to achieve meaningful and durable learning.

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Even though the intentionality of the use of instructional teacher-made materials to achieve meaningful learning is not to focus on the development of language skills, but on the learning of new subjects and topics related to students' closest context, the use of the language in meaningful ways can be the result of implementing well-conceived, informed and structured materials that contribute to language learning and use. In relation to meaningful learning and its connection to materials, Núñez et al. (2004) highlighted: "Materials must be designed so that they tap our learners' feelings and background, and they should enhance learning acquisition" (p. 131). Thus, meaningful learning in this study is also the result of privileging the overt-strategy instruction model (Chamot, 1999) that fosters the application of learning strategies to solve the learning activities proposed, since they are central to motivate students in self-controlling their own learning in the EFL classroom.

We have discussed the second theoretical construct that supports this study. The next section presents literacy, which frames writing, the third theoretical construct of this study.

Literacy

The term of literacy can be defined from different perspectives. Yet, for the purpose of this study, literacy is understood as the ability to comprehend, use and produce written messages using the target language as the result of working on teacher-made materials. Considering Steelman's, Pierce's and Koppenhaver's (1994) words, "To be literate is to be able to gather and to construct meaning using written language" (p. 201). Literacy, in Kern's (2000) vision, "Is a dynamic, culturally and historical situated practice of using and interpreting diverse written and spoken texts to fulfill particular social purposes" (p. 6). For Thoman and Jolls (2003), literacy means, "Having the skill to interpret "squiggles" on a piece of paper as letters which, when put together, formed words that conveyed meaning" (p. 6). The three definitions agree on the fact

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

that literacy involves production of the language and it requires the assemblage of information and the ability to communicate that information using accurate written language.

There is also a special perception on the social practices and purposes since literacy demands the domain of the language and its practicability in real-life situation in which language plays an essential role, not only written but also spoken. From this comparison, we can notice the different purposes of literacy, and how it may be understood depending on the perspective given. In this sense, Bond (2011) remarked: “Literacy takes many different forms and the degree to which each of these forms is important is dependent not just on any given person’s needs, but on the community in which the person is required to operate” (p. 2). Summing up, literacy lies on the fact that the context where a person belongs requires specific interpretation and production of language, which suggest that the sociocultural practices can affect literacy in a person. This is because the sociocultural background allows a person to interpret and produce language in determined manners.

Writing. Writing can be considered as one of the most complex and demanding language skills to be achieved as it is a productive one. Writing shows how much accurate the learners must be when brainstorming, organizing and polishing ideas into a text to properly describe what they want to communicate. As contended by Byrne (1988), “Writing refers to the production of graphic symbols which have to be arranged, considering certain conventions to form words and words have to be arranged to form sentences” (p. 98). Hence, writing results very difficult to people because it is not easy to put thoughts together into utterances; the process of mastering good writing takes time and it requires a permanent and gradual process that must be addressed in the EFL classroom.

The complexity in written texts says a lot about the proficiency a person has in this ability. This syntactic complexity not only allows a person to clearly communicate their thoughts,

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

but also to achieve a range of understanding and socialization of meaning in a broader sense. In fact, Wolfe-Quintero et al. (as cited in Polio, 2001), stressed on the idea that syntactic complexity means “that a wide variety of both basic and sophisticated structures are available whereas a lack of complexity means that only a narrow range of basic structures are available” (p. 96). The fact of using sophisticated language for writing shows how much domain of the language and language production a person could have.

Writing as a skill. Writing is considered one of the four language skills and it refers to the graphical representations to communicate the language. Language skills are divided into comprehension and production skills; writing is considered a productive language skill that aims at eliciting ideas, creating sentences, and putting them together in a consistent and understandable way to express what the writer wants to share. As a skill, Elbow (1981) admitted “writing calls on the ability to create words and ideas out of yourself, but it also calls on the ability to criticize them in order to decide which ones to use” (p. 7). In the same vein, Harmer (2004) considered writing is a higher order cognitive skill that entails a conscious process and has to be taught. Then, writing allows people to think, organize, discriminate, and communicate their ideas in written form.

Writing ideas to convey meaning requires knowing and using words to convey meaning. Concerning communicative words and language in written texts, there is a need for “A varied vocabulary to get successful literacy, as well as the expressive and receptive language and words” (Reyes & Vega, 2015, p.28). Therefore, working on the language features to achieve comprehensible writing is not a simple dexterity that awaits to be sparkled, but rather to be gradually developed via cognitive procedures and meaningful and sequenced materials and writing strategies.

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Writing approaches. The aforementioned view of writing already shows the significant representation of its capacities along development stages. Moreover, there are two main approaches to take into account during the procedure, the first one is writing as a process and the second one states writing as a product.

Writing as a process. As a process, writing focuses on the stages followed to achieve a good written text. Those stages are the result of cognitive and mental processes carried out by the writer. According to Langan (2001), “It is frustrating to discover how much of a challenge it is to transfer thoughts and feelings from one’s head onto a sheet of paper” (p. 13). This implies taking into consideration the beliefs and habits of the writer, because those features will affect the process itself.

Writing as a process does not pay attention to the final product but to the gradual procedure followed to get writing accuracy. Scholars like Grabe and Kaplan (1996), Hyland (2002), and Kroll (1996) agreed on the assertion that writing is a process that demands intellectual processes such as preparing, reviewing, proofread, and evaluating. Thus, writing implies the knowledge of rules to convey a specific message. In this study, writing as a process is fundamental because it allows learners to self-notice the importance of considering a series of conscious processes to build understandable written texts.

Additionally, learners focus on organizing ideas for being understood by the reader, as suggested by Baynham (1995), writing as a process “involves the collection and analysis of written texts, in order to understand better their internal organization and structure, provides evidence of the targets of literacy processes” (p. 221). In addition to this, Murray (1972) affirmed “writing as a process is not a question of correct or incorrect. It is a matter of far higher relevance. The writer is making ethical decisions. He uses language to reveal the truth to himself so that he can tell it to others” (p. 4). Writing as a process tries to exploit the best from students in

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

the process of making a written piece. The focus is not the accuracy of the sentences they got at the end (product), but the gradual mindful procedures and the guides they follow to achieve a personal feeling of satisfaction regarding the written piece. In reference to this, the aim of this research study is basically to make students able to understand the importance of a guided process instead of products, and how a required product may be more valuable when it has been built through conscious procedural actions of short term achievement.

Writing as a product. This approach centers on what the writers need to enhance by themselves, identifying features and relevant facts of a given task, running and completing it through samples to achieve it. Writing as a product is sorted out as “a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text, usually is presented and analyzed at an early stage” (Gabrielatos, 2002, p. 5). In other words, writing as a product has been set for a long time in writing stages and has always tried to repeat what is already done, considering what it might be done on a sheet of paper to compare the edition and the process made by the thrilled writer.

Writing as a product is oriented towards an organized control of information and ideas systematized by their relevance, having it as a specific result to get an emphasis on the final product. According to Harmer (1988), writing as a product is known as the “Orientation originated from the combination of structural linguistics and behaviorism learning theories applied to second language teaching” (p. 256). Unlike the process approach, this one resorts to understanding the purpose of accomplishing the academic target in accordance with the established criteria.

For the purpose of this study, and more specifically, for its pedagogical intervention, this teacher-made workshop approaches writing as a process. It informs the conscious processes that students should follow during the implementation of the materials more than the product they

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

may get at the end of such implementation. Even though the written activities included in the teacher-made materials intend to achieve a final product, the imperative concern is to make learners understand the importance of contemplating cognizant procedures to build and achieve writing skills development through a systematic process.

All in all, writing is understood and interpreted from diverse perspectives. Regarding these visions, Baynham (1995) approaches writing from different angles:

First, we can identify writing as text and study aspects of the organization of written text.

This is an emphasis on writing as a product. Secondly, we can study writing as process and examine the factors involved or construction of written text. Thirdly, we can focus on the writer and try to understand the subjectivity involved in writing. (p. 208)

Out of these three positions, this study also regards writing as a skill that ought to be taught, practice and fostered through mental processes in which students conceive, prepare, built, revise and share ideas, feelings and thoughts about a given topic that is familiar to them. Furthermore, writing can also be understood as a practice immerse in a social context to serve sociolinguistic purposes. Since the use of teacher-made materials to develop students' writing skills is the focus of this study, it is situated or localized as a key element for engagement and improved production.

Giving and receiving feedback. In the process of developing the writing skills to build written texts, which is the purpose of this study, both formative and summative assessment takes place. In this moment, I would like to contrast what Brown's (2003) insights on formative and summative assessment, and how Núñez and Téllez (2009) adopted these two processes in their framework of materials development and evaluation. Brown (2003) states that, "Formative assessment is evaluating students in the process of forming their competencies and skills with the goal of helping to continue that growth process" (p. 6). Formative assessment, for Núñez and

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Téllez (2009), “Takes place during the implementation of the course and provides information about students’ achievements and shortcomings and the extent to which needs are met, aiming at adjusting it while being developed” (p. 183). Brown (2003) also mentions that summative assessment “Aims to measure, or summarize, what a student has grasped, and typically occurs at the end of a course or unit of instruction” (p. 6). In this case, Núñez and Téllez (2009) establish that the summative assessment “Occurs at the end of a course and gives information about both students’ overall achievement and the effectiveness of the course for future implementation” (p. 183). These both types of assessment support the purpose of developing and implementing materials for language teaching and for checking the progress of the writing skills throughout the whole process of implementation of the material. Teacher-made materials mediate a pedagogically conceived process that includes evaluating the process itself using it as a point of reference for continue improving the pedagogical intervention.

Having addressed the three theoretical constructs that inform the current study, the following fragment discusses the methodological design that encompasses both the research and the instructional designs that support this study.

Chapter III

Methodological Design

This chapter describes the research and the instructional designs that support this study.

Research design

This section includes theoretical background and support related to the research design, type of research approach, type of study, participants and instruments for data collection gathering. The research design supporting this study is the qualitative research approach because my intention is to describe the process in which learners are involved. Also, the type of study that best fits to this research study is action research because it represents the way in which the pedagogical intervention was implemented. Moreover, I described the process I have followed to reach the research goals and objectives and briefly described the participants of the study and the data gathering instruments.

Type of research approach. I have decided to use the qualitative research approach as its characteristics help me to make a better sense of the contribution of teacher- made materials, based on meaningful learning, to the development of tenth graders' writing skills. This study was based on a qualitative approach whose purpose is to understand facts by interpreting and elucidating research results. In Sandin's (2003) words, a qualitative research is “a systematic activity guided to the comprehension of educational phenomenon and the transformation of the socio-educational sceneries” (p. 123). Therefore, the study explores and draws conclusions about the implications of a teacher- made materials based on meaningful learning to foster writing skills.

The qualitative research approach plays a vital role in the development of this study because as Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009) stated, “It helps to study behaviors in natural contexts and focus on how people or groups of people can have different ways of looking

at reality” (p. 6). Thus, the use of the qualitative approach also allows exploring the behavior of the participants in their natural context. In Burns’ (1999) words, “The aim of a qualitative approach is to offer descriptions, interpretations and clarifications of naturalistic social contexts” (p. 22). Moreover, one of the principal reasons of this study is to describe the appropriateness and effectiveness of developing and implementing teacher-made materials to foster students’ writing skills. That is why the use of a qualitative approach would help to collect specific data that can contribute to the achievement of the research objectives set out for this study.

Type of study. Taking in consideration the nature of my research study, action research fits the development and implementation of my pedagogical intervention. In fact, action research allows the researcher to know real information about language learning events that take place within a particular social context. In that sense, it provides several realistic data, which according to Burns (2010), cannot be generalized. In the same line of thought, from Calhoun’s (1994) perspective, “Action research is a fancy way of saying let’s study what’s happening at our school and decide how to make it a better place” (p. 16). In other words, since each class can be considered a unique different setting, this type of research study looks for the generation of knowledge, the proposal and implementation of a pedagogical innovation that foster a change in both the teacher’s pedagogical practice and the students’ learning and performance.

Following Burns (2009), in action research:

The *action* is located within the ongoing social processes of particular societal contexts, whether they be classrooms, schools, or whole organizations, and typically involves developments and interventions into those processes to bring about improvement and change. The *research* is located within the systematic observation and analysis of the developments and changes that eventuate in order to identify the underlying rationale for

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

the action and to make further changes as required based on findings and outcomes. (pp. 289-290)

Action research methodology can be considered as an advantage when research takes place because teachers, can simultaneously perform their teaching practicum and propose innovative pedagogical interventions aimed at improving, or at least, alleviating the identified problematic situation.

To bridge the genuine course of things in a social context, like the EFL classroom, and the appropriate ways of doing them, action research provides the suitable support to identify a problem, design an intervention, and gather, analyze and report information. Following Cohen and Manion (2000), “Action research is a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such an intervention” (pp. 226-27). This type of study brings a realistic source of data and the possibility to solve problematic situations that might increase both students and teachers’ knowledge and performance.

Conducting action research implies undergoing a set of stages on which the study ground its development in a cyclical way. For the implementation of the pedagogical intervention and the analysis of the results it was necessary to establish the action research cycle. In this regard, Kemmis and Mc Taggart and McNiff (as cited in Burns, 2015), proposed four action research stages that suit this study: planning the pedagogical intervention; acting when implementing the intervention to solve or alleviate the identified problem; observing and describing the behavior and response of the participants; and reflecting on the data collected. The acting phase is divided into five sub-phases that allow the research to go in depth in regard to the pedagogical implementation: Ground recognition, trialing, collecting, questioning, and feedback, as shown in figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Source: Kemmis and McTaggart, (1988) Action Research Cycle from Burns' Perspective.

Participants. The participants for this research study were students and the teacher, who also performed the role of materials developer and researcher.

Students. The target population for this study is a tenth-grade group from Normal Superior de Florencia, a public institution in Florencia Caquetá-Colombia. The participants total 35 students who decided to be part of this research study, 12 boys and 23 girls, whose average age is fourteen and sixteen years old. Most of them belong to first and second level of social strata and they have attended English classes with the English teachers since the beginning of the scholar year.

The group of participants for this study signed a consent form (See Appendix B) and were selected because of the opportuneness to participate in the implementation of the pedagogical intervention. This convenient accessibility is established because of my constant contact with the group as I am the English teacher. Concerning the convenience sampling technique, Stevens

(1996), found that it is a sample where the participants are chosen, based on the convenience of the researcher; for example, due to the availability or accessibility. This sampling technique involves, according to Marshall (1996), “The selection of the most accessible subjects. It is the least costly to the researcher, in terms of time, effort and money” (p. 523). Finally, this technique, according to Ross (1978), “Is a sample in which elements have been selected from the target population on the basis of their accessibility or convenience to the researcher” (p. 7). Thus, due to the availability of the participants, it is the technique that best suits this study as students showed disposition and willingness to participate. Moreover, considering these students’ performance during prior writing activities and the needs analysis carried out to identify the problem, they conform an ideal group to implement the intervention.

Teacher-text developer-researcher. In action research, the researcher becomes part of the context being studied (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983); then, my role as a teacher was to be in contact with my students, guide, motivate and facilitate the development of their writing skills; and getting to know them in terms of behavior and writing performance through this innovative experience. As a material developer, I designed a teacher-made workshop composed of five lessons aimed at fostering the students’ learning process by means of motivating, challenging and innovative learning activities (Núñez & Téllez, 2009, Núñez et al. 2009; Núñez et al. 2012; Ramos & Aguirre, 2014, Tomlinson, 1998). The authors further asserted that teachers as materials writers refine their teaching insights, pedagogical practices and become agents of change. Finally, as a researcher, I collected information during the implementation of the pedagogical intervention, analyzed it, and reported the findings (Burns, 2009). In sum, performing this triple role has fostered my personal and professional growth.

Instruments for data collection gathering. Data collection instruments play a vital role in providing the researcher with sets of information to be systematized, codified, reduced and

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

interpreted to generate preliminary salient issues that give rise to the research subcategories and categories. In fact, Leavy (2014) asserted that the collection and the organization of data is necessary using the new technological software that could avoid having bunch of papers. For this research study, I have chosen to use students' artefacts, teacher's field notes, and a focus-group interview as the source of data to be systematized, analyzed and justified in accordance with the established research objectives. An entry and an exit survey (See Appendices E and F) were also designed and conducted to identify the research problem, and the students' language learning and affective needs, preferred topics or themes, learning activities, writing approaches, and strategies to help them build knowledge. The researcher must guarantee confidentiality in learner's responses and in the use of the data collected for research purposes exclusively.

Students' artefacts. This instrument may be considered as fundamental in the current study because it shows the students' performance during the implementation of the teacher-made workshops to develop their writing skills. Besides that, the workshops included the corresponding self-assessment section where the students are invited to evaluate the materials in terms of the three theoretical constructs that underpin this study. Students' perception of the materials served the purpose of informing the teacher-researcher-text developer teacher about salient aspects related to the development of writing skills through teacher-made materials based on meaningful learning.

Referring to artefacts, LeCompte and Preissle (1994) argued that they are a "consisting of products people use, objects people make, and records of what they do, say, produce, or write" (p. 1). Likewise, Given (2008) defined artefacts as the materials used as evidence to document and record personal information of the society, people or a culture. These artefacts, as Merriam and Tisdell (2016) concurred, are excellent to "furnish" (p. 182) observations. Thus, students' artefacts provided registries that documented what students did during the implementation of the

pedagogical intervention, which in turn, complemented teachers' observations, the second data-collection instrument.

Field notes. This instrument “Is a way of reporting, observations, reflections, and reactions to classroom problems” (Hopkins, 1993, p. 116). During the implementation of the lessons developed in the workshop, the researcher registered class observation notes for each lesson, having a total of five field notes in which the teacher-researcher describes the actions, perceptions and procedures of students during the implementation of the materials. In this regard, Burns (1999):

Notes, or field notes as they are often referred to in qualitative research, are descriptions and accounts of events in the research context which are written in a relatively factual and objective style. They generally include reports of non-verbal information, physical settings, group structures and records of conversations and interactions between participants. (p. 87)

Field notes can also be understood based on the purpose it serves. For Wolfinger (2002), “Writing field notes seems deceptively straightforward. Go to a research site, see what happens, then write it down” (p. 85). Nevertheless, I tried always to focus on specific moments of the lesson which I considered relevant in terms of language use in writing activities, suitability of materials development and students' responses to them. On the words of Arhar et al. (2001), “Field notes are direct observations of what is being said and done as well as impressions or hunches of the observer” (p. 140). Field notes were very useful for this research study because they allowed seeing and describing the students' behaviors, verbal and non-verbal interactions, and group organization that took place during the implementation of the five lessons in a separate way. Finally, Lankshear and Knobel (2004) considered that, “Field notes comprise finely detailed written accounts of what was observed” (p. 229). Thus, they allow giving especial attention to the

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

progress and performance of students while working on the writing activities proposed in the lesson which is the focus skill of this study (See Appendix C).

Focus group interview. It was an essential instrument to collect data after implementing the teacher-made workshop that also served the purpose of triangulating the data collected. Researchers like Krueger, Casey, Donner, Kirsch, and Maack (2001) and Tong, Sainsbury, Craig and Donner (2007) coincided on focus groups interviews as an instrument to collect data with a group of people that manifest their perspectives in regard to a specific topic. Considering this, I interviewed a group of students with the purpose of asking questions focused on their perception of the materials I created for them to enhance their writing skills in a meaningful way (See Appendix D).

Surveys. Prior to the development of the previously mentioned workshop, the students answered an entry survey (See Appendix E), on issues related to the three theoretical constructs that underpin the current study, which served as the onset of a teacher-developed workshop proposed for the pedagogical intervention of this study. Besides that, an exit survey (See Appendix F) was designed and administered to identify students' perceptions in regard to the kind of materials developed to foment their writing skills. Correspondingly, for Burns (2001), surveys are an alternative to obtain information and a complement for interviews, where it is recommended to prepare a list of questions and pilot them in advance. Students' answers from the entry survey brought to light important aspects to consider in the development and the use of these materials, whereas, the exit survey offered students' perception of the extent to which teacher-made materials facilitates language learning aimed at refining their writing skills, or not.

Having selected the research approach, the population sampling and the instruments to compile data, it is important to consider the components of the instructional design as described in the following lines.

Instructional Design

This fragment entails the pedagogical intervention and the corresponding explanation of the Second Language Acquisition (SLA hereafter) principles that underlay the design of the teacher-made workshop; the second language acquisition principles considered for this materials development, the general and specific instructional objectives, the innovation of the intervention, the theory of the nature of language and language learning, the methodological approach underlying the pedagogical intervention, the connection of the pedagogical intervention with the research question, and the suggested instruction phases that contemplate the selection of the themes and activities for each one of the lessons; finally, a brief description on the implementation of the teacher-made materials based on meaningful learning to foster writing skills.

Pedagogical intervention. It consisted of the design and implementation of a five-lesson workshop, based on meaningful learning, to foster writing skills. It considered the process approach to writing (pre- writing, while writing, and post writing) in the writing lesson, based on the meaningful learning approach for language, to foster writing skills in tenth graders. Such process was guided with writing tips and opportunities for peer and teacher-feedback in the EFL classroom. Students were expected to write texts expressing their perceptions, opinions, feeling and other expressions related to topics of their personal interests to share with their peers and the teacher in the socialization stage of the lessons.

Second language acquisition principles. This pedagogical intervention contemplated the SLA principles relevant to the development of materials to guarantee suitability, pertinence and effectiveness of the teacher-made workshop proposed. Tomlinson (1998) established a set of SLA principles to consider when designing materials from which I privileged the following seven:

Achieve impact through novelty, variety, attractive presentation, and appealing content.

The material presented to the learners was designed taking into consideration an attractive presentation to engage students in the completion of the activities included in the teacher-created workshop. As Barnard and Zemach (2003) mentioned “Layout should always be carefully considered; an otherwise excellent text and activity can be ruined simply by a badly designed presentation on the page” (p. 317). The layout of the materials serves as an alternative engagement strategy to motivate and engage learners in the completion of the learning activities specially the writing ones.

Besides, having attractive content serves as a strategy to make student feel interested in the materials. As sustained by Tomlinson (1998), “The content is appealing when it has got topics of interest to the target learners, topics which offer the possibility of learning something new, engaging stories, universal themes or local references” (p. 7). Hence, the presentational details of the materials seek to impact students so they can get committed towards both the activities and the language.

Be perceived as relevant and useful by the learner. As a second principle, it was necessary that the content the material offer to the learners could be considered as relevant. For this reason, the closest context of the learner was taken into account as they consider important to talk about the region they live. This content selection was the result of the needs analysis survey (See Appendix E) conducted with them. Moreover, the fact of contextualizing the grammatical aspects of the academic period to the cultural content of the region has already being used as a language learning strategy.

Offer plenty of free practice. As Ellis (1990) ascertained, controlled practice appears to have slight long-term effect on the accuracy required to perform new structures. Besides, Ellis and Rathbone (1987) point out that it has little effect on fluency. As the purpose of the teacher-

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

made workshop was based on written production, the possibility to give learners the opportunity to write freely based on the content of the lessons should encourage them to better perform the production activities. Nevertheless, they were always guided to use the process approach for writing.

Provide opportunities for communicative purposes in L2, fostering thereby language use, not just usage. As pointed out by Canale and Swain (1980), learners should be helped to automatize their existing procedural knowledge and develop strategic competence. This principle makes a direct connection to the previous one allowing them to practice the language through specific moments that can be considered as opportunities during the completion of specific learning activities that require using the target language purposefully.

Help learners feel at ease. SLA research has revealed students seem to learn more and in shorter time when being relaxed and comfortably engaged in learning activities. (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). Providing learners with a comfortable environment allows a better performance when working on the material for the completion of learning activities in each lesson.

Furthermore, it encourages them to practice the language without any constraint, which might result in language use and improved production fostered by a suitable learning atmosphere.

Facilitate student's self-investment. The resources required for the completion and performance of the learning activities in each one of the lessons proposed in the workshop should be always available for learners to avoid discouragement and failure. In this way, the proposed materials foster students' self-investment as they favored the overt model of instruction of strategy instruction (Chamot, 1999) to help students become aware of applying learning strategies that boost language learning and performance. This conscious application of learning strategies under the overt or explicit model of strategy instruction (Chamot, 1999) may result in learners' motivation engagement and autonomy during the implementation of the teacher-made

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

materials process as the content is relevant and connected to real life situations. In fact, Duarte & Escobar (2008) found “when implementing the local adapted material, students felt more motivated to finish the activities since they were more meaningful to them” (p. 72). Thus, completing learning activities would always be driven by the conscious use of learning strategies that show them how to accomplish a learning activity not only in the EFL class, but also in other content-subject matters.

Provide opportunities for outcome feedback. The element of providing a continuous feedback relies on the fact of having learners notice their possible weaknesses and strengths, so they can overcome the former and strengthen them to continue their own learning process. This is mainly because as Muñoz and Álvarez (2008) maintained, “The relationship between teacher feedback and student revision is also important to examine in order to determine the degree to which students address the teacher feedback and the degree to which revisions are related to teacher comments” (p. 104). So, providing students with feedback would ensure a positive washback in terms of acceptance of the assignments they do. The constant interaction of the learners with the teacher-made workshop, under the teacher’s guidance, would lead them to achieve the development of their writing skills.

Instructional objectives. The general and specific objectives of this pedagogical intervention are stated below.

General objective. To design and implement a teacher-made workshop, composed of five lessons, to foster the writing skills among tenth-grade students at a public institution.

Specific objectives. (a) To make students aware of the procedures considered in the implementation of the teacher-made workshop; (b) to create a suitable learning environment that promotes writing; (c) to create activities that catch students’ attention so they can write about local issues found in their context; (d) to make students aware of the use of different learning

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

strategies to prepare them to write; (e) to encourage students to develop the writing skills through the process approach; and (f) to help students become conscious of the need to give and receive peer and teacher feedback to improve their compositions.

Innovation of the intervention. The tenth-grade students at Normal Superior high school do not have a textbook to guide the development of competences in EFL. To supply this lack of resources teachers usually compile materials from different sources, mainly focused on the grammatical and structural aspect. However, those assorted materials are not selected considering the language learning, emotional and academic needs of the students. For these reasons, this study proposes the development and implementation of teacher-made materials, based on meaningful learning, to foster tenth graders' writing skills through the process approach, as a needed communicative skill that contribute to the development of the communicative competence in the EFL classroom. The materials developed on this study correspond to a teacher-made workshop that includes five lessons, namely vocabulary and grammar in context, reading, listening, speaking, writing, and a self-assessment section that foster students' reflection on their learning process.

Broadly speaking, an innovation is a deliberate and planned process that is usually perceived as new by an individual or a group of individuals. For Rogers (as cited in Kirkland & Sutch 2009), "An innovation is the application of a new resource or approach that changes social practice, creating some value ... by altering the social practice of teaching and learning ... if the ideas seem new to the individual" (p. 10). Innovation in this research study is informed by the new practices and consideration of local culture and students' background to learn new things in the target language through the implementation of the teacher-made materials that allows specifically the use and production of the target language by the development of the writing skills.

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

It is necessary for us as teachers and materials developer to perform innovative roles by developing materials and implementing new methodological practices that can encourage our students to learn the language and use it for communicative purposes. As Núñez et al. (2012) claimed, “Innovation has a major role in MD and that teacher-developed materials can be seen as an innovative practice in the EFL classroom” (p. 24). In the same vein, Núñez, Téllez and Castellanos (2017) found that, “As in-service teachers make informed decisions regarding the MD field and the EFL field of study, the materials they developed for their pedagogical intervention aim at improving their students’ learning” (p. 54). These new practices in the EFL classroom would lead to better results and a better attainment of the language knowledge and use. As long as teachers and materials developers are informed about a good MD framework, the most efficient and innovative these teaching resources would result in language teaching.

Besides, this pedagogical intervention has an innovation connotation because in some extent the workshop that was implemented serves in purpose of attending students’ needs in language learning. According to Núñez, Téllez and Castellanos (2012), “MD constitutes a true resource for teachers to respond to students’ needs and foster institutional innovation in language teaching” (p. 25). This may be the main objective of etching practices and pedagogical interventions like this, attending students’ needs so they can feel that the materials used are not only innovative but useful. Núñez et al. (2012) identified:

Three key reasons that justify why developing materials fosters innovation. One reason is that it entails a sequence of opportunities for decision. Another reason is that by doing so they become active agents of change in language teaching. The last reason is that in designing them they were able to address their students’ needs and expectations. (p. 27)

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

Therefore, materials design and the innovation on them takes us to a different level of language teaching and learning. It contributes to have a different point of view toward EFL settings.

Theory of the nature of language. The theories of the nature of language I chose for my research study were the functional and the self-expression perspectives based on the visions presented by Tudor (2001). The functional perspective because it allows to determine the functionality of the language in context; it means that learners can be aware about the usefulness the language can have in real-life situations and how it contributes to communicative purposes. The self-expression perspective intends to raise learner's intentionality with the language; it means learners can use the language to express their selves in different situations and contexts. The process of self-expressing through the target language is the most important goal based on the purpose of producing written language. Besides, Tudor (2001) considers these theories with a pragmatic role, which refers to the functionality of the language in sociolinguistic contexts.

Vision of language learning. The theories of language learning that this research study considered were the experiential learning and the role of affect. The experiential learning since the perspective of exposing learners to real experience that can lead to learning and developing the language skills properly. These experiences provide learners with real language use so they can notice about the importance they are learning and developing. Learners can be aware that there is not a lesson usage for the language but that it has multiple contexts use. The role of affect is considered since the perspective of creating a relationship of the students' background and previous knowledge to acquire new ones. In this sense, they are expected to relate what they already know and what they are interested in learning to have a better learning outcome. This makes a connection to the pedagogical approach of meaningful learning. Tudor (2001)

contemplated as a key issue the fact of involving learners into their previous knowledge so they can relate it to what they are about to learn and produce.

Methodological approach underlying the pedagogical intervention. For the development and the implementation of this pedagogical intervention two approaches were considered. First as the language teaching approach, meaningful learning was used as it matches the purpose of the intervention, as described in the literature review. Second, the teaching approach to writing was the process approach, which takes learners stage by stage to reach mastery in written texts. The process approach is suitable to develop the writing skills. In fact, Kroll (as cited in Hasan & Akhand, 2010) conceptualized the process approach as follow:

The “process approach” serves today as an umbrella term for many types of writing courses. What the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than a single-shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts. (p. 79)

In the process of engaging learners to develop their writing skills, the process approach is a determining factor in both guiding their cognitive procedures and raising their motivation to undertake writing. In this regard, Silva (1990) determined, “This approach calls for providing a positive, encouraging and collaborative workshop environment within which students, with ample and minimal interference, can work through their composing process” (p. 15). Correspondingly, the process approach leads to have more concentrated students and more accurate results when working under its guidance.

Connection of the pedagogical intervention with the research question. Bearing in mind that the main concern of this research study was to know how teacher-made materials, based on meaningful learning, develop tenth graders' writing skills, the pedagogical intervention was driven towards the implementation of a teacher-made workshop in which students and teacher explored the possible effectiveness in writing skills concerning such materials. Richards (2005) highlighted the importance of connecting materials developers' activity to research. Because of this, the connection of the pedagogical intervention and the research question relies in the simplicity of being accurate when designing the materials and its implementation. Hence, Richards (2005) stated that "before the writer can make decision on the kind of exercises, tasks and activities to be employed in materials, an overall instructional framework has to be agreed on" (p. 8). The development of the workshop was always connected to the research question with the purpose of being a guided process which could allow later the identification of the concerns in the research question and the objectives set for the research study.

Suggested instructional phases.

Proposed materials development framework. When developing materials, teachers should have into consideration a clear framework for MD with the purpose of considering a clear path to achieve the goals set in a language course. Following Núñez et al. (2004):

Materials could lack a solid rationale if they are not constructed considering principles in which the teacher believes. It is by combining their theoretical background and their teaching experience in the development of their materials that they create positive conditions for language learning. (p. 131)

Based on this assumption, a materials development framework serves as a reference for teachers to create appropriate teaching situations and proper environments for language learning and language learners. Correspondingly, the materials proposed here followed the existing

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

theoretical frameworks in the field of materials development. Several authors like Graves (1996), Jolly and Bolitho (1998); Masuhara (1998); Núñez et al., (2004), Núñez and Téllez (2009), Núñez et al., (2009) and Núñez et al., (2012) highlighted the importance of the identification of needs; establishment of objectives; defining the methodological approach; selection of content and activities; the physical production or development of the activities; and revision, evaluating or assessing the materials. However, Graves (1996) considered the resources and constraints; Masuhara (1998) includes the design of a syllabus; Jolly and Bolitho (1998) took into account the identification of a problem and the contextual realization of the proposed new materials; Núñez, Pineda, and Téllez (2004) embraced the learning and teaching activities the materials required students to perform, type of participation, and the way students use their background knowledge; Núñez and Téllez (2009) contemplated resources and constraints; and Núñez et al., (2009) and Núñez et al., (2012) incorporated the issue of making adjustments. As suggested by Núñez and Téllez (2009), “The assessment component of the framework for materials development plays a vital role in assessing both students’ needs and learning, and the course per se” (p. 183). Therefore, considering the main aspects of the frameworks mentioned above provided me with a good theoretical background to start establishing my own MD framework that could attend my students’ needs.

Thus, the pedagogical challenge I undertook was to come up with my own proposal of a theoretical framework to develop materials. A standing feature of the proposed framework for the materials refer to students’ context or background knowledge as the issues studied in the five lessons of the workshop was related to students’ lives and interest. This distinguishing characteristic allows learners to connect what they are developing and learning using the materials to their real and closest context. In this way, knowledge and learning is meaningful for them especially because of the familiar topics and vocabulary used throughout the teacher-made

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

workshop. Moreover, the English syllabus of the institution intends to foster the communicative competence by integrating the development of the four-language skills joint with the regional and institutional needs.

Informed consent. Students were informed about the research study and its corresponding pedagogical intervention to be implemented. In doing so, students' questions in regard to the study were answered. Consent forms (See Appendix A) were given for them to read and sign up before implementing the pedagogical intervention; however, as my students are children, their parents were the ones who signed the consent forms. Finally, as a researcher I did emphasize on the fact that the information gathered was kept in strict confidentiality and used for research purposes exclusively.

Sensitization. Students are acquainted with the pedagogical intervention and with the details of timing and how the teacher-made materials were going to be presented and worked on. Also, I highlighted the importance of developing materials (Workshop No. My Tourist Region) to help them become familiar with the topics and methodology underpinning the implementation, as well as the selected data gathered instruments.

Implementation of the materials. The time allotted for the implementation of the five lessons encompassed in the teacher-made workshop was 10 hours; the time devoted for each lesson was divided as follow: two hours for the grammar and vocabulary lesson, two hours for the reading and listening lesson, two hours for the speaking lesson and finally, four hours for the writing lesson. As the main skill to be fostered in the development of the workshop was writing, the completion of the writing lesson took four hours. The four language skills were worked in interconnected lessons that started with the receptive skills and gradually moved to the productive ones as follows: grammar and vocabulary, reading, listening, speaking and writing, with the corresponding self-assessment section. This was intentionally done because it was expected to

MEANINGFUL MATERIALS FOR WRITING SKILLS

provide students with enough vocabulary and input for them to achieve the writing activity. In fact, Tomlinson (2010) affirmed that, “In order to acquire the ability to use the language effectively, the learners need a lot of experience of the language being used in a variety of different ways for a variety of purposes” (p. 87). Thus, it is expected to sufficiently expose the students to the language needed to achieve their writing activities using the process approach. Besides that, the classroom is equipped with all the necessary resources for the implementation of the five lessons.

Workshop Sample

Workshop No. 1

My Tourist Region



Do you know this place?

What is the name of this river?

Where is it located?

What can people do in this river?

Image taken from: <http://www.sanjosedelfragua-caqueta.gov.co/galeriafotosDetalle.shtml>

General Objective:

- To write persuasive texts based on the importance of Caquetá region as a touristic destination.

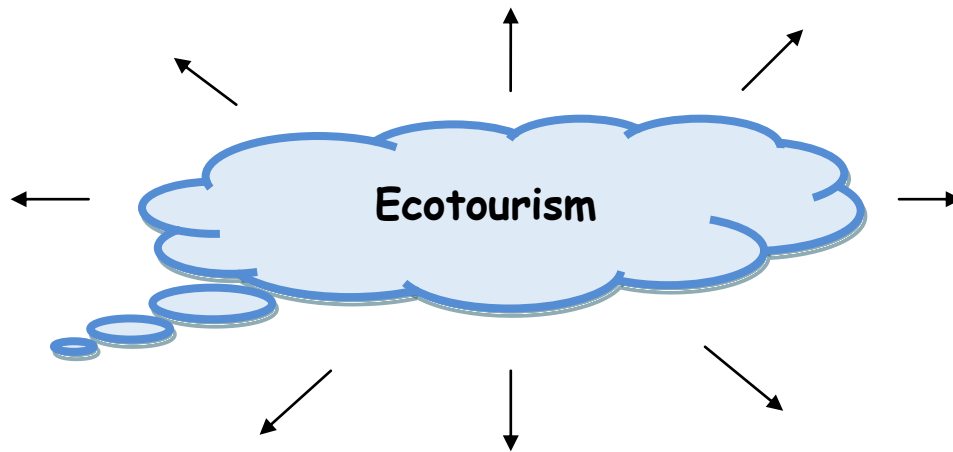
Specific Objectives:

- To use vocabulary related to Colombian local tourist attractions.
- To identify local information in a passage about regional tourist attractions.
- To recognize the main and specific information from audio recordings related to the regional profile and main tourist attractions.
- To ask and give information about tourist attractions in the region.
- To write an invitation to a foreigner using vocabulary in context.

Lesson 1: Vocabulary and Grammar in Context

1. Write as many words as you can around the word in the cloud.

Learning strategy: semantic mapping (evoking previous language and learning experiences)



2. Unscramble the Colombian tourist places and organize them on the list below.

Learning strategy: Using previous knowledge to find specific vocabulary.



- a) cohcamicha nonatial prak _____
- b) san asutgin aroceoghalcil prak _____
- c) tyanora prak _____
- d) pachicos nonaital prak _____
- e) chiteribique nonatial prak _____

3. Complete the following sentences using the vocabulary from the previous exercise.

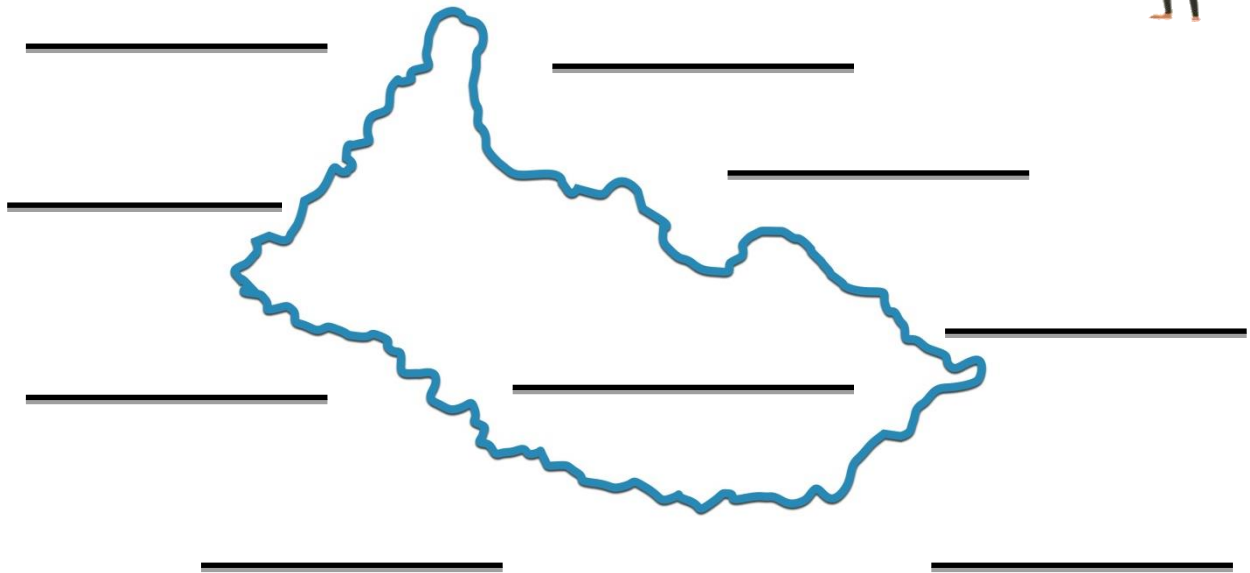
Learning strategy: Using vocabulary in context.



- a) If I visit Santa Marta sometime, I will go to _____
_____ with my family.
- b) If I choose our vacations destination this year, I will plan to visit _____, it is beautiful.
- c) I wish you were here so we can travel to _____.
- d) If you have time next holidays, I will take you to _____.
- e) I wish I could be in _____ with you, this place is so romantic.

4. Write tourist places that you know in Caqueta on the lines below. Then, color the map and rename the department with an appealing name.

Learning strategy: Using imagery to evoke previous knowledge.



5. Find words related to our region. Then, label the corresponding picture image.

Learning strategy: Associate words and images.





P	E	T	R	O	G	L	Y	P	H
L	A	N	D	S	C	A	P	E	A
S	T	R	I	U	D	N	U	N	M
E	Z	I	R	L	O	E	G	L	A
D	U	V	I	S	A	N	A	D	L
R	C	A	V	E	S	M	O	T	O
T	A	X	E	T	I	P	I	R	K
O	B	A	C	A	R	D	O	S	A
T	R	E	O	K	I	N	G	O	I
W	A	T	E	R	F	A	L	L	S

Lesson 2: Reading

1. Read the following text and **circle** the words that identify our region.

Learning strategy: Identifying key words.



Top Tourist Attraction in Caqueta

Caquetá department has a vast area extending from the pedestal of the Andes Mountains towards the Amazon forest. It has captivating views of mountain ranges and an oasis to diverse species of wildlife making it a favorable place for ecotourism in Colombia.

One of the most visited top tourist attractions in Caquetá is the Picachos National Park. The park has a large variety of fauna as well as extraordinary flora and trees that make this region the perfect place to explore and experience its rich tropical forest and highlands.

Another park to explore in Caquetá is Chiribiquete National Park which is located at the core of the Colombian Amazon. Its panoramic sceneries also display

valleys, enormous rocks and diverse species of wildlife.

Florencia, which is the capital city of the Department of Caquetá, is also one of the top tourist attractions in this region. This capital is considered the most influential metropolis in the southeast region of Colombia because of its large population, and abundant and diverse culture. The capital city is close to Hacha River and is primarily the heart of the Colombia's Amazon, due to its rich fauna and vegetation, and diverse population.

Selected and adapted from:
<http://spgteam.com/colombia/top-tourist-attractions-in-caqueta/>

2. Work in pairs to answer the following questions.

Learning strategy: identifying general and specific information.



a) The general idea of the passage is:

1. to invite people to go to the rivers in Caqueta.
2. to describe the top tourist attractions in Caqueta.
3. to inform people that Caqueta is big.

b) The top tourist attractions in Caqueta are...

1. Chiribiquete National Park and Picachos National Park.
2. Picachos National Park and Tayrona park.
3. Chiribiquete National Park and Chicamocha National Park.

c) Based on the reading, the term ecotourism means:

1. visiting interesting tourist places in capital cities.
2. travelling to natural areas that preserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.
3. visiting landmarks and unique places around the world.

d) Some aspects that make Caqueta one of the most influential area in the south region of Colombia are:

1. its parks and tourist attractions.
2. its rivers and delicious food.
3. its large population, and abundant and diverse culture.

e) Do you consider Caqueta as an important tourist region? Why?

I think that Caqueta is an important tourist region because

it... _____

Lesson 3: Listening

1. Listen to the audio recording 1. In the chart below, tick (✓) the correct information you hear and cross out (✗) the wrong one. Then, correct the wrong one.



Learning strategy:
Discriminating right and wrong statements.

Natural National Parks in Caquetá		✓	✗
a.	Los Picachos national park		
b.	El Encanto national park		
c.	El Bodoquero national park		
d.	Alto Fragua Indiwasi national park		

2. Listen to the audio recording 2 and circle the places and indigenous tribes you hear.

Learning strategy: Identifying key information.



- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| ★ | <i>Florencia</i> | ★ | <i>Mayas</i> |
| ★ | <i>Solita</i> | ★ | <i>Coreguajes</i> |
| ★ | <i>Cartagena del</i> | ★ | <i>Incas</i> |
| ★ | <i>Solano</i> | ★ | <i>Andaquies</i> |
| ★ | <i>San Vicente de</i> | ★ | <i>Huitotos</i> |

3. Work in pairs. Listen to the audio recording 3 and organize the text in the correct order.

Learning strategy: Listening attentively.



Florencia - Caqueta	
<input type="radio"/>	The biggest economic activity its agriculture, with a special place for cattle.
<input type="radio"/>	It has an altitude of 242 Mts. and an average temperature of 26C.
<input type="radio"/>	Florencia is the capital city of Caqueta department; it is also known as "The golden gate to the Colombian Amazon", which refers to its green natural treasures.
<input type="radio"/>	Among the rivers flowing across the city's territory we can find the rivers Orteguaza, Caraño, Bodoquero, and Hacha.
<input type="radio"/>	Florencia is located in the north of the Caqueta department; it is close to the limits with the Huila department, in the down part of the Andes. mountains.

4. Listen to the audio recording 4. List five tourist places you can identify.

Learning strategy: Identifying key vocabulary.



Five horizontal green-outlined boxes with arrowheads on the right side, arranged in a descending staircase pattern from top-left to bottom-right, intended for listing five tourist places.

Lesson 4: Speaking

1. Work in pairs. Take turns to interview each other following the model given.

Learning strategy: Combining words to share ideas.



Interview about Caqueta as a tourist destination

- a. Have you gone on tourism in Caqueta? _____
- b. If you had the chance, what tourist places would you visit?

If I had the chance, I would ... _____

- c. What places would you recommend tourists to visit in Caquetá? Why?

I would recommend tourists to visit ... _____

_____ because... _____

- d. What would you say to those who have not visited our department?

I would say...



Lesson 5: Writing

1. Work in groups of four. Create a slogan (motto) that describes the importance of our region as a tourist destination. Then share it with your classmates.

Learning strategy: Using imagery and combining words into longer sentences.



- a. A slogan or motto must start with a verb. Write some expressions using verbs. Example: come - visit - enjoy - discover - explore - taste


1	<hr/>	4	<hr/>
2	<hr/>	5	<hr/>
3	<hr/>	6	<hr/>

Come and enjoy
the wonders of
ecotourism in
Caqueta.

- b. A slogan or motto should not have more than 10 words. Combine two or more expressions from the previous activity.

1	<hr/> <hr/>
2	<hr/> <hr/>

- c. Write the final version of your slogan motto here.



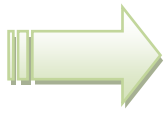
MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

2. Continue working in the same groups. Make a brochure in which you describe the most relevant tourist aspects of our department.

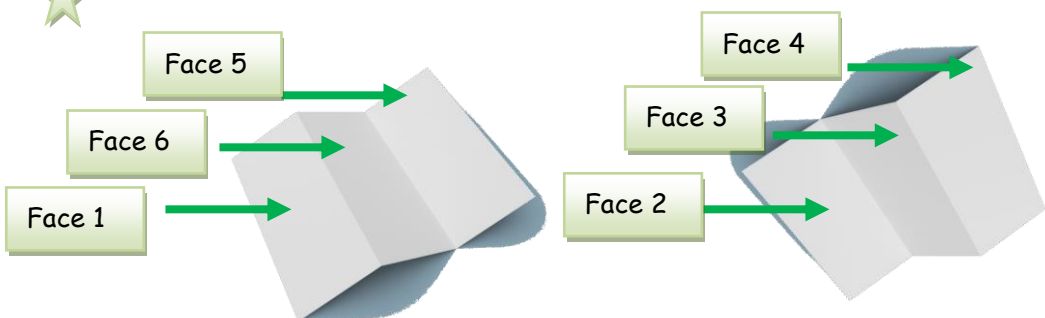
Learning strategy: Using previous knowledge, imagery and combining words into longer sequences.



- Key elements in a brochure:**
1. *Appealing content.*
 2. *Classification of the information.*
 3. *Organized content.*
 4. *Engaging.*



Faces in a brochure



a. Think about possible titles for your brochure. This is to be used in the first face of your brochure.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

b. *Select four main topics you want to talk about in your brochure. Share the information with your partners and teacher. This is to be used in the face number 2, 3, 4 and 5 of your brochure.*

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

c. *Make a brainstorming to describe the main topics you have chosen. This is to be used on faces number 2, 3, 4 and 5 of your brochure.*

<p>Category 1</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Category 2</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Category 3</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Category 4</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

d. Write a short invitation to a foreigner persuading him/her to visit our department. This is to be used in the face number 6 of your brochure. Do it in group and decide. See the example.

1 You should come and enjoy tourism in Caqueta.

2 _____

3 _____

e. In your group, use the information you have written to start making your brochure. Ask for help to your teacher or classmates if needed. Good luck!

3. Exchange your workshop with a classmate. Use the symbols below to give your feedback according to the example. Use the non-numbered cells to write the symbols.

Learning strategy: Asking for correction.



Mistake	Sy
Word	w.o
Wrong	w.w
Spelling	s.p

Example:
 You should taste our food delicious
w.o.
because it is healthy and clean.
s.p. w.w.

4. Think about the perfect tourist place to visit. Write a descriptive text including the most relevant characteristics from that place. Write on the numbered boxes.



Learning strategy: combining words into longer sequences and asking for correction.

Title: _____

1. The _____ is very attractive because _____

2. It has _____

3. Here you can enjoy _____

4. Also, people enjoy _____

5. People like coming here _____

6. It allows visitors to _____

5. Exchange your workshop with a classmate. Use the symbols below to give your feedback according to the example! Use the non-numbered boxes in the previous exercise to write the symbols.

Mistake	Symbol
Word	w.o
Wrong	w.w
Spelling	s.p

Example:
 You should taste our food delicious
 w.o.
because it is healthy and clean.
 s.p. w.w.

6. Give your workshop to your teacher. He will give feedback on your written exercises. Your teacher will base his feedback on the following correction code sheet/form.

THE CORRECTION CODE

SYMBOL	TYPE OF ERROR	ERROR EXAMPLE	CORRECTED ERROR
Cp	Capitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a perfect Balance. mary lives in a big House. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A perfect balance. Mary lives in a big house.
P	Punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is the word wonderful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is the world wonderful?
Sp	Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It offers us many thigs. I always belived. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It offers us many things. I always believed.
∧	Missing word(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura is model. I'm looking the stars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura is a model. I'm looking at the stars.

7. Now, it is time to edit and polish your composition up.

<i>Title:</i>
1. The _____ is very attractive because _____
2. It has _____
3. Here you can enjoy _____
4. Also, people enjoy _____
5. People like coming here _____
6. It allows visitors to _____

Self-assessment

<p>My learning objectives <i>Mis objetivos de aprendizaje</i></p>	<p>I do Puedo</p>	<p>I can improve Puedo mejorar</p>
<p>I can use vocabulary related to Colombian local tourist attractions. <i>Puedo usar vocabulario relacionado a atracciones turísticas locales de Colombia.</i></p>		
<p>I identify local information in a passage about regional tourist attractions. <i>Identifico información local en una lectura sobre atracciones turísticas regional.</i></p>		
<p>I am able to recognize the main and specific information from audio recordings related to the regional profile and main tourist attractions. <i>Soy capaz de reconocer información principal y específica de un audio relacionado al perfil regional y a las principales atracciones turísticas.</i></p>		
<p>I can ask and give information about tourist attractions in the region. <i>Puedo preguntar y dar información acerca atracciones turísticas en la región.</i></p>		
<p>I write an invitation to a foreigner using vocabulary in context. <i>Escribe una invitación a un foráneo usando vocabulario en contexto.</i></p>		
<p>The workshop... <i>El taller...</i></p>	<p>It does</p>	<p>It can be better</p>
<p>Has a relevant and useful content. <i>Tiene un contenido útil y relevante.</i></p>		
<p>Have images that facilitate my understanding. <i>Tiene imágenes que me ayudan a comprender /entender.</i></p>		
<p>Gradually sequences the activities to facilitate learning. <i>La secuencia gradual de las actividades facilita mi aprendizaje.</i></p>		
<p>Allows me to evoke my previous knowledge and experiences. <i>Me permite evocar mi conocimiento y experiencias previas.</i></p>		
<p>Offers a variety of activities that work on reading, listening, writing and speaking. <i>Ofrece una variedad de actividades que trabaja la lectura, escucha, escritura y el habla.</i></p>		
<p>Offers a variety of oral communication tasks. <i>Ofrece una variedad de tareas de comunicación oral.</i></p>		
<p>Has an attractive design and eye-catching photographs. <i>Tiene un diseño atractivo y fotografías que captan la atención visual.</i></p>		
<p>Considers my needs, preferences and learning styles. <i>Considera mis necesidades, preferencias y estilos de aprendizaje.</i></p>		
<p>Promotes the application of learning strategies that help me do or solve the tasks. <i>Promueve la aplicación de estrategias que me ayudan a hacer y resolver tareas.</i></p>		
<p>Sequences the learning activities gradually so that I can learn in a relaxed way. <i>Secuencia gradual de actividades que me permiten aprender de manera descomplicada.</i></p>		

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Provides opportunities to learn from both my classmates and teacher's observations. <i>Promueve oportunidades para aprender tanto de mis compañeros como de las observaciones de la profesora.</i>		
Topic, activities or images were interesting to me. <i>El tema, las actividades o las imágenes fueron interesantes para mí.</i>		
Activities and instructions were easy to follow. <i>Las actividades y las instrucciones fueron fáciles de seguir.</i>		
The content of the activities was comprehensible. <i>El contenido de las actividades fue comprensible.</i>		
The sequence of the activities guided me to write properly. <i>La secuencia de las actividades me guio a escribir apropiadamente.</i>		
Time was enough to understand and develop the activities. <i>El tiempo fue suficiente para entender y desarrollar las actividades.</i>		
I shared my task with my classmates and he or she gave me feedback. <i>Compartí mi trabajo con mi compañero y él o ella me retroalimentó.</i>		
I can associate images to previous knowledge. <i>Puedo asociar imágenes a conocimientos previos.</i>		
I can relate words and meaning. <i>Puedo relacionar palabras y significados.</i>		
I can concentrate on specific information. <i>Me puedo concentrar en información específica.</i>		
I can use vocabulary and sentences to create short texts. <i>Puedo usar vocabulario y oraciones para crear textos cortos.</i>		
Allow me to use the new vocabulary in contextualized sentences. <i>Me permite utilizar el vocabulario nuevo en oraciones contextualizadas.</i>		
Writing Process to Accuracy The process approach	Yes	To improve
I used the sentences and expressions I needed. <i>Usé las oraciones y expresiones que necesitaba.</i>		
I had spelling errors. <i>Tuve errores en deletreo.</i>		
I had word order errors. <i>Tuve errores en el orden de las palabras.</i>		
I had wrong word errors. <i>Tuve errores de palabras equivocadas.</i>		
Classmates helped me to understand words and meaning. <i>Compañeros me ayudaron a entender palabras y significados.</i>		
I enjoyed the process of writing <i>Disfruté el proceso de escritura</i>		
I successfully followed the stages in the process approach for writing (Brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, publishing). <i>Seguí exitosamente las etapas en el enfoque de proceso para escritura (Lluvia de ideas, borrador, revisión, edición, publicación).</i>		

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Images taken from:

<http://blog.animaker.com/lets-welcome-the-amazing-teenagers/>
<http://edupol.com.co/mapa/caqueta.html>
<http://www.sanjosedelfragua-caqueta.gov.co/galeriafotosDetalle.shtml>
http://es.123rf.com/imagenes-de-archivo/adolescentes_ejecutivos.html
<http://www.heliconias.net/flores-heliconias.html>
<https://www.google.com.co/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=0ahUKEwiB0pqEl4rQAhUFkZQKHc9mBEoQjRwIBw&url=http%3A%2F%2Fblogs.nottingham.ac.uk%2Fmedschoolife%2F2015%2F11%2F09%2Finterview-experience>
<https://www.google.com.co/search?biw=1366&bih=662&tbn=isch&q=interview+clipart&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiyq87MlorQAhUBpJQKHVVyAmkQhyYIIw#imgrc>
https://www.google.com.co/search?biw=1366&bih=662&tbn=isch&sa=1&q=brochure&oq=brochure&gs_l=img.3
<https://www.google.com.co/search?q=tourist+brochure&espv=2&biw=1366&bih=662&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjUsI-SsJjQAHUDOyYKHSyB>
http://www.imgrum.net/user/andreitabadell/42595121/1007895829870143913_42595121
<https://www.google.com.co/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjXz8DOvJjQAhVCWCYKHUGeC-MQjRwIBw&url>
<https://www.google.com.co/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=0ahUKEwjpi7qNvpjQAhWC7yYKHdUfBscQjRwIBw&url>
https://www.google.com.co/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&ved=&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.caqueta.gov.co%2Fsitios_visitar.shtml&psig=AFQjCNHr2f
<https://www.google.com.co/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj5OKyxpNQAhWBfCYKHd5eCVMQjRwIBw&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bigstockphoto.com%2Fblog%2Ftips-for-using-stock-images-in-brochures&psig=AFQjCNH6tEJmmhZX-59SQNSUHvU1D6K8sQ&ust=1478707860220748>

Chapter IV

Data Analysis and Findings

This study aims to explore the contribution of teacher- made materials based on meaningful learning to the development of tenth graders' writing skills. The instruments used to collect the data were students' artefacts including the respective self-assessment section, teacher's field notes, surveys that were administered before and after the implementation of the pedagogical intervention, and a focus group interview. In this chapter I describe the process carried out in the analysis of the data gathered during and after the pedagogical intervention.

Data Analysis Procedures

The procedure for the data analysis involves a qualitative data analysis based on the grounded theory approach. Initially, I would like to state the importance of the use of a qualitative data analysis. For doing so, Creswell (2012) defined qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (p.145). This qualitative analysis of the collected data is assumed since the connection of what was implemented in the classroom and the theoretical support that informs the relevant patterns addressed in the categories and subcategories for data analysis.

I used the grounded theory approach to analyze the data collected. This approach in qualitative research was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to construct theory grounded in data, which also "allows for identification of general concepts, the development of theoretical explanations that reach beyond the known, and offers new insights into a variety of experiences and phenomena" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 6). In view of that, the data derived from this

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

intervention allowed me to understand and explain the implications of teacher-made materials based on meaningful learning to foster students' writing skills.

The grounded approach also relates to empirical situations that allow researchers to interpret information and apply it to improve their teaching practices and student's outcomes. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), "Grounded theory-is a major task confronting sociology today, ... fits empirical situations, and is understandable to sociologists and layman alike. Most important, it works-provides us with relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications" (p. 1). In this sense, this technique allows me to identify the most salient and recurrent patterns that emerge from the data and to identify categories and subcategories that respond the question posed in the current study.

I started the data analysis by exploring the students' artefacts including the respective self-assessment, the transcriptions of teacher's field notes, the systematization of the answers given to a survey administered at the end of the implementation of the pedagogical intervention, and the transcription of the focus group interview conducted at the end of the pedagogical intervention. In doing so, I use the colour coding technique to code the most relevant information I found so I identified the most salient and recurrent patterns from the data. Besides, the colour coding technique, according to Stottok, Bergaus and Gorra (2011) "uses coloured fonts to assign certain codes, concepts and categories to the text, with codes being keywords or short sentences, concepts being interrelationships of codes, and categories being interrelationships of concepts" (p. 1). Additionally, Burns (1999) defines the term "coding" as "a process of attempting to reduce the large amount of data that may be collected to more manageable categories of concepts, themes or types" (p. 157). Hence, Bergaus (2015) asserts that colour coding provides "a way of moving quickly from open coding to the next step of

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

focused coding” (p. 119). Considering this, colour coding allows to move into the data and highlight important issues. Thus, data could be easily found and used for later interpretation. Such interpretation should lead to the identification of the research categories and research subcategories based on the coding made by the researcher. Hence, each issue that is being found during data analysis is being highlighted and related to a salient pattern.

Following this technique, I labelled the data using different colours for the three theoretical constructs of this study: materials development (yellow), meaningful learning (blue) and, writing skill (green), to highlight the specific parts in which some subcategories would illustrate the final research categories to later inform the research question.

When this part was finished, I proceed to reduce the data by identifying commonalities and establishing relationships of the most salient and recurrent patterns. After this, I triangulated the data to avoid bias. Triangulation of data implies taking “different perspectives on an issue under study” (Flick, 2009, p. 445). Additionally, the triangulation of data as pointed out by Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe and Neville (2014) “refers to the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena” (p. 545). Finally, Flick (2009) affirmed that triangulation “is used to name the combination of different methods, study groups, local and temporal settings, and different theoretical perspectives in dealing with a phenomenon... it can also be an approach to do qualitative research in an appropriate way” (p. 444). The perspectives considered for the triangulation of the information in the data analysis had to do with the use of the different data from the instruments and the theory used to support the research categories. Moreover, I performed a methodological triangulation since I gather data through various instruments and

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

theoretical triangulation as I used different theoretical sources from scholars to describe and explain the findings.

So, the process of understanding data and the impact of the phenomena is supported with different sources of information. This means, triangulation allows me to consider the different information gathered in the data collection instruments since different perspectives informed by theory. Furthermore, triangulation of the data pretends to provide a better understanding of the salient issues and to group them in such form that they can inform the studied phenomenon accurately and accordingly with the purpose of the research study. To do this, the resulting analysis and findings are strongly supported by existing facts.

Acknowledging that the primary descriptive validity is “what the researcher reports having seen or heard” (Maxwell, 1992, p. 286); this study collected the required information to understand and describe students’ learning experiences through teacher-made materials based on meaningful learning to foster their writing skills.

After making a careful revision of the collected data, and using the techniques mentioned above, I identified three main categories with their corresponding subcategories.

Research Categories

Bearing in mind that this research study aims at exploring the contribution of teacher-made materials based on meaningful learning to the development of tenth graders’ writing skills, I identified and named three research categories and their respective subcategories which are supported by samples selected from the data-gathering instruments, which would provide a sense of validity of the information and analysis done. The research categories are set in the following section and they are framed within the constructs of the research question. These categories are shown in the Table 1 as follows:

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Table 1.

Research categories and sub-categories

Research question	Categories	Subcategories	Salient and recurrent patterns
How do teacher-made materials based on meaningful learning develop tenth graders' writing skills?	Exposure to informed teacher-made materials as an anchor for language learning and use.	<p>Informed teacher-made materials favor language learning and use.</p> <p>Exposure to contextualized materials as an anchor for language learning and use.</p>	<p>-Variety of activities.</p> <p>-Attractive presentation and appealing content.</p> <p>-Relevant and useful to the learner.</p> <p>-Offer plenty of free practice.</p> <p>Provide communicative opportunities (the materials foment writing skills).</p> <p>-Facilitate student's self-investment Asking the teacher and classmate for help).</p> <p>-Provide opportunities for outcome feedback.</p> <p>-The contextualization of the material fosters target language use and learning.</p> <p>-To talk about our realities makes more interesting the material.</p> <p>-Good and nice materials a result of committed teachers' work.</p> <p>-The use of local vocabulary and topics fosters learning (there were things that students knew).</p>
	Personalized local experiences: A source for meaningful learning.	<p>Personalized experiences as basis of meaningful learning.</p> <p>Local information at the core of meaningful learning.</p>	<p>-Use of previous knowledge and local vocabulary.</p> <p>-Personalized and localized activities raise students' personal interest.</p> <p>-Contextualized grammar and information on familiar topics.</p> <p>- Fostering student's interaction and meaningful learning.</p>
	Writing through the process approach and cooperative work.	<p>Enhancing writing skills through cooperative work.</p> <p>Building the writing experience via the process approach.</p>	<p>-The help of classmates to develop writing activities.</p> <p>-Working cooperatively helps students to get better results when writing.</p> <p>-Assuming or featuring individual work for group responsibility.</p> <p>-Following instructions to perform tasks.</p> <p>-The process approach supporting and structures writing activities.</p> <p>-Students were aware of the procedures involved in the process approach to writing.</p> <p>-Relating previous concepts to what students are writing leads to accuracy.</p> <p>-Feedback plays an important role in building, editing and polishing writing assignments.</p>

Exposure to informed teacher-made materials as an anchor for language learning and use. The importance of this category relies on the assumption that teacher-made materials should follow an informed framework so they are engaging and appealing to learners. In this way, learners engaged in the process of learning and using the language when completing the learning activities proposed in the teacher-made materials. In fact, Núñez et al. (2004) stated that:

Materials could lack a solid rationale if they are not constructed considering principles in which the teacher believes. It is by combining their theoretical background and their teaching experience in the development of materials that they create positive conditions for language learning. A combination of experience and theoretical background could guarantee a better developed product. (p.131)

In other words, teachers should be well-versed about MD frameworks when approaching the development of materials, so that they can make informed decisions at the moment of proposing their own contextualized frameworks to develop the material for their pedagogical interventions.

As teachers and researchers, we should acknowledge the importance of being well-informed when developing our teaching practice. This would assure not only to provide learners with a good learning experience, but also to grow ourselves professionally. For Tomlinson (2001) “helping teachers to understand and apply theories of language learning - and to achieve ... professional development- is to provide monitored experience of the process of developing materials” (p. 67). Following this assumption, the exposure to informed teacher-made materials assured learners a significant experience when working on the learning activities.

The suitability and effectiveness of the teacher-made materials developed for the pedagogical intervention of this study were the result of considering students’ needs, interest and expectations, as well as their workability in real life contexts. On this subject, Núñez and Téllez (2009) stated that, “Effective materials make learners feel comfortable and confident because

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

both the content and type of activities are perceived by them as significant and practical to their lives” (p. 184). Therefore, exposing learners to teacher-made materials helped them to use the language they are learning in daily-life situations, and to perceive the functionality of the language as they work on the activities proposed considering their own interests.

This category encompasses two research subcategories: *Informed teacher-made materials favor language learning and use* and *exposure to contextualized materials as an anchor for language learning and use*.


Informed teacher-made materials favor language learning and use. This subcategory supports the fact that teacher-made materials informed by contextualized SLA principles offers far more possibilities for students’ positive reception of the materials and for language learning. With respect to the reception of materials, Núñez and Téllez (2009) claimed that, “The degree of acceptance by learners that teaching materials have may vary greatly according to the novelty, variety, presentation and content used in them” (p. 186). On the subject of language learning, Núñez (2010) ascertained: "Developing in-house materials makes it more feasible to address the demands of the institutional context and students’ profiles, and to achieve academic and language learning goals" (p. 37) since they offer the “possibility of prioritizing the learners and placing them at the center of the language program while acquainting them with the current world" (Núñez et al., 2004, p. 129-30). Indeed, the following fragments corroborate that well-informed teacher-made materials prompts language learning and use.

When the students received and saw the materials especially designed for them, with attractive presentation, appealing content, variety of activities, opportunities to communicate in oral and written forms, use of learning strategies and receive outcome feedback from peers, they got immediately involved both emotionally and mentally. In this sense, Tomlinson (2003) expressed that, “The most important result that learning materials can achieve is to engage the emotions of learners (p.18), which facilitates cognitive engagement. Therefore, the diverse activities proposed in the workshop enabled students’ understanding of the language, fostered

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

their production via plenty of free practice, gave them opportunities to apply learning strategies and receive peer feedback, and encouraged them to work on the materials, which in turn, helped them be aware of their own language learning process, as can be seen in the following samples.

Workshop No. 1
My Tourist Region



Do you know this place? Where is it located?
 What is the name of this river? What can people do in this

Image taken from: <http://www.sanjosedelragua-caqueta.gov.co/galeriafotosDetalle.shtml>

Lesson 2: Reading

1. Read the following text and circle the words that identify our region.

Learning strategy: Identifying key words.

Top Tourist Attraction in Caqueta

Caquetá department has a vast area extending from the pedestal of the Andes Mountains towards the Amazon forest. It has captivating views of mountain ranges and an oasis of diverse species of wildlife making it a favorable place for ecotourism in Colombia.

One of the most visited top tourist attractions in Caquetá is the Picachos National Park. The park has a large variety of fauna as well as extraordinary flora and trees that make this region the perfect place to explore and experience its rich tropical forest and highlands.

Another park to explore in Caquetá is Chiribiquete National Park which is located at the core of the Colombian Amazon. Its panoramic sceneries also display valleys, enormous rocks and diverse species of wildlife.

Florencia, which is the capital city of the Department of Caquetá, is also one of the top tourist attractions in this region. This capital is considered the most influential metropolis in the southeast region of Colombia because of its large population and abundant and diverse culture. The capital city is close to Hacha River and is primarily the heart of the Colombia's Amazon due to its rich fauna and vegetation and diverse population.

Selected and adapted from: <https://epsteam.com/colombia/top-tourist-attractions-in-caqueta/>

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 5

Lesson 4: Speaking

1. Work in pairs. Take turns to interview each other following the model given.

Learning strategy: Combining words to share ideas.

Interview about Caqueta as a tourist destination

a. Have you gone on tourism in Caqueta? yes

b. If you had the chance, what tourist places would you visit?
 If I had the chance, I would visit the Cayano and esmeraldas.

c. What places would you recommend tourists to visit in Caquetá? Why?
 I would recommend tourists to visit the Bosaso de Pedro because have pretty rivers, beautiful flora and fauna

d. What would you say to those who have not visited our department?
 I would say you should do it, it is beautiful.

Interview

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez

Self-assessment

El taller...		
Has a relevant and useful content. <i>Tiene un contenido útil y relevante.</i>	✓	
Have images that facilitate my understanding. <i>Tiene imágenes que me ayudan a comprender/entender.</i>	✓	
Gradually sequences the activities to facilitate learning. <i>La secuencia gradual de las actividades facilita mi aprendizaje.</i>	✓	
Allows me to evoke my previous knowledge and experiences. <i>Me permite evocar mi conocimiento y experiencias previas.</i>	✓	
Offers a variety of activities that work on reading, listening, writing and speaking. <i>Ofrece una variedad de actividades que trabaja la lectura, escucha, escritura y el habla.</i>	✓	
Offers a variety of oral communication tasks. <i>Ofrece una variedad de tareas de comunicación oral.</i>	✓	
Has an attractive design and eye-catching photographs. <i>Tiene un diseño atractivo y fotografías que captan la atención visual.</i>	✓	
Considers my needs, preferences and learning styles. <i>Considera mis necesidades, preferencias y estilos de aprendizaje.</i>	✓	
Promotes the application of learning strategies that help me do or solve the tasks. <i>Promueve la aplicación de estrategias que me ayudan a hacer y resolver tareas.</i>	✓	
Sequences the learning activities gradually so that I can learn in a relaxed way. <i>Secuencia gradual de actividades que me permiten aprender de manera descomplicada.</i>	✓	

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 16

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, lesson 1-2-4)

(Student's artefacts, self-assessment section workshop No.1)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

In the previous sample, the title page of the workshop No.1 offers learners an appealing image that invites them to explore the workshop and, to a certain extent, to the completion of the activities. Likewise, the reading passage deals with the top tourist attractions in Caquetá, which are a referent to the students since they make part of their own context. Finally, the speaking activity (the interview) offers them opportunities to use the language for communicative purposes.

Besides, students' opinions and responses regarding the design, appealing presentation, beautifully layout, useful content and use of strategies ratified the positive impact, response and interest when they received the workshop for the very first time, and took the time to look at the materials which they found interesting. This workshop provides learners with enough visual layout and varied language learning activities that encourage them to explore and work on those. Indeed, Harmer considered that materials "must have attractive layout/design and be interesting by including a variety of pleasing, challenging and motivating tasks so as to avoid predictability and sameness" (as cited in Núñez & Tellez, 2009, p. 175). In addition, Barnard and Zemach (2003) stated "layout should always be carefully considered; an otherwise excellent text and activity can be ruined simply by a badly designed presentation on the page" (p.317). The quality of the texts, activities and design displayed in the teacher-made materials have to be as best as possible. Therefore, the workshop had the purpose of attracting learners attention and engaging them in the completion of the activities proposed, exploiting their abilities in the different language skills by performing activities related to their closest context, and using the language taught in the English lessons prior to the implementation of this pedagogical interventions, as shown in the following transcriptions of the teacher's field notes.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

While the teacher is delivering the workshop to the learners, it can be perceived a good first impression by students towards the material. Students start talking about how beautiful it was, they were talking about the images that the workshop has and especially they felt emotional touched because it presented vocabulary related to issues of their context. [sic]

(Field notes 1, workshop 1)

Students find the use of graphics to support the activities interesting. It was noticeable to see how the activities make students feel interested. Students keep saying that the use of local vocabulary is a very good thing in the materials and that this allows them to explore some personal interests and talk about them thanks to the use of the grammar in context. [sic]

(Field notes 1, workshop 1)

Interpreting the students' perceptions regarding the presentation of the teacher-made workshop, led me to say that it impacted them and they got immediately engaged in its implementation. Hence, this very good first impression was the result of the use of localized cultural content that the students perceived in images, titles, subtitles of the proposed activities.

In addition to the previous aspect, the workshop proposed learning activities that foster communication by using the language learned in context when interacting in the suggested production activities. With respect to materials, Rico (2005) found they “focus on understandable, relevant, and interesting exchanges of information, rather than on the presentation of grammatical form” (p. 105). Although grammar input is necessary for accurate language production, the well-structured activities of the workshop contributed to language learning and use. Including communicative activities helped students learn new vocabulary, relate it to previous knowledge, and interacting in English to reinforce their language learning and use. These issues can be noticed in the following transcriptions of the focus group interview.

Docente: ¿Cómo encontraste el material usado para el estudio?

[Teacher: How did you find the material used for the study?]

Estudiante: Lo encontré interesante ya que tenía suficientes recursos gráficos y pues nos servían para guiarnos.

[Student: Yes, I found it interesting due to it had enough graphic resources and they helped us to be guided] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 1)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Docente: ¿Cómo contribuyó el estudio a tu aprendizaje de la lengua?

[Teacher: How did the study contribute to your language learning?]

Estudiante: ...fue un proceso que reforzó mucho el aprendizaje que llevamos nosotros en el colegio eeh realmente a través de ejercicios sencillos como describir un lugar, ...reúne un conjunto de cosas que le refuerzan a uno en el área de inglés.

[Student: well, in my opinion I think I was a process that strengthens a lot the learning we have in the institution, eeee, really through simple exercises like describing a place, a person. All of that, eeee, it encompasses a set of things that helps us in the English subject] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 4)

Estudiante: eee, fue positivo porque sinceramente fueron ... lugares que conocíamos ...entonces nos ayudó en la parte de inglés.

[Student: eeee, it was positive because honestly, they were places that we knew ...so it helped us in the part of English.] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 5)

The inclusion of several communicative activities in the workshop allowed learners to relate their previous language knowledge and cultural background and use it when working on the activities. As a result, learners were engaged in the completion of the proposed learning activities, especially the contextualized grammar and the vocabulary used in context.

Additionally, the workshop provided a variety of activities aimed at exposing the students to more opportunities for self-investment in contextualized language learning and use. In this regard, Rico (2005) claimed that “materials will involve different kinds of texts and different media, which the learners can use to develop their competence through a variety of different activities” (p. 106). Exposing students to different kind of activities have the students perform themselves by using the language in different moments of the implementation. The more attracting and contextualized the teacher-made materials, the more positive results in terms of language learning and use, as can be perceived in the transcriptions of the survey as follows:

<p>4. ¿Deberían seguir siendo usados este tipo de material para la enseñanza del inglés y especialmente para trabajar la habilidad escrita en el idioma extranjero?</p> <p>SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>¿Por qué? Si, Porque con este material podemos desarrollar de mejor manera nuestro aprendizaje.</p>	<p>Yes, because with this material we can develop in a better way our learning. [sic]</p>
<p>4. ¿Deberían seguir siendo usados este tipo de material para la enseñanza del inglés y especialmente para trabajar la habilidad escrita en el idioma extranjero?</p> <p>SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>¿Por qué? pues es chvere aprender y realizar este tipo de trabajos y más en inglés ya que se nos dificulta tanto aprenderlo.</p>	<p>Yes, it is cool to learn and to make this kind of work and even more in English due to it is so difficult to learn it. [sic]</p>

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

<p>4. ¿Deberían seguir siendo usados este tipo de material para la enseñanza del inglés y especialmente para trabajar la habilidad escrita en el idioma extranjero? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? <u>Porque estos materiales te permiten adquirir más desenvolvimiento en el inglés.</u></p>	<p>Yes, because these materials allow you to acquire more development in English. [sic]</p>
---	---

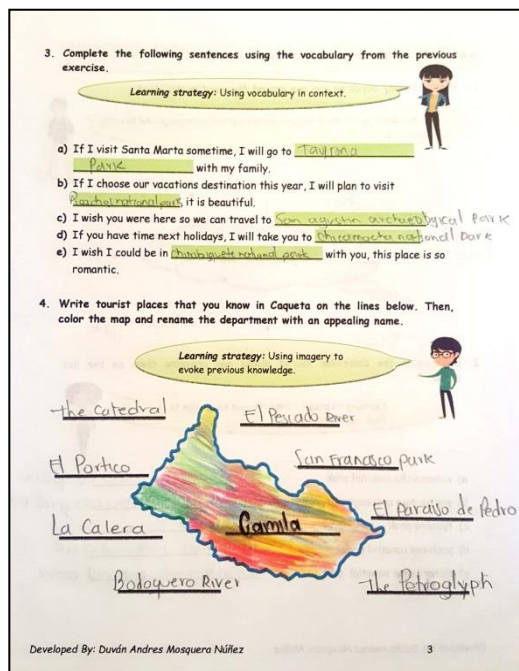
(Survey on students' perceptions)

These samples of the survey show the students' perceptions regarding the variety of the learning activities proposed in the workshop, which demonstrated how much they care about the development of language learning and use. Finally, students perceive the workshop and the learning activities as an opportunity to improve their performance in language learning and use.

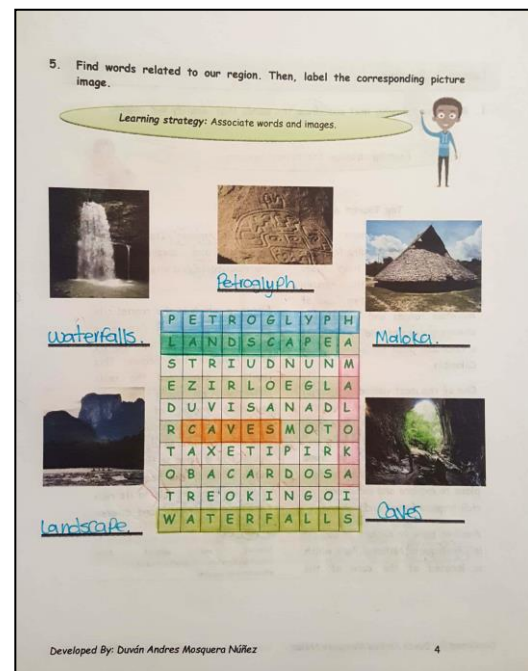
Exposure to contextualized materials as an anchor for language learning and use. This subcategory points out the relevance that contextualization of the teacher-made materials has during the implementation of the pedagogical intervention as a stepping stone for students' language learning and use. This assumption plays a vital role in MD due to the lack of contextualization in standardized materials offered by publishing houses. In fact, Howard and Major (2004) asserted that, "They are necessarily generic and not aimed at any specific group of learners or any particular cultural or educational context" (p. 101). That kind of materials may sometimes be seen as a useless tool for language teaching since they do not meet students' needs and interests. Following Núñez (2010), "Learning materials should keep a balance among students' language learning and affective needs, interests, expectations, and the institutional policies" (pp. 36-37). As opposed to standardized and routinized materials (Littlejohn, 2012), contextualized respond to and cater for the students' needs and interest, with far more possibilities to achieve better language learning and use.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Additionally, contextualization of the teacher-made materials is a personal intention aimed at getting students involved in language learning and use. When students realize how much they can learn by relating their learning to their closest context and their realities, language learning and use occurs. As Lopera, (2014) considered “when teachers design their own materials, they keep away from the one-size-fits-all imposed by commercial materials.” (p. 131). In this way, language learning and use is developed under the conception of materials that privilege real- life issues and contextualized learning activities, as evinced in the following samples



(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, lessons 1)



The workshop... El taller...	It does
Has a relevant and useful content. Tiene un contenido útil y relevante.	✓

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, self-assessment)

In the previous samples, from the students' artefacts and their corresponding self-assessment section, contextualization is seen in exercise number three in which students had to use the vocabulary related to local issues that already know in their mother tongue, in

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

contextualized sentences. Then, in exercise number four, students had to recall some tourist places in their own department, and to relate some images to contextualized vocabulary related to the local region. Finally, in the self-assessment section most of the students expressed that the content was useful and relevant.

The following entries in the teacher's field notes show the importance and the recurrent form in which students recall contextualization as an imperative issue during the implementation of the workshop, and especially when learning and using the language.

Contextualization of the tasks seems to be a good strategy to engage students. Students are interested in the activities of the workshop and express that the use of the local information in relation to the department is a good strategy for helping them learn and use the language in the English classes. [*sic*]
(Field notes, workshop 1, lesson 1)

Providing students with input in a text using familiar vocabulary and contextualizing the information motivated and helped them to complete the activities more easily. [*sic*]
(Field notes, workshop 1, lesson 2)

It can be deduced that the use of learners' closest context in relation to the theme for the teacher-made workshop engaged the students in the development of the activities proposed. As Rico (2005) claimed, "All decisions one makes in terms of teaching and learning languages might take as reference the social conditions of the learners" (p. 28). These types of decisions are decisive if a teacher-researcher -materials developer wants to achieve personal goals in the field of MD within the framework of language learning and use. Then, contextualized materials changed the students' personal perceptions of traditional materials and adopt a better disposition to learn the language. They found the contextualized workshop not only interesting but also engaging, which was more evident in the completion of the learning activities.

Furthermore, contextualizing the teacher-made materials with the goals and objectives set in the institutional curriculum offer more possibilities for meaningful and durable learning. For Taylor and Mulhall (1997), "Contextualization of learning occurs when the content of the curriculum, and the methods and materials associated with it, are related directly to the

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

experience and environment of the learner” (p. 5). Also, conducting research on contextualized materials in use provide sources for new curriculum changes and adaptation if possible, as underlined by Burns (2003), “Teachers highlighted the capacity of action research to enable them to engage more closely with their classroom practice as well as to explore the realities they faced in the process of curriculum change” (p. 14). Having learners use the language to describe landmarks of their real settings and realize that the workshop is aligned to the institutional guidelines encouraged them to perform better in the foreign language. Such relation can be perceived in the samples from the focus group interview below:

Docente: ¿Qué fue lo más interesante que pudiste apreciar en el estudio?

[Teacher: What was the most interesting thing you could appreciate about the study?]

Estudiante: Lo más interesante que pude apreciar en el estudio fue el implemento de cómo lugares, lugares aquí representativos en el Caqueta y cómo mediante esos lugares podemos desarrollar nuestras habilidades en el inglés.

[Student: the most interesting that I could appreciate in the study was the implementation of places, representative place here in Caqueta and how through these places we can develop our abilities in English.] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 1)

Estudiante: eee, que pues lo más interesante para mí fue que se utilizaron como cosas que nosotros conocíamos, se implementó cosas cotidianas para de una manera fuera más fácil para nosotros desarrollar la actividad.

[Student: eeee, well the most interesting for me was the use of things that we knew, it was daily life things so it was easier for us to develop the activity.] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 2)

These data demonstrate that exposing learners to contextualized materials facilitates language learning and use, and makes students find the local vocabulary, places of the region and daily life elements interesting and motivating for the completion of the activities proposed in the workshop.

Moreover, most of the students asserted that the workshop had relevant and useful content, which encouraged the effective completion of the learning activities. Correspondingly, Ur (1996) stated that “sometimes, teachers need to explore teaching materials outside textbooks and modify them in order to be relevant to a particular group or students” (p. 185). With this in mind, the design and implementation of teacher-made materials had the foremost purpose of

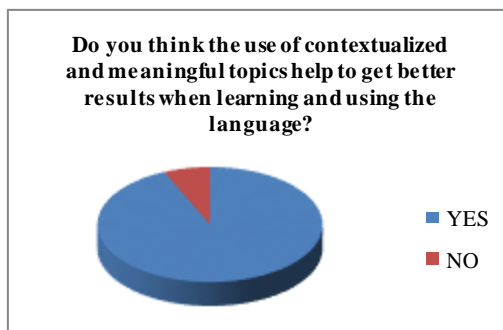
MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

providing the learners with meaningful, useful and contextualized content to contribute to a better language learning and use. These types of thoughts can be shown in the survey.

<p>5. ¿Piensas que el uso de temas contextualizados y de carácter significativo logran mejores resultados cuando se aprende y se usa el idioma? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? <u>porque al usar temas como estos es más interesante el aprendizaje y al mismo tiempo se está practicando el inglés.</u></p>	<p>Yes, because when using the topics like these, it is more interesting learning and at the same time we are practicing English. [sic]</p>
--	---

<p>5. ¿Piensas que el uso de temas contextualizados y de carácter significativo logran mejores resultados cuando se aprende y se usa el idioma? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? <u>ya que llamarían la atención de los estudiantes y sería más fácil el aprendizaje.</u></p>	<p>Yes, due to it would call students' attention and the learning would be easier. [sic]</p>
---	--

(Survey on students' perceptions)



(Survey on students' perception)

Most of the answers from the survey depicted that there is a strong belief regarding the results in language learning and use that can be achieved through the use of contextualized materials. In sum, using the language learned with communicative purposes, on issues of the local contexts, yielded more possibilities for meaningful and durable learning. Next, I address the second research category of analysis.

Personalized local experiences: A source for meaningful learning. This category describes the role of the meaningful learning approach in fostering students' writing skills. Including general ideas of a subject, using contextualized instructional materials and fostering the link between what the students learn using the materials and their background knowledge

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

were the three-fold principle to foment meaningful learning. The use of local knowledge and previous experiences in every lesson of the workshop “My Tourist Region” played a central role in helping the students learn meaningfully.

As respects this approach, Ausubel (1961) claimed that “prior experience in this case is conceptualized as accumulatively acquired, hierarchically organized, and established body of knowledge which is organically relatable to the new learning task” (p. 501). Besides being exposed to this new learning experiences, that relied on the students’ previous concepts, they used the language imprecisely within a context that provided them with meaningful resources to develop the activities proposed in the workshop and use the language for communitive purposes.

Another aspect considered in this workshop as a source of meaningful content is the localized input learners were exposed to. In this regard, Núñez et al., (2009) suggested:

To provide language learners with meaningful high-quality input so that it facilitates learner’s language learning targets. -To guide students towards the importance of recognizing their own learning process. -To facilitate the gradual development of a balanced set of English skill, learning strategies, and instructional content. - To identify the outcome of the instructional process. - To establish how the effectiveness of instructional material will be evaluated. (p. 16)

Meaningful input, thus, favors better cognitive stages and intake processes so language production can occur effectively. Hence, the main source of meaningful content and learning is the nature of the input privileged in the workshop: localized and contextualized. This category covers two research subcategories: *Personalized experiences as basis of meaningful learning and Local information at the core of meaningful learning.*

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Personalized experiences as basis of meaningful learning. To support this category, the personalized experiences proposed in the teacher-made workshop constitutes the basis of meaningful learning. As stated by Rico (2010), there exist “experiential activities and intake response activities” used to explore senses that can be connected to meaningful learning. The author further claimed that these activities “trigger connections in the mind of the learner between their prior experience and what they will encounter in the text” (p. 96). Implementing experiential activities which are related to the learners’ context and background facilitated the completion of the activities in the teacher-made workshop and the achievement of meaningful learning as argued in the next fragments.

The personalized learning activities provided a number of sources for meaningful learning. This is also perceived by the learners in the content and type of activities. The inclusion of content and activities allowed them to identify several elements from their own culture and personal experiences that fostered and accelerated their learning in a pleasant and meaningful way. This issue happened because, as mentioned before, the activities were carefully designed and sequenced first, to attend learners’ needs, interests, and expectations, and second, to gradually guide them into a new and meaningful learning experience.

Unlike contextualized materials, commercial ones do not contribute to meaningful learning. In this line of thought, Tomlinson (2003) contended that “most commercial materials are written by professional materials writers writing to a brief determined by the publishers from an analysis of market needs” (p. 4). Likewise, in Masuhara’s (1998) perspective, “The teachers’ home-grown materials may be more finely tuned to the local classroom needs” (p. 243). In other words, using teacher-made materials that aim at meeting the learners’ needs and having them

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

elaborate on several personalized experiences within the EFL classroom became a foundation for meaningful learning, as can be seen in the following evidences from the artefacts.

Lesson 1: Vocabulary and Grammar in Context

1. Write as many words as you can around the word in the cloud.

Learning strategy: semantic mapping (evoking previous language and learning experiences)

2. Unscramble the Colombian tourist places and organize them on the list below.

Learning strategy: Using previous knowledge to find specific vocabulary

a) cohcamicha nonatial prak	<u>Chicamocha National Park</u>
b) san asutgin aroceoghalcil prak	<u>San Agustín Archeological Park</u>
c) tyanora prak	<u>Tayrona Park</u>
d) pachicos nonatial prak	<u>Picachos National Park</u>
e) chiteribique nonatial prak	<u>Chiribiquete National Park</u>

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez

2. Work in pairs to answer the following questions.

Learning strategy: identifying general and specific information.

a) The general idea of the passage is:

- to invite people to go to the rivers in Caqueta.
- to describe the top tourist attractions in Caqueta.
- to inform people that Caqueta is big.

b) The top tourist attractions in Caqueta are...

- Chiribiquete National Park and Picachos National Park.
- Picachos National Park and Tayrona park.
- Chiribiquete National Park and Chicamocha National Park.

c) Based on the reading, the term ecotourism means:

- visiting interesting tourist places in capital cities.
- travelling to natural areas that preserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.
- visiting landmarks and unique places around the world.

d) Some aspects that make Caqueta one of the most influential area in the south region of Colombia are:

- its parks and tourist attractions.
- its rivers and delicious food.
- its large population, and abundant and diverse culture.

e) Do you consider Caqueta as an important tourist region? Why?

I think that Caqueta is an important tourist region because it has a large variety of fauna as well as extraordinary flora and has an oasis to diverse species of wildlife.

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, lesson 1-2)

The workshop... El taller...	It does	It can be better
Allows me to evoke my previous knowledge and experiences. <i>Me permite evocar mi conocimiento y experiencias previas.</i>	✓	
Considers my needs, preferences and learning styles. <i>Considera mis necesidades, preferencias y estilos de aprendizaje.</i>	✓	

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, self-assessment)

The previous samples from the students' artefacts and their corresponding self-assessment section, show how the learners evoked their previous knowledge and experiences to what they are about to start learning. In this case, in both the vocabulary and the reading comprehension sections the learners are exposed to personalized input to allow them to link their prior knowledge to the new information before asking them to use the language or produce in English. In the reading comprehension section, learners demonstrated their understanding of the

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

passage using their abilities and the language input they had already received, in connection to their background knowledge, to answer several multiple-choice questions and a final open question in written form, which is a small written production. This goes in accordance with Crowford's (as cited in Sarapli, 2011) insight: "Teachers need to take extra care about students' background and learning abilities in class activities therefore they adapt materials to the context in which learning takes place" (p. 40). Finally, in the self-assessment, the students asserted that this type of activities had made them resort to their experiences and recognize that contextualized materials consider their needs, preferences and learning styles. Overall, the students were always connecting three main aspects: the previous knowledge they had of the language and their context, their experiences within their context and the new language learned and used, which give a comprehensive account of meaning learning. The teacher's field notes below exemplified the aforementioned aspect.

Once again, the use of familiar information and contextualization of the information helped students to get better results when completing the proposed activities. In doing so, students show a good command of the language and meaningful learning can be evinced when they declare how much the materials and activities contributed to their language learning. Student 18 says "con este vocabulario si aprendo mejor porque conozco estos lugares y todo" [with this vocabulary I learn better because I know these places and everything] Student 24 says "así es más fácil aprender porque usamos cosas que conocemos" [*in this way is easier to learn because we use things that we know*] [sic]. These comments permit me to notice that the language is being learnt meaningfully. [sic]
(*Field notes, workshop 1, lesson 3*)

Meaningful learning took place through the contextualization of students' learning experiences proposed in the activities, the explicit instruction of learning strategies, the teacher's support, the suitable teaching sequence underpinning the materials, and the students' interest in working on the suggested activities. As respects contextualization, it "makes learning significant to students by helping them become interested and aware of what happens around them" (Ramírez, 2004, p. 5). In this way, personalized experiences and contextualization engaged learners in the workshop completion. These transcriptions of the focus group interview corroborate the previously mentioned aspect.

Docente: ¿El estudio contribuyó al aprendizaje del idioma?

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

[Teacher: Did the study contribute to your language learning?

Estudiante: Si lo considero ya que, a través de lugares representativos aquí en el Caquetá, y cosas cotidianas pudimos mejorar nuestro vocabulario y mejorar nuestros conocimientos en gramática y en escritura sobre el idioma inglés.

[Student: Yes, I consider that due to through some representative places here in Caquetá, and daily lice things we could improve our vocabulary and improve our knowledge in grammar and in writing about the English language.] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 1)

This sample of the focus group interview illustrates the relationship that the learners established among their regional landmarks, daily life situations and experiences as a source for learning the language in a meaningful way. As affirmed by Rico (2012), “It is true that materials are culturally loaded and are influenced by social context” (p. 141). Thus, context plays a vital role in the design and implementation of teacher-made materials.

Besides encouraging students to develop their language abilities meaningfully, personalizing experiences and contextualizing the information allowed them to learn and use the language, as a result of establishing relationships between their prior background knowledge and the new information presented, as can be seen in this sample of the survey.

<p>5. ¿Piensas que el uso de temas contextualizados y de carácter significativo logran mejores resultados cuando se aprende y se usa el idioma? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? <u>al trabajar temas en contexto mejorar</u> <u>mos nuestra(s) habilidades.</u></p>	<p>When working with topics in context we improve our abilities. [sic]</p>
--	--

(Survey on students' perception)

In this sample from the survey, the learner is aware of the role that the contextualization of topics plays in helping them learn meaningfully and, thereby develop their language skills. Hence, this teacher-made workshop that privileges contextual topics, promotes regional tourist attractions, has students use vocabulary related to those local attractions as well as identify local information in the reading passage, fosters meaningful learning.

Local information at the core of meaningful learning. This category evidences the role of local information in the teacher-made workshop as the core of fostering meaningful learning in language learners.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Due to the close connection between language and culture, learners start developing their localized cultural knowledge using the language meaningfully. Acknowledging the socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky (1995), a number of scholars have addressed this tight relationship of culture in the study of a language (Gómez, 2015; Goldstein, 2015; Kramsch 1998, 1996, 1993; Pulverness, 2003; Rico, 2012; among others). Therefore, the references to local information made in the workshop had the intentionality of engaging students in completing the learning activities, fostering thereby the learning of the language in a meaningful way.

Additionally, this local information is the necessary input learners should be exposed to so they can achieve meaningful learning. With respect to meaningful input, Tomlinson (2010) asserted that learners “need to understand enough of this input to gain positive access to it and it needs to be meaningful to them” (p. 87). Then, the localized cultural information, as valuable and understandable input, is at the core of meaningful learning, as shown in the following samples of the students’ artefacts.

Lesson 3: Listening

1. Listen to the audio recording 1. In the chart below, tick (✓) the correct information you hear and cross out (✗) the wrong one. Then, correct the wrong one.

Learning strategy: Discriminating right and wrong statements.

Natural National Parks in Caquetá		✓	✗
a.	Los Picachos national park		
b.	El Encanto national park <i>Chiriquete National Park</i>	✓	✗
c.	El Bodoquero national park <i>Chiriquete National Park</i>		✗
d.	Alto Fragua Indiwasi national park	✓	

2. Listen to the audio recording 2 and circle the places and indigenous tribes you hear.

Learning strategy: Identifying key information.

★ Florencia	★ Mayas
★ Solita	★ Coreguajes
★ Cartagena del Chaira	★ Incas
★ Solano	★ Andaquies
★ San Vicente de Caguan	★ Huitotos

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 7

3. Work in pairs. Listen to the audio recording 3 and organize the text in the correct order.

Learning strategy: Listening attentively.

Florencia - Caqueta	
4	The biggest economic activity its agriculture, with a special place for cattle.
3	It has an altitude of 242 Mts. and an average temperature of 26C.
1	Florencia is the capital city of Caqueta department; it is also known as "The golden gate to the Colombian Amazon", which refers to its green natural treasures.
5	Among the rivers flowing across the city's territory we can find the rivers Ortegaza, Careño, Bodoquero, and Hacha.
2	Florencia is located in the north of the Caqueta department; it is close to the limits with the Huila department, in the down part of the Andes mountains.

4. Listen to the audio recording 4. List five tourist places you can identify.

Learning strategy: Identifying key vocabulary.

- El encanto.
- Caquetá Museum.
- Nuestra señora de Lourdes.
- Bodoquero river.
- Hacha river.

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 8

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, lesson 3)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

My learning objectives <i>Mis objetivos de aprendizaje</i>	I do Puedo	I can improve Puedo mejorar
I can use vocabulary related to Colombian local tourist attractions. <i>Puedo usar vocabulario relacionado a atracciones turísticas locales de Colombia.</i>	✗	
I identify local information in a passage about regional tourist attractions. <i>Identifico información local en una lectura sobre atracciones turísticas regional.</i>	✗	

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, self-assessment)

In both the students' artefacts and the respective self-assessment section, local information is displayed. In the listening lesson, the students were expected to distinguish correct and incorrect information, identify some local tourist places, indigenous tribes and then, organize a paragraph about Florencia-Caquetá their hometown. In the self-assessment, most of the learners answered that they were able to use vocabulary related to Colombian tourist attractions as well as identify local information in a passage about regional tourist attractions. This locally relevant information allowed students to recall their previous knowledge, associate what they already knew to the new information, remain involved in the development of the learning, and learn meaningfully. In this regard, McDonough, Shaw and Masuhara (2013) suggested incorporating contextual factors in the design of materials since "the possibilities for actually implementing them will be directly related both to the learners themselves, their needs, characteristics and so on, and to the whole educational setting in which the teaching is to take place" (p. 4). Among those contextual factors local information plays a vital role in the contextualization of vocabulary, grammar and information about familiar topics, as revealed in the teacher's field notes.

Asking for information about a familiar topic is easier because students can talk about it. Students start to feel confident about their speaking, due to the familiar things they are talking about. The local information that is used in the workshop gives students tools to develop the activities and they express it is very important to work the English classes using this kind of material because it exalts the local culture and permits them to learn the language and raise their cultural knowledge as well. [sic]

(Field notes, workshop 1, lesson 4)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

As a result of including locally relevant information, language production starts to be a more relaxing activity since familiar topics are used as prompts for language learning. Exalting the local culture through the regional tourist attractions served as the fundamental source for meaningful learning as it directly addresses students' behaviors, thoughts and values. This assumption is also supported by the learners' perceptions in the focus group interview.

Docente: ¿Qué fue lo más interesante que pudiste apreciar en el estudio?

[Teacher: What was the most interesting thing you could appreciate about the study?]

Estudiante: Considero que no hay una cosa que sobresalte ya que todo fue muy interesante en este material elaborado por el profesor ya que conocí diversos lugares que ni siquiera yo conocía y eso me hace sentir muy bien para valorar la cultura de mi ciudad y al mismo tiempo aprender el idioma más fácilmente.

[Student: I consider there is not something that stands out due to everything was very interesting in this teacher made materials due I knew diverse places that I did not even know and that makes me feel good to value y city culture and at the same time to learn the language more easily.] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 7)

This transcription demonstrates the relevance learners gave to local information referred to their regional tourist attractions included in the contextualized teacher-made workshop. In this sense, Taylor and Mulhall (1997) claimed that “contextualization of learning occurs when the content of the curriculum, and the methods and materials associated with it, are related directly to the experience and environment of the learner” (p. 5). Therefore, the local relevant tourist attractions, including the tribes and some generalities of the Caquetá department contextualized the learning activities proposed and fomented meaningful learning among the students. This was again expressed by the learners in the survey they answered.

<p>5. ¿Piensas que el uso de temas contextualizados y de carácter significativo logran mejores resultados cuando se aprende y se usa el idioma? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? <u>logramos obtener mejores conocimientos a la hora de leer, investigar y contextualizar temas usados en el taller</u></p>	<p>Yes, because we achieve to get better knowledge when reading, searching and contextualizing topics used in the workshop. [sic]</p>
---	---

(Survey on students' perception)

These samples show how local information was easily understood. This is mainly because when creating the activities, the teacher considered the students' lives and interest to further contextualized the framework for materials design. Referring to teacher-designed

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

materials, Núñez, Pineda and Téllez (2004) asserted that “materials designed by the teachers are more likely to be updated and manageable” (p. 129). This is an advantage teachers have since they can customize them, adapt them to new topics, tailor them up (increase their degree of complexity) or down (reduce their complexity), and proposed manifold purposeful activities. In this way, localized cultural topics, vocabulary and experiences increases offer a more conducive setting for meaningful learning to take place.

Writing through the process approach, feedback and cooperative work. This category presents evidence of the development of the students’ writing skills featured by two recurrent patterns: working cooperatively and using the process approach to writing, which includes giving and receiving feedback. In this regard, the writing skills fostered during the implementation of the teacher-made materials are related to: eliciting ideas, creating sentences, joining sentences to make sense, and producing short compositions. Alternatively, working cooperatively appears to be the strategy for the development of most of the writing activities that required the help of classmates. In doing so, learners had the chance to elicit ideas in their groups, organize them into sentences, to finally join them to make sense. With respect to this, Elbow (1981) invited to “find each idea in your best bits of raw writing, force yourself to summarize it in a sentence that asserts something, then put those sentences into the order that tells the most coherent story” (p. 130). Additionally, the process approach that informs the workshop is a scaffolding that facilitates the written assignments, thereby fostering the students’ writing skills. Due to the process approach, and the constant feedback learners were exposed to, the writing skill of producing short compositions was fostered at a high level since learners completed the writing activities accurately.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

This category has two sub categories which will develop data support in regard to *Enhancing writing skills through cooperative work and Building the writing experience via the process approach.*

Enhancing writing skills through cooperative work. This subcategory shares information and evidence about the influence of cooperative work in enhancing the students' writing skills throughout the teacher-made workshop. Cooperative work is the main methodological approach in the institution where the pedagogical intervention was implemented. Cooperative work allowed students to support each other in the development of the writing activities and to work faster and accurately. In words of Johnson, Johnson and Smith, "Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (as cited in Smith, 1996, p. 1). Bearing this in mind, the cooperative work was the strategy to encourage students to work together to achieve better results and enhance their writing skills while developing the written activities proposed in the workshop.

Furthermore, cooperative work allowed learners to notice the importance of supporting each other to elicit ideas, create sentences, join them together and finally produce short compositions. For learners, this joint effort facilitated the development of the writing activities. This leads me to conclude that the students' writing skills were fostered by the cooperative work that allowed learners to support each other when completing the writing activities. In the following lines, I present some evidence to support the enhancement of the students' writing skills through cooperative work.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Lesson 5: Writing

1. Work in groups of four. Create a slogan (motto) that describes the importance of our region as a tourist destination. Then share it with your classmates.

Learning strategy: Using imagery and combining words into longer sentences.

a. A slogan or motto must start with a verb. Write some expressions using verbs. Example: come - visit - enjoy - discover - explore - taste

1 (Go) come	4 Travel
2 See	5 learn
3 (Explore)	6 Know

b. A slogan or motto should not have more than 10 words. Combine two or more expressions from the previous activity.

- 1 Travel and know our Amazonic culture in Caquetá.
- 2 Go and see our beautiful fauna and flora

c. Write the final version of your slogan motto here.

Travel and know our beautiful Amazonic culture in Caquetá.

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 10

travel and share the wonderful landscapes in Caquetá.

Travel and Know our BEAUTIFUL AMAZONIC culture IN CAQUETÁ.

Learn and see the great nature of our Caquetá

KNOW AND SHARE WITH YOUR FAMILY OUR BEAUTIFUL CAQUETÁ.

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, lesson 5)

These two samples show the first writing activity included in the final lesson of the implemented workshop. In the first image, it can be seen how students organized their own groups of work and start developing the activity, sharing some ideas and following instructions regarding verbs to create a motto; then, they arranged these ideas into a sentence, to finally create their own motto in which they exalt the importance of their region as a tourist destination. The second image shows some of the mottos students created cooperatively in the previous activity; all of them reflect an emotional charge triggered by their region as a tourist destination.

These samples depict that cooperative work, as the main methodological approach, was fundamental in the completion of the writing activities. In these samples, the students made their own contributions to the group (elicit ideas, create sentences, join them to make sense), to finally achieve the goal of the writing activity (create a short composition). Thus, working in groups enhanced the students' writing skills, which are related to their ability to create opinions and ideas to be then shared with their classmates within their groups. On this subject, Smith (1996)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

believed that “the heart of cooperative learning is positive interdependence. Students must believe that they are linked with others in a way that one cannot succeed unless the other members of the group succeed (and vice versa)” (p. 4). It is therefore important that the members of the group interact among themselves to depend on each other to develop the writing activities suggested in the teacher-made workshop. It was also evident that the students enjoyed working in the groups while working on the writing lesson. The teacher’s field notes also evinced this fact.

Cooperative work plays an important role; students helped each other and provided feedback to edit their writing while doing it. Each member of the group seems to contribute to the development of the activities and share ideas when completing a specific assignment. Also, students are always worried about doing a good work in the group. There is an especial commitment from each student.
(Field notes, workshop 1, lesson 5)

Cooperative work served as the bridge for communication and negotiation during the development of the writing activities, enhanced the students’ writing skills, and fostered language learning and use. During the whole implementation of the teacher-made workshop the students’ showed commitment towards the writing activities. As Adams (2013) stressed, “The use of cooperative learning is an effective teaching and learning strategy” (p. 10). Hence, using the cooperative work let the students to enhance their writing skills, thereby improving language learning and use. This perception is one of the positives experiences the students had during the implementation of the workshop as can be seen in the focus group interview samples as follows:

Docente: Cuéntame acerca de experiencias positivas que tuviste mientras desarrollabas el material.

[Teacher: Tell me about positive experiences you had while developing the material]

Estudiante: Una de las cosas positivas fue el haber trabajado en equipo y también el poder aprender y reforzar el área de escritura.

[Student: One of the positives things was to work in teams and also to learn to reinforce the writing skills.]
[sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 4)

Docente: Cuéntame acerca de experiencias positivas que tuviste mientras desarrollabas el material.

[Teacher: Tell me about positive experiences you had while developing the material]

Estudiante: En lo que a mí respecta lo positivo de todo esto fue usar el aprendizaje cooperativo y el uso de imágenes para esto.

[Student: In my personal perspective, the positive about all of this was to use the cooperative learning and the use of images for doing this.] *[sic]*

(Focus group interview, student No. 7)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

These samples show students' perceptions towards the role of cooperative work and its contribution to the enhancement of their writing skills. They deem important the contribution that each member of the group made to complete the writing activities and developing their writing skills. The students also acknowledge that working in groups is such a good strategy that permits to achieve better writing skills and language learning. In fact, Adams (2013) asserted that "cooperative learning offers educators an option different than a teacher-centered approach" (p. 6). The use of this approach supported the students' achievement of better goals in the writing activities. Additionally, the survey on students' perception provides more evidence regarding the use of the cooperative work.

<p>3. ¿Para ti es importante la corrección de tus compañeros y del docente durante proceso de construir textos escritos en inglés? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? <u>Si, porque nos ayudamos unos a otros para tener mejores resultados</u></p>	<p>Yes, because we help each other to have better results. [sic]</p>
---	--

(Survey on students' perceptions)

This sample display the students' perceptions about the contribution of their peers and the teacher during the process of mutual correction within their groups to attain better results in the writing activities.

Building the writing experience via the process approach. This subcategory demonstrates that the students' writing experience was achieved through the process approach, with special emphasis on feedback. The students were aware of the nuances entailed in the process approach to enhance writing, instead of favoring it as a product; thus, they were expected to work following a series of cognitive procedures to achieve the development of the writing activities. In this sense, Kroll (2001) affirmed that:

They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts. (pp. 220-221)

This approach helped the students feel at ease when working on the proposed writing assignments, as a result of undergoing a process of generating ideas, joining them to make sense, editing and polishing what they write to finally complete the written assignment.

In addition to following cognizant procedures to create short compositions, the students were given the opportunity to give and receive constant feedback to allow them to correct, adjust, enrich and polish up their writings. During the implementation, the students underwent the experience of not only receiving the teacher feedback, but also peer feedback to attain better writing. Hence, teacher and peer feedback were vital to help the student reach the objectives of each writing activities proposed in the workshop.

The following samples from the students' artefacts depict some samples of role of building the writing experience via the process approach, with special emphasis on feedback.

2. Continue working in the same groups. Make a brochure in which you describe the most relevant tourist aspects of our department.

Learning strategy: Using previous knowledge, imagery and combining words into longer sequences.

Key elements in a brochure:

1. Appealing content.
2. Classification of the information.
3. Organized content.
4. Engaging.

★ Faces in a brochure

a. Think about possible titles for your brochure. This is to be used in the first face of your brochure.

1. Golden Gate of the Amazonia.
2. Caqueza tourist attractions region.
3. Wonderland of Caquetá.
4. Amazonic Culture

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 11

b. Select four main topics you want to talk about in your brochure. Share the information with your partners and teacher. This is to be used in the face number 2, 3, 4 and 5 of your brochure.

1. Gastronomy
2. Folklore
3. Music
4. Tourist places

c. Make a brainstorming to describe the main topics you have chosen. This is to be used on faces number 2, 3, 4 and 5 of your brochure.

Category 1	Category 2
<u>Gastronomy</u>	<u>Folklore</u>
<u>Sancocho</u>	<u>San Juanero Caquetá</u>
<u>Banana Hamburger</u>	<u>Montarritense</u>
<u>Cachama frita</u>	<u>Danza de la Caña</u>
	<u>Danza del Caccho.</u>
Category 3	Category 4
<u>Music</u>	<u>Tourist places</u>
<u>Bambuco</u>	<u>The petroglyph</u>
<u>Ritmo tropical</u>	<u>Bobacero rivers</u>
<u>Dance Indígena</u>	<u>Portales del fragua</u>
<u>Jancero.</u>	<u>Las Pailas</u>

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 12

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, lesson 5)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

4. Think about the perfect tourist place to visit. Write a descriptive text including the most relevant characteristics from that place. Write on the numbered boxes.

Learning strategy: combining words into longer sequences and asking for correction.

Title:

1. The Pailas is very attractive because is a
place very tourist and amazing

2. It has a beautiful river and big
trees

3. Here you can enjoy its environment and nature
sp

4. Also, people enjoy its waterfalls
sp

5. People like coming here for feel nice
sp

6. It allows visitors to remember beautiful moments
to enjoy in caquetá

5. Exchange your workshop with a classmate. Use the symbols below to give your feedback according to the example! Use the non-numbered boxes in the previous exercise to write the symbols

Mistake	Symbol
Word order	w.o
Wrong word	w.w
Spelling	s.p

Example:
You should taste our food delicious
w.o.
because it is healthy and clean
s.p. w.w.

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 14

6. Give your workshop to your teacher. He will give feedback on your written exercises. Your teacher will base his feedback on the following correction code sheet/form.

THE CORRECTION CODE

SYMBOL	TYPE OF ERROR	ERROR EXAMPLE	CORRECTED ERROR
Cp	Capitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a perfect Balance. many lives in a big House. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A perfect balance. Mary lives in a big house.
P	Punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is the word wonderful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why is the world wonderful?
Sp	Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It offers us many thigs. I always believed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It offers us many things. I always believed.
λ	Missing word(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura is model. I'm looking the stars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laura is a model. I'm looking at the stars.

7. Now, it is time to edit and polish your composition up.

Title: Las Pailas.

1. The Pailas is very attractive because is a
place very tourist and amazing

2. It has a beautiful river and big trees

3. Here you can enjoy its environment and nature

4. Also, people enjoy its waterfalls

5. People like coming here for feeling nice

6. It allows visitors to remember beautiful moments
to enjoy in caquetá

Developed By: Duván Andres Mosquera Núñez 15

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, lesson 5)

The workshop... <i>El taller...</i>	It does	It can be better
Provides opportunities to learn from both my classmates and teacher's observations. <i>Promueve oportunidades para aprender tanto de mis compañeros como de las observaciones de la profesora.</i>	✓	✓
Writing Process to Accuracy The process approach	Yes	To improve
I used the sentences and expressions I needed <i>Usé las oraciones y expresiones que necesitaba</i>	✓	
I had spelling errors <i>Tuve errores en deletreo</i>		✓
I had word order errors <i>Tuve errores en el orden de las palabras</i>	✓	
I had wrong word errors <i>Tuve errores de palabras equivocadas</i>	✓	
Classmates helped me to understand words and meaning <i>Compañeros me ayudaron a entender palabras y significados</i>	✓	
I enjoyed the process of writing <i>Disfruté el proceso de escritura</i>	✓	
I successfully followed the stages in the process approach for writing. (Brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, publishing). <i>Seguí exitosamente las etapas en el enfoque de proceso para escritura. (Lluvia de ideas, borrador, revisión, edición, publicación).</i>	✓	

(Student's artefacts, workshop No.1, self-assessment)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

The students' artefacts reveal the usefulness of the process approach to writing in allowing them to write and revise their written ideas until they felt pleased with their written assignment. In the first two samples, the students were expected to create a brochure; to make it they had follow some production and editing stages until having the final product. The other two samples display the process of giving and receiving teacher and peer feedback, using the corresponding correction codes after finishing their writing drafts.

Finally, the self-assessment samples show the students' perceptions towards the opportunity to learn from the teacher and peer feedback, and to the role of the process approach as the pillar for writing. In addition to differentiating writing as a process and writing as a product, the students went through both approaches to achieve the finished product of their written assignment. However, this teacher- made workshop privileged the process approach to write in which the students could generate ideas, connect them, edit, receive feedback and publish their writings.

The students identified the importance of learning from both, the English teacher and their peers. In this line of thought, Hasan and Akhand (2010) affirmed that, "Generally, the distinction can be summed up in this way: the process writing represents a shift in emphasis in teaching writing from the product of writing activities (the finished text) to ways in which text can be developed" (p. 80). Therefore, the sequenced orientations learners receive in the workshop made them aware of the cognitive process they were following in the carefully designed and sequenced writing activities. The orientations centered on the process approach can also be appreciated in the teachers' field notes below.

Following instructions to perform activities is a very important fact while learners are relating previous concepts to what they are writing and help them to be accurate and achieve the purpose of the activity. The stage to stage orientations in the writing activities have allowed students to develop this part of the workshop without any complication. Also, the process approach seems to encourage them to keep writing while they help each other in the development of the activities. [*sic*]
(*Field notes, workshop 1, lesson 5*)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

The instructions in the teacher-made workshop were a support for the students to achieve the objectives in their writing assignments. According to Edge (1993), “Materials exist in order to support learning and teaching, so they should be designed to suit the people and the process involved” (p. 43). The students found suitable guiding and orientations in both the process approach and in the development of their writing skills such as producing ideas, joining them, polishing, editing and finally, publishing their final works. This aspect can also be seen in some samples of the focus group interview.

Docente: ¿Cómo te sentiste estando inmerso en este estudio?

[Teacher: How did you feel being involved in this research study?]

Estudiante: Bueno, me sentí muy bien ya que pudimos desarrollar algunas actividades de habilidades de escritura, y mediante los diferentes ejercicios planteados pues nos hicieron más fácil pues eee lograr estos objetivos.

[Student: Well, I felt very good due to we could develop activities of writing skill, and through different stablished exercises make us easier to achieve these objectives.] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 1)

Docente: ¿Consideras que tus habilidades escritoras son desarrolladas con este tipo de materiales?

[Teacher: Do you consider your writing skills are developed with this kind of materials?]

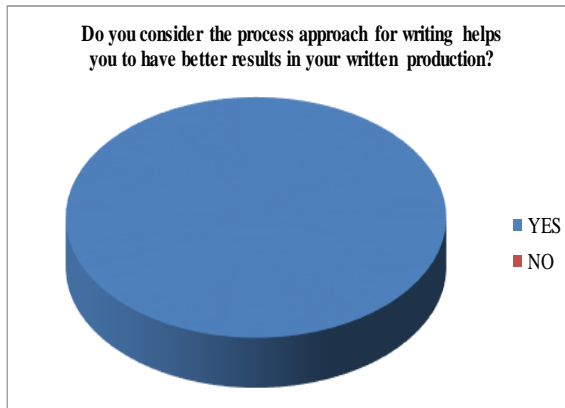
Estudiante: Si porque el material tenía unos enfoques que fortalecían la escritura de los estudiantes estuvieran bien o mal.

[Student: yes, because the material had some approaches that strengthen the writing of the students even they were fine or wrong.] [sic]

(Focus group interview, student No. 7)

These perceptions indicate that the students were aware of the process approach when working on their writing activities; they also noticed their mistakes, corrected them, and continued completing the writing activity. Feedback can be seen from a double perspective, as suggested by Ur (2006) when comparing the role of positive and negative feedback: “It is true that positive feedback tends to encourage, but this can be overstated [whereas] negative feedback, if given supportively and warmly, will be recognized as constructive, and will not necessarily discourage” (p. 257). Hence, feedback becomes a fruitful pedagogical strategy that offers possibilities to enhance the students’ compositions. The survey on students’ perceptions below also revealed the previously mentioned aspect.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL



(Survey on students' perception)

2. ¿Crees que el enfoque de escritura por proceso ayuda a que tengas un mejor resultado en tu producción escrita? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? Sí, porque el hecho de llevar una guía o proceso nos ayuda a desarrollar mejor la producción escrita.	Yes, because the fact of having a guide or a process help us to develop better the writing skill. [sic]
3. ¿Para ti es importante la corrección de tus compañeros y del docente durante proceso de construir textos escritos en inglés? SI: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO: <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Por qué? Porque a partir de la corrección de mis compañeras y docentes mejora mi construcción de textos escritos en inglés.	Yes, because from the feedback from my classmates and teacher I improve my text construction in English. [sic]

(Survey on students' perception)

These samples evinced that the students perceived the process approach as an opportunity to improve their writing. At the same time, they perceive feedback from peers and from the teacher as a pedagogical strategy to foster their writing skills. Again, there is a strong connection between the process approach and the feedback suggested in the writing activities. In fact, Correa, Martínez, Molina, Silva, and Torres (2013) assured that:

Feedback on writing is the information or comments given by a reader to a writer in relation to organization, ideas, and writing mechanics. It is also a useful tool for writers in order to achieve their purpose, which is to let the readers understand what the writers want to convey. (p. 152)

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

Regarding the previous assumption, the process approach with its corresponding feedback enhanced the students' writing skills since it identified and assessed the mistakes to be corrected and overcome in the writing assignments.

Having described three main research categories of analysis and their corresponding subcategories, and supported them by evidences collected during the implementation of the pedagogical intervention developed for this study, the following section presents the conclusions, pedagogical implications, limitations and questions for future research.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

This chapter presents the conclusions, limitations and questions for further research regarding this qualitative action research study. In doing so, I consider the three main constructs: materials development, meaningful learning and writing skills that were originally set in my research question as follows: How do teacher- made materials, based on meaningful learning, develop tenth graders' writing skills at a public school?

Conclusions

Suitable and effective language learning should be informed by an MD rationale that entails a selection of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) principles (Tomlinson, 1998), a scaffolding or theoretical framework (Graves, 1996; Jolly and Bolitho, 1998; Masuhara, 1998; Núñez et al., 2004; Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Núñez et al., 2009; and Núñez et al., 2012) a theoretical vision of the nature of language (Tudor, 2001), and a language teaching and learning methodological approach learning (Rico, 2005). In this way, informed materials are responsive to the genuine needs and profiles of the students within their learning contexts.

Referring to the first research category, exposing the students to informed teacher-made materials that contextualized content anchors language learning and use. The students showed a positive response towards the attractive presentation of the workshop, its appealing content, the range of varied activities it includes, the opportunities to communicate in oral and written forms, the use of learning strategies and the instances to give and receive outcome feedback from peers and the teacher. As the sort of learning activities were perceived by the students as relevant and useful to their lives, it made them not only feel at ease and raise their confidence (Núñez & Téllez, 2009; Núñez et al., 2009), but also got involved emotionally and mentally (Tomlinson,

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

2003). Therefore, the exposure to informed materials, especially with contextualized content and activities, served the purpose of meeting the students' profile and needs, facilitated the process of language learning and use, supported student' self-investment to encourage them to work on the completion of the suggested learning activities; and helped them become aware of their own language learning process.

Regarding the second research personalized local experiences became the source for meaningful learning. The inclusion of personalized and local experiences contributed to foster the development of the learning activities in a meaningful way. The students are especially committed to the implementation of this kind of materials because the information provided directly referred to their personal and local context and experiences. Correspondingly, Ausubel (1991) exalted the importance of relating previous cognitive experiences to what is being learnt to achieve meaningful learning. Hence, the core of meaningful learning is the result of the exposure to the local information and the opportunities provided to recall personalized experiences during the completion of the learning activities, which served as the basis for meaningful language learning and use.

With respect to the third research category, writing was achieved through the process approach and cooperative work. The students were aware of their own writing process, which was facilitated by two recurrent patterns: cooperative work and the process approach with a salient emphasis on feedback. Cooperative work benefited the constant interaction and support from the members of the group involving them in the development of the writing activities (Adams, 2013), helping the students to enhance their writing skills. Indeed, cooperative work was an effective teaching approach that fostered language learning, and the process approach allowed the students to do constant revisions of the changing writing activity (Kroll, 2001).

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

All in all, the students became conscious of the procedures entailed in the completion of their writing activities such as generating ideas, building sentences, connecting them, and finally, producing short compositions. Finally, feedback as part of the process approach played a vital role in creating spaces for learner-learner and teacher-learner to build, edit and polish the writing assignments.

Pedagogical Implications

This qualitative action research study contributed to my personal and professional growth since I augmented my knowledge of materials development as a field of study and a practical endeavor and became skillful in the design of contextualized teacher-made materials that address the integration of language skills and particularly foster the development of the students' writing skills. I also became aware of the urgent need teachers have to start producing knowledge instead of being passive consumers of standardized commercial materials (Kumaravadivelu, 2014; Littlejohn, 2012). It is time for us teachers to start generating knowledge resulting from research on the design and use of contextualized teacher-made language learning materials that favor the refinement of diverse language skills.

It also contributed to the research field at the regional and national levels since it looks into the field of materials development in EFL settings in the Colombian context. Moreover, it becomes an institutional starting point in the development and implementation of teacher-made materials that takes into account students' contexts, background and language learning and affective needs.

The pedagogical intervention designed for this study explored the suitability and effectiveness of informed EFL materials in fostering a neglected language skills in the English classroom: writing. Therefore, the results in this study provide an innovative perspective on

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

enhancing writing to the community of EFL teachers since the development of this skill demands contextualized writing tasks, language learning use, and a suitable scaffolding process to help students to build their writing tasks.

Limitations

During the implementation of this research study the main limitations were the lack of appropriate spaces where the English lessons took place, since the classroom of the tenth graders is too small and the number of students was high. They were always crowded and some of the group activities were hard to be developed. Similarly, the time for the implementation of the whole workshop was too short and some activities had to be completed under time restrictions.

Questions for Further Research

Considering the finding and results from my research study, I pose two research questions for further research: How do the design and implementation of teacher-and student-made materials, based on the community base- pedagogies, foster students' local cultural awareness? and How do the design and implementation of teacher-and student-made materials, based on L1, foster intercultural competences in EFL learners?

References

- Adams, A. (2013). *Cooperative Learning Effects on the Classroom*. Unpublished manuscript. Master of Arts in Education, Northern Michigan University. Michigan, USA.
- Arhar, J., Holly, M., & Kasten, W. (2001). Elements of design: Planning and documenting the action. *Action Research for Teachers, 11*, 131-166.
- Ausubel, D., & Fitzgerald, D. (1961). Meaningful learning and retention: Intrapersonal cognitive variables review of educational research. *Growth, Development, and Learning, 31*(5), 500-510.
- Barnard, R., & Zemach, D. (2003). Materials for specific purposes. In C. Tomlinson (Ed.), *Materials development in language teaching*. (p. 306-323) Great Britain: Cromwell Press.
- Baynham, M. (1995). *Literacy practices: Investigating literacy in social contexts*. New York, NY Longman.
- Brown, H. D. (2002). English language teaching in the post-method era: Toward better diagnosis, treatment, and assessment. In Richards, J., & Renandya, W. (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice* (p. 9-18). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, J., & Hudson, T. (1998). The alternatives in language assessment. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(4), 653-675.
- Becerra, L., & McNulty, M. (2010). Significant learning experiences for English foreign language students. *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development, 12*(2), 117-132.
- Bergaus, M. (2015). *Design issues for service delivery platforms: Incorporate user experience: A grounded theory study of individual user needs*. Springer.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Bond, V. (2011). *What we talk about when we talk about literacy: a look into the value, measurement, and power hierarchy of literacy*. (Unpublished master's thesis). DePaul University. Chicago.
- Burns, A. (1999). Observational techniques for collection action research data. *Collaborative Action Research for English Language teachers*, 78-116. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Burns, A. (2009). Action research in second language teacher education. *The Cambridge guide to second language teacher education*, 289-297.
- Burns, A. (2010). *Planning the action*. In *doing action research in English language teaching. A guide for practitioners*. New York, NY Routledge.
- Burns, A. (2015). *Perspectives on action research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Byrne, D. (1988). *Teaching writing skills*. Harlow, UK: Longman.
- Calhoun, E. F. (1994). *How to use action research in the self-renewing school*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Carter, N., Bryant-Lukosius, D., DiCenso, A., Blythe, J., & Neville, A. (2014). The use of triangulation in qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 41(5), 545-547.
- Castañeda, Y. (2015). *The meaningful learning booklet, a strategy for the reading comprehension process* (Unpublished master's thesis). Universidad Externado de Colombia. Bogota.
- Chamot, A. (1999). *The Learning strategies handbook*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Criprian, C., Farfán, D., & Ramos, B. (2014). Normalistas' written performance in workshops based on the task based approach. *Cuadernos de Lingüística Hispánica*, 25, 181-199. Tunja: Uptc.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Cohen, L., & Manion, K. (2000). *Action research. In Research methods in education* (5th ed.), eds. L. Cohen, L. Manion, and K. Morrison. London: Routledge-Falmer.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015), *Basic of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Correa, R., Martínez, M., Molina, M., Silva, J., & Torres, M. (2013). The impact of explicit feedback on EFL high school students engaged in writing tasks. *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 15(2), 149-163.
- Daza, J. (2017). *The contribution of task-based lessons to writing accuracy* (Unpublished master's thesis). Universidad Externado de Colombia. Bogotá.
- Murray, D. (1972). "Teach Writing as a Process Not Product" *The Leaflet* (November 1972), rpt. in *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory*, 2nd ed.
- Duarte, S., & Escobar, L. (2008). Using Adapted Material and its Impact on University Students' Motivation. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 9, 63-87.
- Edge, J. (1993). *Essential of English Language Teaching*. London: Longman.
- Elbow, P. (1981). *Writing with Power*. New York, NY: United States: Oxford University Press.
- Flick, U. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research*. Fourth edition. London: Sage.
- Gabrielatos, C. (2002). *EFL writing: product and process*. Retrieved August 25, 2017 from <http://www.gabrielatos.com/Writing.pdf>. Originally published in three parts in *ELT News* 133, 134 & 135 (March, April & May 2000).
- Given, L. (2008). *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods (Vol. 2)*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Glaser, B., & Strauss, A., (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. New York, NY Aldine Publishing Company, Hawthorne.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Goldstein, B. (2015). La necesidad de un enfoque intercultural. *Ruta Maestra*, 11, 8-12.
- Gómez, L. F. (2015). The cultural content in EFL textbooks and what teachers need to do about it. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 17(2), 167-187.
- González, A. (2010). English and English teaching in Colombia. Tensions and possibilities in the expanding circle. In A. Kirkpatrick (Ed.). *The Routledge Handbook of World Englishes*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Grabe, W., & Kaplan, R. B. (1996). *Theory and practice of writing*. New York, NY Addison Wesley Longman.
- Habók, A. (2009). *Applying concepts maps to facilitate meaningful learning*. Retrieved August 25, 2017 from www.edu.u-szeged.hu/phd/downloads/habok_tezis_en.pdf.
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1983). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*. London: Routledge.
- Harmer, J. (1988). *How to teach English*. London: Person Longman, 1988a.---. *The practice of English language teaching*. 4th ed. London: Pearson Longman, 1988b.
- Harmer, J. (2004). *How to teach writing*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Hasan, K., & Akhand, M. (2010). Approaches to writing in EFL/ESL context: Balancing product and process in writing class at tertiary level. *NELTA*. 15(1-2), 77-87.
- Hopkins, D. (1993). *A teacher's guide to classroom research* (2nd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Howard J. and Major J. (2004) Guidelines for designing effective English language teaching materials. *The TESOLANZ Journal*, 12, 50-58.
- Hyland, K. (2002). *Teaching and Researching*. Writing. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (1988). *The Action research planner*. Waurn Ponds, Vic: Deakin University.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Kern, R. (2000). *Literacy and language teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University.
- Kirkland, K., & Sutch, D. (2009). *Overcoming the barriers to educational innovation: A literature review*. *Futurelab, Innovation in education*. Retrieved February 20, 2017 from http://www2.futurelab.org.uk/resources/documents/lit_reviews/Barriers_to_Innovation_review.pdf.
- Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University.
- Kramsch, C. (1996). The cultural component of language teaching. *British Studies Now*, (8), 4-7.
- Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language and culture*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1988). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. US: Prentice-Hall International.
- Kroll, B. (Ed.). (1996). *Second language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krueger, R. A., Casey, M. A., Donner, J., Kirsch, S., & Maack, J. N. (2001). Social analysis: selected tools and techniques. *Social Development Paper*, 36.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2014). The Decolonial Option in English Teaching. Can the subaltern act? *TESOL Quarterly*. 14(1), 66-85.
- Langan, J. (2001). *College Writing Skills with Readings*. Boston: McGraw-Hill College.
- Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2004). *A handbook for teacher research from designing to implementation*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill International.
- LeCompte, M. D., & Preissle, J. (1994). Qualitative research: What it is, what it isn't, and how it's done. *Advances in social science methodology*, 3, 141-63.
- Littlejohn, A. (2012). Language Teaching Materials and the (Very) Big Picture. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*. 9(1), 283-297.
- Mc-Donough, J., & Shaw, C. (2013). *Materials and methods in ELT: A teacher's guide*. Malden: Blackwells.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- McGrath, I. (2002). *Materials evaluation and design for language teaching*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*, 13(6), 522-526.
- Masuhara, H. (1998). What do teachers really want from course books? In: B. Tomlinson (Ed), *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (239-260), UK. Cambridge University Press.
- Meraji, S., & Zamanian, M. (2014). Incorporation of L1 culture into second language materials development: benefits vs. risks. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 1128-1133.
- Merriam, S., & Tisdell, E. (2016). *Qualitative research: a guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.
- Montijano, M. (2014). Textbook use training in EFL teacher education. *Utrecht Studies in Language and Communication*, 27, 267-287.
- Muñoz, A., & Álvarez, M. (2008). Preliminary evaluation of the impact of a writing assessment system on teaching and learning. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 9, 89-110.
- Núñez, A. (2010) The teaching of English within the theory-practice alternance model. Innovación y Competitividad Jornada de Investigación 2010. Dirección de Investigaciones y Estudios Empresariales Fundación Universitaria Empresarial de la Cámara de Comercio de Bogotá Uniempresarial.
- Núñez, A. (2017). PowerPoint Slides on Materials Development: Theoretical Foundations and Practical Insights.
- Núñez, A., Pineda, C., Téllez, M. (2004). Key aspects for developing your instructional materials. *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 5, 128-139. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Núñez, A., & Téllez, M.F. (2008) Meeting students' needs. *Enletawa*, Master's Programme in FL Teaching Journal (1), 65-68.
- Núñez, A., & Téllez, M. (2009). ELT materials: The key to fostering effective teaching and learning settings. *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 11(2), 171-186.
- Núñez, A., & Téllez, M. F. (2015). Reflection on teachers' personal and professional growth through materials development seminar. *HOW, A Colombian Journal for Teachers of English*, 22(2), 57-74.
- Núñez, A., Téllez, M. F., & Castellanos, J. (2012). A framework for materials development: A path for in-service teachers to build up the instructional design of their research projects. In A. Núñez, M. F. Téllez, & J. Castellanos (Eds.), *Teacher research on English didactics issues* (pp. 17-37).
- Núñez, A., Téllez, M., & Castellanos, J. (2013). *Document: Proposal for the research line materials development and didactics* (Ascribed to the Research Group: Critical Pedagogy and Didactics for Social Transformation). Universidad Externado de Colombia.
- Núñez, A., Téllez, M. F., & Castellanos, J. (2017). Materials development for teachers' professional growth. In A. Núñez, M. F. Téllez, & J. Castellanos (Eds.), *Materials for the learning of English and teachers' professional growth* (pp. 19-68). Bogotá: Departamento de Publicaciones Universidad Externado de Colombia.
- Núñez A., Téllez M., Castellanos J. & Ramos B. (2009). *A practical materials development guide for EFL pre-service, novice, and in-service teachers*. Bogotá: Departamento de Publicaciones Universidad Externado de Colombia.
- Polio, C. (2001). Research methodology in L2 writing research. In Silva, T. & Matsuda, P.K. (eds.), *On second language writing* (pp. 91-115). New Jersey, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Pulverness, A. (2003). Materials for cultural awareness. In B. Tomlinson (Ed), *Developing materials for language teaching*, 426-438. Londres, UK: Continuum.
- Ramírez, M. (2004). English teachers as materials developers. *Revista Electrónica "Actualidades Investigativas en Educación"*. 4(2), 1-17.
- Ramos, B., & Aguirre, J. (2014). Materials development in the Colombian context: Some considerations about its benefits and challenges. *HOW, a Colombian journal for teachers of English*, 21(2), 134-150.
- Richards, J. (2005, March). *Materials development and research making the connection*. Paper Presented at a Colloquium on Research and Materials Development at TESOL Convention, 1-21.
- Rico, C. (2005). Searching for coherence in language teaching: the issue of teaching competences. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 7, 95-107.
- Rico, C. (2012). *Language Teaching Materials as Mediators for ICC development: A Challenge for Materials Developers*. Retrieved August 20, 2017 from <http://revistas.javeriana.edu.co/index.php/signoypensamiento/article/view/2416>.
- Rico, C. (2010). The effects of language materials on the development of intercultural competence. In Tomlinson, B & Masuhara, H. *Research for materials development in language learning: Evidence for best practice*. UK: Continuum.
- Rojas, G. (2011). Writing using blogs: A way to engage Colombian adolescents in meaningful communication. *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 13(2). 11-27.
- Ross, K. N. (1978). Sample design for educational survey research. *Evaluation in Education. International Progress*, 2(2), 105-195.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Sandin, M. P. (2003). *Investigación cualitativa en educación: fundamentos y tradiciones* [Qualitative research in education: Fundamentals and traditions]. Barcelona, ES: Mc Graw Hill.
- Smith, K.A. (1996). Cooperative learning: Making "groupwork" work. In C. Bonwell & T. Sutherlund, Eds., *Active learning: Lessons from practice and emerging issues. New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. (pp 71-82). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Solórzano, L. (2013). *Fostering writing by incorporating students' voices on controversial-topic songs*. (Unpublished master's thesis). Universidad Externado de Colombia. Bogota.
- Stelman, J. D., Pierce, P. L., & Koppenhaver, D. A. (1994). The role of computers in promoting literacy in children with severe speech and physical impairments. In K. G. Butler (Ed.), *Severe communication disorders: Intervention strategies* (pp. 200-212). Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen.
- Stevens, J. (1996). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences*. 3rd ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.
- Stottok, B., Bergaus, M. & Gorra, A. (2011). Color coding: an alternative to analyse. Empirical data via grounded theory. Retrieved October 1 from <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/62796110/colour-coding-alternative-analyse-empirical-data-via-grounded-theory>. *Proceedings of the European Conference on Research Methods*.
- Taylor, P., & Mulhall, A. (1997). *Contextualizing teaching and learning in primary schools: Using agricultural experience*. (1 and 2) Education Research. Department of International Development, London, England.
- Thoman, E., & Jolls, T. (2003). *Literacy for the 21st century*. Center for Media Literacy, 1-48.

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

- Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tomlinson, B. (2003). *Developing materials to develop yourself. Humanizing language Teaching*, 5 (4). Retrieved March 15, 2017 from <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/jul03/mart1.htm>.
- Tomlinson, B. (2010). *Materials development*. In Carter, R. & Nunan, D., (Eds.). *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tomlinson, B. (2012a). *State-of-the-art article materials development for language learning and teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tong, A., Sainsbury, P., & Craig, J. (2007). Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups. *International journal for quality in health care*, 19(6), 349-357.
- Tudor, I. (2001) *The dynamics of the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching. Practice and theory*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Ur, P. (2006). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1995). *Historia del desarrollo de las funciones psíquicas superiores*. Madrid: Visor.
- Wolfinger, N. (2012). On writing fieldnotes: collection strategies and background expectancies. *London, Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi vol. 2 (I)*, 85-95.

Appendixes

Appendix A. Informed Consent Form

Neiva, Agosto 30 de 2016

Padre

JORGE HERNÁN ALZATE ALZATE

Rector

I.E. NORMAL SUPERIOR

Florencia- Caquetá

Atento saludo.

Comedidamente me dirijo a usted con el fin de solicitar su autorización para que el profesor **DUVAN ANDRES MOSQUERA NÚÑEZ** realice una intervención pedagógica en el grado 10° 02 como aplicación de la tesis de grado que cursa en la Universidad Surcolombiana en el Programa de Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés. El título de su tesis es: “**Materials Based on Meaningful Learning to Foster Writing Skills**”.

El profesor **DUVÄN ANDRES MOSQUERA NÚÑEZ** justifica la aplicación de su intervención pedagógica. La aplicación de la intervención pedagógica que se pretende realizar hace referencia a la importancia del diseño e implementación de material contextualizado basado en aprendizaje significativo para la enseñanza del idioma extranjero Inglés en las instituciones educativas de carácter público, las cuales no cuentan con un libro guía para el desarrollo de los contenidos curriculares y de las habilidades propias del idioma. En este sentido, se pretende enfocar el diseño de material para el desarrollo de la habilidad escrita en el idioma extranjero.

Durante la intervención, los estudiantes deberán participar de entrevistas, encuestas, y escritura de un diario de reflexión con el fin de verificar el logro de los objetivos del proyecto. La información recolectada se analizará sin hacer referencias personales ni ninguna acción que conlleve a atentar contra el buen nombre e integridad de los participantes. A los padres de los estudiantes se les enviará una carta con el fin de que consideren autorizar a sus hijos para participar en el proyecto.

Finalmente, cabe mencionar que este estudio ha sido aprobado por el Programa de Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés y es un requisito para obtener el título de Magister. Su asesora es la profesora **ASTRID NÚÑEZ PARDO M.A.**

Cordialmente,

GILMA ZÚÑIGA CAMACHO

Appendix B. Informed Consent Form

Florencia, septiembre 28 de 2016

Apreciado Padre de Familia
Institución Educativa Escuela Normal Superior

Atento saludo.

Comendidamente me dirijo a usted con el fin de solicitar su autorización para que su hijo participe en un proyecto de investigación que realizo como tesis de grado en la Universidad Surcolombiana en el Programa de Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés. El título de la tesis es: *“Materials Based on Meaningful Learning to Foster Writing Skills”*.

La aplicación de la intervención pedagógica que se pretende realizar hace referencia a la importancia del diseño e implementación de material contextualizado basado en aprendizaje significativo para la enseñanza del idioma extranjero Inglés en las instituciones educativas de carácter público, las cuales no cuentan con un libro guía para el desarrollo de los contenidos curriculares y de las habilidades propias del idioma. En este sentido, se pretende enfocar el diseño de material para el desarrollo de la habilidad escrita en el idioma extranjero.

Si usted autoriza la participación de su hijo/a, el estudiante formará parte de una serie de entrevistas grupales con otros estudiantes, el diligenciamiento de encuestas y la escritura de un diario de reflexión con el fin de verificar el logro de los objetivos del proyecto. Las grabaciones y en general la información recolectada, se analizará sin hacer referencias personales ni ninguna acción que conlleve a atentar contra el buen nombre e integridad del participante.

Cabe reiterar que la participación de su hijo/a en este proyecto es voluntaria y si fuera el caso, puede abandonar su participación en cualquier momento. Cabe resaltar que no habrá consecuencias negativas si el participante decide abandonar la investigación. No obstante, espero permita a su hijo/a formar parte de este proceso. En el informe final de tesis, los participantes serán anonimizados para asegurar que sus identidades no sean reconocidas y de esta forma, se conserve la objetividad y confidencialidad del estudio.

Finalmente, este proyecto de investigación ha sido aprobado por el Programa de Maestría de la Universidad Surcolombiana.

Consentimiento de Participación

Si usted autoriza a su hijo/a _____ para formar parte del proyecto de investigación, firme el presente consentimiento y regréselo al profesor. Si tiene alguna pregunta con respecto a los procedimientos y/o la investigación en sí, por favor envíe un correo a *duvan1230@gmail.com* con sus inquietudes.

Agradezco de antemano su colaboración.

Autorizo que mi hijo/a forme parte del proyecto de investigación descrito anteriormente.

SI _____ NO _____

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Cordialmente,

DUVÁN ANDRES MOSQUERA NÚÑEZ
Docente de Inglés
Autor del proyecto

Appendix C. Fields Notes Form

School: Population: Students:	Date:	Topic:	Complementary Materials:	Workshop No. 1:
		Section:		
Research question General research objective:			Specific research objectives.	
General Observations			Analysis	
<u>Students' strengths:</u>				
<u>Students' weaknesses:</u>				
<u>Materials in action; what materials do in the EFL classroom:</u>				
<u>Triggering meaningful learning through localized issues:</u>				
<u>Students' writing skills:</u>				
<u>Follow-up reflection:</u>				

Appendix D. Focus Group Interview Questionnaire

Focus group interview questions

General questions

1. How did you feel being involved in this research study?
2. What was the most interesting thing you could appreciate about the study?
3. What needs improvement?
4. If possible, what kind of changes you would do?
5. Did the study contribute positively to your language learning?

Specific questions

1. How do find the materials used for the study? Why?
2. Tell me about positive experiences you had while working with the materials.
3. Tell me about some negative aspects you noticed while working with the materials.
4. Do you consider this kind of material helps you to learn the English language easier?
5. How do you feel with materials specially designed for you? Why?
6. Do you consider your writing skills are developed with this kind of material?

Appendix E. Entry Survey (Needs Analysis)

**Materials Development Survey
Universidad Surcolombiana
School of Education
Master's Program in English Didactics**

Name: _____ Identity card: _____

Dear Students,

We are conducting this survey with tenth graders at Normal Superior High School, to collect information about your interests and opinions related to the use and relevance of didactic materials concerning the writing skill in the English classes. We would acknowledge your help in providing the required information in this survey that will lead to structure the materials and activities for the course.

1. Writing in English is should be more implemented in the English lessons because: (Tick the options of your preference).

- It helps to be a more complete English user.
- It is one of the hardest skills to develop.
- It helps to express our personal ideas.
- It is an important skill to communicate the language.

2. Learning English as a foreign language is useful only if: (Tick the options of your preference).

- It serves as a tool to get a job.
- It is used as a communicative tool.
- I travel abroad
- I become in a better professional.

3. I find difficult to organize my ideas in English in a sentence or a paragraph.

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Always | <input type="checkbox"/> | Frequently | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sometimes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. I have errors when presenting my writing activities

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Always | <input type="checkbox"/> | Frequently | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sometimes | <input type="checkbox"/> | Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

5. How many times I have to correct a writing activity before succeed?

- One time Two times
 Three times More times

6. From the following options, select the ones you find more difficult to accomplish in your writing activities.

- a) Grammar
 b) Vocabulary
 c) Spelling
 d) Punctuation
 e) Coherence
 f) Use of connectors

7. In your personal experience learning English, how often have you been exposed to these kinds of language learning materials? (Circle the choices that better matches your opinion).

	<u>Never</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Usually</u>	<u>Always</u>
Technological materials	1	2	3	4
Textbooks	1	2	3	4
Copies	1	2	3	4
Audiovisual materials	1	2	3	4
In house materials)	1	2	3	4
Contextualized materials	1	2	3	4

8. Do you consider that contextualized materials are important to have good language learning?

YES: _____ NO: _____

WHY? _____

9. The content in the materials used for your English classes should have: (tick your options)

- Personal interest's topics _____
 Easy and comprehensible language _____
 Topics related to your context _____
 Language and topics relevant to local Context _____
 Global topics with local interpretation _____
 Images that catch your attention _____

MEANINGFUL LEARNING BASED MATERIAL

10. Should the English course include the development of the writing skill in the workshops, materials and tools related to your personal interests?

YES: _____

NO: _____

WHY? _____

11. What kind of material should your English teacher design to work in class? (Tick your options).

- Worksheets _____
- Language learning Units (5 Lessons) _____
- Booklets _____
- Flashcards _____
- Posters _____
- Picture dictionaries _____
- Modules _____
- Lessons _____

12. What kind of materials do you find less suitable? (tick your options)

- Audiovisual material _____
- Worksheets _____
- Workbooks _____
- Students' Books _____

13. What do you dislike having in the materials used at the classes? (tick your options)

- Difficult language _____
- Not contextualized topics _____
- Long texts _____
- Uninteresting topics _____
- Filling exercises _____
- Matching activities _____
- Crosswords _____

14. To what extent language learning materials would influence your English learning and affect the following aspect of your life? (Circle the choices that better matches your opinion).

	NONE	A LITTLE	A LOT	QUITE A LOT
Language proficiency	1	2	3	4
Personal growth	1	2	3	4
Professional development	1	2	3	4
Cognitive development	1	2	3	4

Appendix F. Exit Survey

Materials Development Survey

Universidad Surcolombiana

School of Education

Master's Program in English Didactics

Dear Students,

I am conducting this survey at Normal superior high school to collect information about your perceptions and opinions related to the use and relevance of the material used to foster the writing skill. I would acknowledge your help in providing the required information in this survey.

1. ¿Consideras que tu habilidad de la escritura fue desarrollada de mejor manera al usar este tipo de material?

SI: ____ NO: ____

¿Por qué? _____

2. ¿Crees que el enfoque de escritura por proceso ayuda a que tengas un mejor resultado en tu producción escrita?

SI: ____ NO: ____

¿Por qué? _____

3. ¿Para ti es importante la corrección de tus compañeros y del docente durante proceso de construir textos escritos en inglés?

SI: ____ NO: ____

¿Por qué? _____

4. ¿Deberían seguir siendo usados este tipo de materiales para la enseñanza del inglés y especialmente para trabajar la habilidad escrita en el idioma extranjero?

SI: ____ NO: ____

¿Por qué? _____

5. ¿Piensas que el uso de temas contextualizados y de carácter significativo logran mejores resultados cuando se aprende y se usa el idioma?

SI: ____ NO: ____

¿Por qué? _____
