

LITTLE WRITERS, BIG STEPS: DEVELOPING FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING IN  
SECOND GRADERS THROUGH MODELING AND ADAPTED MATERIALS

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UNIVERSIDAD  
La Gran Colombia

Vigilada MINEDUCACIÓN

Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas, Ciencias de la Educación

Universidad la Gran Colombia

Bogotá

2025

**Little Writers, Big Steps**  
**Developing Foreign Language Writing in Second Graders through Modeling and**  
**Adapted Materials**

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**Trabajo de Grado presentado como requisito para optar al título de Licenciatura**  
**en Lenguas Modernas con énfasis en Ingles.**



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**Bogotá**

**2025**

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### **Resumen**

El desafío de las escuelas del siglo XXI es educar para la vida. Los alumnos se enfrentan a un entorno en permanente evolución y complejidad, que requiere habilidades y conocimientos más allá de la memorización de información. Es preciso formar a los jóvenes para que se transformen en individuos críticos, reflexivos, creativos y capacitados para adaptarse. En consecuencia, el dominio de un idioma extranjero es esencial para asegurar un futuro académico y profesional prometedor. Este trabajo de grado empieza proponiendo una exploración preliminar y teórica hacia el desarrollo práctico de una lengua extranjera en estudiantes de segundo grado en edades de 7 a 8 años, especialmente enfocado en ampliar su conocimiento en la escritura en inglés, apoyado en la ciencia cognitiva y la aplicación de material adaptado en las sesiones de intervención. Asimismo, se proponen métodos para mejorar el comportamiento en clase, eliminando factores de distracción y potenciando su motivación extrínseca a través del método conductista. Por ello, mediante el uso de la prueba T, los estudiantes se verán enfrentados a una evaluación preliminar que buscará evaluar su desempeño en gramática y ortografía, asimismo hallar las mejoras y/o fallas presentadas durante las clases que tuvieron una duración de 3 meses. La triangulación mixta y los resultados de las pruebas mostraron mejoras en áreas como coherencia, uso de vocabulario y expresión de ideas dentro de los escritos del curso. Se deduce que los participantes consiguieron establecer una conexión más íntima con la realidad de un idioma diferente, modificando las metodologías educativas convencionales y generando actividades apropiadas para la población receptora.

*Palabras Clave: Producción Escrita, Material Adaptado, Atención Dividida, Lengua Extranjera, Enseñanza, Condicionamiento Operante.*

### **Abstract**

The challenge for schools in the 21st century is to educate for life. Students face a constantly changing and complex environment that requires skills and knowledge beyond memorizing information. Young people must be trained to become critical, reflective, creative, and adaptive individuals. Therefore, proficiency in a foreign language is essential to ensure a promising academic and professional future. This degree project begins by proposing a preliminary and theoretical exploration of practical foreign language development in second-grade students aged 7 to 8 years old, aimed at expanding their knowledge of English writing, supported by cognitive science and the application of adapted material in the intervention sessions. Likewise, methods are proposed to improve behavior in class, eliminating distraction factors and enhancing their extrinsic motivation through the behaviorist method. Therefore, by using a T-test, learners will be faced with a preliminary evaluation that will seek to assess their performance in grammar and spelling, thus finding the improvements and/or failures that occurred throughout the three-month-long classes. Mixed triangulation and test results evidenced progress in areas including consistency, use of vocabulary, and expression of ideas within the writings of the course. It was inferred that participants were enabled to establish a tighter connection with the reality of a different language, modifying conventional educational methodologies and generating activities appropriate for the target population.

*Keywords: Written production, adapted material, attention, divided attention foreign language, teaching, behaviorism learning, operant conditioning.*

## Introduction

Education seeks to give scope of knowledge to every integral human being, it represents a powerful tool to improve the quality of learning and move towards more just, equitable as well as cohesive societies. For foreign language learning, the challenge is considered of special importance for teachers as educational material does not always meet the student's needs, which implies adapting and changing the internal features of textbooks to maximize their suitability in various contexts. Therefore, the case study is presented, which answers the research question ***How to improve English writing skills of second graders with language modeling activities employing adapted material?***. This material plays a role in the improvement of textual production in second graders of the Domingo Savio bilingual school, an institution that through pedagogical practices allowed recognizing the research problem in elementary classrooms.

This institution focuses on constant exposure to foreign languages such as English and French, in the different areas of knowledge (social, mathematics, geometry, etc.) for constant learning, along with formative and summative evaluations that allow the student community to build their continuous exploitation of a foreign language.

The participants that were chosen as a sample (13) can speak, listen and read, however there is a deficiency when it comes to creating sentences with correct grammatical writing, as well as the proper use of verb tenses. Furthermore, being a population with an age of 7-9 years, the constant struggle is to maintain motivation and concentration in the classroom. For this, by implementing language modeling activities and the behaviorist method we aim to ameliorate performance in the classroom for students with divided attention combined with techniques that allow teachers to focus a support material on a topic that captures the attention of students along with rewards that can be transformed into a creative activity that allows them to have a space to design a product that they can develop in their own way and time.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

To enhance the English writing proficiency of second-grade students in EFL by implementing language modeling activities with adapted instructional materials thematically centered on environmental awareness and sustainability.

### **Specific Objectives**

- To evaluate the learning process in second-grade students' written production through pedagogical interventions employing adapted materials as abbreviated audios, and exercises focused on specific linguistic structures; as well as to analyze their progress through formative and summative assessments.
- To analyze the behavioral patterns and distraction factors influencing the concentration of 7- to 8-year-old students during writing activities in English, considering the cognitive characteristics of their developmental stage.
- To apply practical techniques including active listening, linguistic modeling and the use of visual aids, measuring their effectiveness through qualitative and quantitative instruments in improving English writing.

### **Theoretical Framework**

During the practicum period at the Domingo Savio bilingual educational center, it was observed that their foreign language learning is centered on the repetition of vocabulary and short expressions that favor them to work their long-term memory with commands used in the classroom, which builds an environment of constant communication of ideas to maintain an active knowledge of what is happening around them.

Primary ages (7-8 years) usually have their first cognitive, social, and affective developments in which they naturally express their emotions, ideas, and behaviors. Besides, they create different learning processes wherein their behavior is always active which makes possible different activities or dynamics that allow them to have a focus or regulation of their behaviors. Although their writing skills are very scarce, they are related to the same vocabulary they learn. Textual production is one of the skills in which they have more difficulties creating a bad linguistic order in which they can recognize the vocabulary if they hear it, but they are not able to write it without any visual support.

In addition, it is recognized how this population creates different focuses of attention in which they can separate their educational or interpersonal priorities creating an environment of constant change in attention, where individual or group activities are carried out to maintain behavioral control by means of short movement and sound commands that allow them to return to a specific activity automatically along with the use of physical material.

For instance, are various theories and concepts that over the years have had different perceptions and applications in the processes of human development, related to the stages of learning, written production, motivation, behaviorism and attention in order to explain the learning process to which they are habituated.

The first research concept to be presented here is **written production** together with various perceptions about its development and challenges.

### **Writing production**

The written production is part of several natural processes to create text that include a communicative purpose (personal, social, cultural, etc.) Firstly, it is known that writing is a process that children create when they develop a good organization of their ideas to express themselves. Handwriting enables them to fill the empty spaces of what they fail to communicate. Porchia (2016) refers to how the perception of reality, imitations on emotions, postures and habits that manage to adapt develop a more complete process of communication of a thought in writing as a cognitive-Symbolic activity impacting the metacognitive processes of the population. (Cortázar, as cited in Porchia, 2016) says that “A blank piece of the page will be for you an interval, just the bridge that connects my handwriting of yesterday to my handwriting of today” (p.11-3). It demonstrated how the composition of a text at the same time can limit what one wants to express in a natural way, creating confusion about the true meaning of words. The research on preschool children by Reyes & Pérez (2014) determined that writing processes go hand in hand with speech processes, to develop processes in which the child simultaneously achieves inferences or relationships with the concepts he/she hears and repeats as a child to expand his/her vocabulary. Besides, state that writing tasks can be mastered when there is awareness of three aspects of language, phonology, semantics and orthography, which allows analyzing how children who train their writing from an early age are able to improve oral production Gonzales & Delgado (2009).

According to the research application, Affranti et al (2022) showed that children who maintain foreign language learning are exposed to the receptive ability of reading, where they manage to understand naturally what they read although when it comes to expressing their own

ideas on paper, it shows a low level. Through their research, they manage to evaluate writing skills by means of vocabulary dictations, passages, and narrative production, which allows them to determine the level of writing in primary school children. This is connected to the arguments of Dr. Olenka Bilash (2009) comments how students in the early ages leave written production aside and focus on improving their speaking skills, which makes it possible to understand that communicative skills (writing, listening, reading and speaking) are related to each other for a complete useful communication. That is why this brings several consequences in the daily activities of writing when it is not connected with the other skills, that is how Bilash states the importance of having constant writing exercises at an early age. Furthermore, she exposes the importance of creating settings where the groups do not feel anxious when creating a short or long text implementing meaningful feedback and finally does not have a summative grade but a formative one.

In the meantime, the ideas of Coyle & de Larios (2014) demonstrate the importance of feedback in the written production of children thanks to the error connection (directs attention to grammatical errors) and to model texts (rewriting the text while maintaining the general idea and avoiding grammatical mistakes and ambiguities) allow the pedagogical processes to develop better pedagogical practices to create better strategies and methods so that lexis, grammar, and content can be grammar and content complement each other in a better exercise of writing in a foreign language which makes possible a native interpretation by the students. On the other hand, Santos & Hage (2015) compared the performance of students in public and private schools in writing competence, which allows to determine the importance of this skill in which various mechanisms and strategies are applied to produce something complete, which brings a fast and simultaneous production according to what is wanted to express (ideas, words, thoughts) in which grammar, punctuation, spelling, lexicon among others are considered. This ultimately demonstrates in their study that the development of learners in

public institutions lacks basic aspects of writing (lexis, coherence, grammatical order) leaving students in private schools with better results in written production.

Since the research is related to a specific group of participants, the following concept is related to the different ***stages of human development*** and what the purpose of each one is, which allows to relate the skills that the human being must develop in each stage of development.

## **Stages of Development**

### ***Piaget***

Several concepts or cognitive processes are known in which the human being develops an adaptation, personality, learning, or methods to do a task or to have his version of what he wants to be, this is how several theories of human development have been the subject of research. Piaget's 4 stages of development, Castilla (2013) have been a process of research and support in which children from their first years of life manage to create their learning processes through constant interaction with the world around them, being part of various transformations and changes in their cognitive processes by means of:

**1. Sensorimotor stage (0 to 2 years):** In this stage, children create trial-and-error actions demonstrating innate actions that attract the attention of a third party and simultaneously create diverse spaces for exploring their environment.

**2. Pre-operational stage (2 to 7 years):** In the next stage, he develops the imitation of the actions of the people around him. He begins to increase his linguistic competencies, in which his way of expressing his ideas is clearer.

**3. Concrete operational stage (8 to 12 years):** Meanwhile, in the concrete stage, it is demonstrated how they become more logical and rational about their thoughts, situations and

realities of their environment bringing with them their previous learning to create inferences about events and realities that impact them cognitively. On the other hand, they can integrate diverse deductions in their minds, this is how the primary population can absorb and understand information faster and depending on the way in which the information is presented to them, they are able to create their own version and transmit it. In this area, such as the teaching of a foreign language, they can transmit in a fluent and repetitive way different concepts or commands.

**4. Formal operational stage (12 to 16 years):** At this end are adolescents who create more deductive reasoning about their surroundings by analyzing all the internal and external factors of situations without having any previous experience to solve something that creates a reflection on their reasoning.

In this sense, recent theories state that those stages, not necessarily correspond to narrow age ranges as proposed by Piaget, but they depend on other factors related to human interactions and socio-cultural aspects.

### ***Erikson***

Meanwhile, there is another theory based on the 8 psychosocial stages of the human being. (Erikson, cited in Maree, 2021), mentions how these stages are related to the concept of “self” which allows the human being to explore the impact of how the culture of society, history, and the continuous accompaniment of parents and teachers create a personality development.

**1. Infancy - Trust and Distrust (1 to 2 years):** The baby's needs are met and thus an affectionate bond is achieved that eliminates anxious behaviors.

**2. Early Childhood - Autonomy and Embarrassment (2 to 4 years):** Control of one's physical skills to develop independence and self-will.

**3. Preschool age - Initiative and guilt (4-5 years):** Development and exploration of activities that allow the discovery of new skills.

**4. School-age - Industriousness and inferiority (5 to 12 years old):** Acquisition of new skills through praise and support that increase confidence. In addition, the individual begins to build a curiosity for the functioning of everything around him which allows him to know his own abilities, but this behavior can be affected by not having the support of his family or educational community (classmates and teachers) which causes episodes of insecurity in a context that is always in constant comparison with the others, Regarder (2024).

**5. Adolescence - Confusion of identity (13 to 19 years):** Stage in which the human being experiences the “success” of a task using constant supportive stimuli from the people around him/her.

**6. Early adulthood - Intimacy and isolation (20 to 30 years old):** Relationships are established in which vulnerability is recognized through affective bonds with diverse individuals.

**7. Adulthood - Generativity and stagnation (40 to 65 years old):** Development of a thought of caring for others without expecting a response in return, which allows knowing the purpose of life.

**8. Maturity- Ego integrity (65 + years):** Stage in which the human creates a reflection of life through the idea of dying and the meaning of his mortality.

These stages of development are key processes for the creation of the personality, the first stages being the most important to master specific tasks without forgetting the participation of parents and teachers in education, since they must support, motivate and stimulate the human being through intensive communication. On the other hand, these theories explain how reaching each stage of development will allow the human being to have a complete mastery to solve a task, where he achieves the ability to resolve own or external conflicts of his personality development and behavior as a child, adolescent and adult, considering the acceptance of failure when not achieving the expected results Regarder (2024).

In the meantime, it will give way to how to try to improve writing skills, factors such as **attention** influence the focus of concentration in a specific activity.

### **Attention**

Initially, (Renouvier, as cited in James, 1890), proposes that attention "is the action of taking possession by the spirit, clearly and vividly, of one of the objects or series of thought simultaneously possible" (p. 416). In this sense, it is possible to identify how attention can be voluntary and involuntary in any subject, which is reflected in three types: attention by sensations, derived attention and passive attention. Meanwhile, Perez & Merino (2022) define attention as a control mechanism that allows developing cognitive processes in an unconscious way to process old or new information reflecting in a specific behavior that has important and irrelevant factors in the subject building various behavioral stimuli. This is how it is possible to identify different types of attention. Meanwhile, (Rubinstein, as cited in Arbieta, 2017) mentions that attention:

Modifies the structure of psychological processes, making them appear as activities oriented to certain objects, which is produced according to the content of the activities raised that guide the development of psychic processes, being attention a facet of psychological processes. (p.1)

But (Tudela, cited in the Department of Health Psychology, 2007), maintains that attention is a "central mechanism of limited capacity whose primary function is to control and guide the conscious activity of the organism in accordance with a determined objective. In addition, the research of Machado et al. (2021) explains how attention manages to be part of various cognitive developments in which it gives way to activation of what may be the memory and perception through strong or intense stimuli that allow you to create attentional processes that filter, maintains information to finally monitor a result that gives way to the development of

a specific activity in which each subject will be able to create an individual experience taking into account their environment and internal needs at the brain level. On the other hand, Chastain & Garvin (2024) mention how attention is related to concentration when performing a specific task that creates mental processes in which internal and external thoughts can be attended to at the same time, where the subject is part of the focus of attention to stimuli that are familiar in their environment, which allows them to have an automatic attraction, thus creating a voluntary and effortless process towards a task. In addition, according to Alvarez (2023) there are several types of attention that allow us to determine which activities and periods of focus exist.

**1. Sustained attention:** This type of attention explain it as a focused and lasting behavior in a specific task that even if it is in the middle of various distractions the individual can continue without any problem in the development of the activity; an example is reading that states how meditation exercises create a better concentration on an activity that can create positive response during a repetitive activity.

**2. Selective attention:** demonstrated that this type of behavior is how stimuli are focused, and attention is seated, creating diverse information filtrations. There are different tactics in which such stimuli can be improved for more assertive attention in different daily situations.

**3. Alternate attention:** Now define that this type of concentration is based on how one can constantly change activities with different requirements, which makes possible the action of several activities to permit constant adaptation to diverse situations in the moment, becoming a multi-task individual with a simultaneous and automatic response.

**4. Visual and auditory attention:** For the Department of Health Psychology (2007), this type of focus is related to the subject's sensory processes that naturally have spatial and temporal states that allow the creation of a rection of these stimuli.

**5. Divided attention:** Finally, it is possible to observe how elementary school children develop divided attention, which focuses on the response to several stimuli or tasks simultaneously. Moreover, when children have several assignments in their mind they develop deficiency in each task, since they do not achieve constant concentration on them, establishing problems of teaching practice and cognitive training in the elementary school population. Besides (Solhberb & Mateer 1987 cited in Ramos, 2002) define divided attention as "Divided attention may reflect alternating, continuous, and varied attention or reliance on more unconscious automatic processing for at least some tasks" (p. 117). It is explained how it is possible that the type of attention is constantly changing depending on the type of activity and that most of them can be those in which visual and auditory stimuli are applied. For this he mentions several training courses that allow to improve or focus attention on a specific way by means of comprehensive reading, combination of auditory tasks and combination of tasks with time monitoring. This with the purpose of creating better cognitive development to have better results in simultaneous actions or activities that should have a greater impact on the formative purpose of a foreign language class. According to Chuquimarca (2013), it manifests itself as a process in which the individual pays attention to two simultaneous stimuli in which he/she can distribute his/her attentional skills for the specific task of the moment.

Moving on, a further factor that can affect a student's attention is when he or she does not feel the need to pay attention in class, and why does this happen? due to a **lack of motivation** for wanting to do things on their own's initiative.

## **Motivation**

Motivation serves primarily as the dynamic root of understanding, the inner and outer forces that act on an individual's being and pushes us to undertake an action or behavior. It enables us to establish habits, to make new attempts, or to sustain the effort needed to

accomplish tasks. According to (Santrock, cited in Gil, 2023), motivation is “the set of reasons why people behave the way they do. Motivated behavior is vigorous, directed, and sustained” (p. 432). Motivation within an educational framework is what encourages learners to be participants in the teaching-learning process under the guidance of professors, where its repercussion lies in the achievement of both academic and personal targets towards the betterment of scholastic performance:

A student could be motivated to learn a new set of skills because he or she understands their potential utility or value or because learning the skills will yield a good grade and the privileges a good grade affords. In these examples the amount of motivation does not necessarily vary, but the nature and focus of the motivation being evidenced certainly does. (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 1)

### ***1. Self-Determination Theory (SDT)***

Deci & Ryan (1985) developed self-determination theory (sdt), an attempt to explain motivation in terms of a human model capable of decision-making and self-acting, which originates primarily from the need to grow and achieve personal fulfillment (mostly prompted by the attainment of a prize, a raise or tangible rewards). Self-determination theory addresses the pursuit of more internal motivations such as the search for new knowledge and independence. (Mendez, cited in Palacio & Cuesta, 2017) designates motivation as a state that activates, directs and maintains the behavior of the individual, being the school motivation the one that motivates learning and drives the action of knowledge. According to SDT theory, a distinction is made regarding two types of motivation, depending on the degree of self-determination involved.

### **Intrinsic Motivation**

Intrinsic motivation relies on an individual's interest, gratification and personal development through academic, professional, and family activities; it is centered towards challenge-seeking, utilizing voluntary effort as an expression of innate curiosity. Consequently, in the case of an employee who acts based on external rewards, he/she will not work because of positive motivations, (Herzberg, cited in Osorio, 2016). To accomplish this purpose, he/she must work on the internal enrichment of himself to see a long-term aspect. Intrinsic motivation at the educational level plays a crucial role in affective learning, grounded in the pursuit of understanding, abilities and attitudes, it seeks the interest, enjoyment and fulfillment found by the student in learning beyond material rewards such as grades, prizes or recognition. Being interested in carrying out the activities, self-evaluating their progress and procedures contributes significantly to deeper, more lasting and meaningful learning. Likewise, as pointed out by (Deci & Ryan, cited in Cruz et al., 2009) which points out that a feeling of competence will not boost both intrinsic motivation and autonomy, that is, individuals must not merely demonstrate self-confidence or perceived proficiency, but should themselves feel empowered in deciding upon their behavior to maintain, or even improve.

### **Extrinsic Motivation**

Extrinsic motivation comes from outside looking to incentive performance through positive reinforcement; it relies on external rewards and punishment avoidance Deci & Ryan, (1985). In other words, people are extrinsically motivated to undertake an activity precisely because they expect something in return and not by the inherent pleasure of carrying out a specific function. Additionally, in educational settings, use of rewards strengthens students' self-esteem. Indeed, schools' extrinsic motivation and performance objectives are translated into grades and peer competition, in which internal rivalry is evident in the search for a tangible incentive or public acknowledgment (Wigfield, 1997). While extrinsic motivation may be

effective in the short-term, researchers strongly advise a long-term balance with intrinsic motivation, arguing intrinsic motivation as more sustainable and beneficial to a person's emotional and cognitive lifelong learning.

When working with children aged 7 to 9 years, engaging in their interest is complex when an activity has no summative meaning and does not dictate a grade, thus increasing the disorder and decreasing the power figure of the teacher. Therefore, it is useful to make one of ***operant conditioning*** that attracts their attention.

### **Operant Conditioning**

Behaviorism was born based on the book *Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It*, where Watson (1913), considered the father of classical behaviorism states that:

Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select—doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors (p. 82)

Therefore, the purpose of psychology, according to the author, was to prevent and control behavior by making it an objective and natural study, excluding the study or analysis of consciousness and introspection.

Nevertheless, it is a psychological approach that is not exempt from criticism, branding it as “heartless”, since it emphasizes behavior and ignores the inner world of human beings - emotions, feelings, memories, etc., seeking to make the person an item to be shaped to one's own liking. In response to this, Skinner (1974) says that “An individual is undoubtedly unique. No one else (unless he has an identical twin) has his genetic endowment, and, without exception, no one else has his personal history. Therefore, no one else will behave the same” (p.

168). Here the author implies not altering the person's being, but his/her reaction to stimuli in specific contexts. In education, student behavior can be modified based on the consequences of their actions, which can be rewards or punishments. These actions are also reinforced through stimuli, incentives that lead to both positive and negative reinforcement. The duration of conditioning is presented as a psychological treatment for the modification of performance and encouragement of participation. Classical conditioning guides education, thus educators encourage students to obtain information through memorization to be receivers of data. “Another way of learning is for the teacher to ensure that students acquire knowledge by relating stimuli to responses, which are permanently reinforced so that they are lasting” (Pacheco et al., 2020, p. 121). Thereby rendering teachers' central axes and absolute beings, where external input has no place, as no one else but the educator is capable of teaching.

Skinner (1974) differentiates reward and punishment as key concepts; reward is represented as a reinforcement (both negative and positive) aimed at increasing the repetition of a behavior or conduct. Trilla (2001) contributes by saying that “when a consequence acts in a way that increases the probability of occurrence of a response, it is said that it works as a reinforcer and that the act of manifesting that consequence is a reinforcement” (p. 235). Consequently, positive punishments are intended to decrease non-desired conduct so that favorable results are produced (such as receiving a reprimand for talking in class), whereas negative punishments occur when a consequence eliminates or takes away something favorable for the person so as to decrease the probability that bad performance will occur again. (The student hurts another classmate, for which the parents take away the student's cell phone. As a result, the student does not hurt another classmate again).

Aside from the external drawbacks, what about the English language study itself? For this, the use of ***adapted material*** bringing together their interests and abilities gets them excited about studying a new subject.

**Adapted Material**

“People learn best when they are interested in what they are learning. Since that intrinsic motivation is one of the bases of learning, the child's interest in his or her activities is emphasized; therefore, materials have been designed so that they can respond to those interests.” (Montessori, cited in Sanchidrián, 2023, p.1). The author means the role of educational material is key to learning in any field of study, it is an assistance in the process of developing ideas and socio-critical thinking, it serves to record and preserve information and to transmit ideas and messages. Customized material therefore refers to the use of resources, tools and resources designed or altered based on the needs of a specific target population, differing learning styles and special requirements.

De Bra et al., (1999) ensures that during the search for educational resources, factors such as the learner's prior knowledge, skills and experiences should be considered. The material considers the objectives, preferences and characteristic properties of the learner, to achieve a better adaptation of the entity with its socio-cultural environment. In addition, this concept overall seeks the use of sources, creative and manipulative elements, visual and graphic aids to educate outside of the context in which the child is in school. Álvarez (2004) asserts concerning student participation and educational curricula, that integration is necessary to end the lack of involvement and understanding, thus moving from a passive role in the classroom to an active one, allowing students to actively raise their voice to make decisions that affect them and change the outlook for the future that education offers them. On the other hand, at primary ages, it is recommended to provide material that fosters curiosity and adapts to cognitive, emotional and social needs, which cooperate with the child's psychic and motor personality. Otherwise, at younger ages, namely in the learning of a second language, it is expected that the teaching methods are flexible, because if they are too rigid, they generate negative consequences that affect overall development and a loss of motivation.

The adapted material provides the student with exposure to the language of the real world, as it offers cultural knowledge and distinct perspectives that promote intercultural competencies. Teachers need to consider several aspects while modifying resources for language learners to provide a useful and pertinent exercise. Furthermore, Teachers must first consider the chosen material in light of the lesson's target skill, the size and atmosphere of the class, the students' ages, and their language proficiency. Conversely, textbooks and their contents are one of the main problems when teaching a second language, as they idealize learning by using repetition of expressions that are not useful for their long-term communicative needs (Duarte & Escobar, 2008).

After that, educators need to carefully examine the content to see what accommodations may be made. These adjustments should consider the sub skills that are being addressed, including vocabulary, grammatical constructions, structure and design, and colloquial language. Teachers can then determine whether they need to revise, expand upon, or remove portions of the content after taking these aspects into account.

Students find the guidance of a teacher as a figure of wisdom and constant support, a figure that, eventually, leaves them to their free development to build independence and resilience in them. ***Language modeling activities*** demonstrate how the teacher, through activities, breaks down information to help build their class's field of study.

### **Language Modelling Activities**

Vygotsky (1978) argues that language is not just a means of communication but also, a tool for thinking and learning: "The specifically human capacity for language enables children to provide for auxiliary tools in the solution of difficult tasks, to overcome impulsive action, to plan a solution to a problem prior to its execution, and to master them behavior." (p. 12).

Language modeling activities aim to enhance language development by encouraging children's verbal expression and fostering their conversations by providing creative and context-specific lessons. Research reveals that students who experience comfortable relationships, engaging activities, and effective feedback are more likely to achieve results in vocabulary acquisition when studying a second language, as well as letter recognition and reading comprehension (Krashen, 1982).

Likewise, Supporting materials used in the classroom include the presentation of linguistic aspects through isolated sentences, the use of visuals (drawings, real objects, newspapers, photographs) or the implementation of recorded material (videos, music, news); student participation, through repetition, answering open and closed questions or translating, in order to check pronunciation, understanding of meaning and the production of syntactic construction.

### **Methodological Approach**

The use of a methodological approach is of paramount importance, based on the design of a structured framework that guides the research process and provides clear direction with valid results from sources that guarantee validity and reliability (Creswell & Clark, 2017). In the following research, several interventions were developed for the “Case Study” which was based on the improvement of writing in a group of 30 students, but through *Convenience sampling* in which only 13 participants between 7 and 8 years old were taken into consideration due to consensual parental permissions during the internship period of the degree which permit to have complete protection over the participants' data . These students are part of the same group of second grade at the Bilingual School Domingo Savio which allows them to have a continuous exposure to a foreign language (English) through their classes , which permitted the implementation of 3 interventions (once per week) through physical material, audios, presentations, and rewards focused on “ Save water and recycling” which increase the participation of the learners. This was how we followed up on the moment of producing something short (sentences) in English with structures such as the present simple and continuous. Through observation, it was determined that the students listen and speak fluently but do not achieve writing fluency according to their language level (A1+). In addition, they were evaluated and monitored in a formative and summative way, which allowed us to have a broader perspective of what the patterns of error and distraction in short activities could be. On the other hand, different data collection tools were developed (pre-test and post-test, rubric, interview, field diaries) to analyze the deficiencies in writing in a foreign language at an early age of development through meaningful learning. Thus, in each intervention, written products were collected from the participants to demonstrate their progress in the research. For this purpose, the mixed method was used.

## **Mixed Method**

According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), one of the main drivers of the movement suggests a mixed method is when the researcher in question gathers qualitative and quantitative data, integrates them and based on the results makes interpretations that combined, gives strengths to provide a better understanding of the problem and how to address it. For this case study will be made a function of the mixed method by Tashakkori & Teddlie, which will complement the strengths and compensate for the limitations that may come out within the interventions. Furthermore, data is collected from several sources or contexts. For instance, academic performance is studied through summative evaluations (quantitative), and formative evaluations, interviews and questionnaires to children and teachers (qualitative), thus analyzing the educational phenomenon from the perspective of learning theory and sociocultural theory.

### **1. Integration of approaches**

Considering the study target are individuals from ages 7 to 8 years old, students have a limited attention span and may feel overwhelmed with structured and rigid methods of information gathering. Thus, the mixed method is flexible, allowing it to adapt to the pace, interests and necessities of the children, since by combining both approaches, each child's specific strengths and weaknesses can be better detected, which facilitates the creation of personalized interventions. For example, a quantitative test may indicate a language delay, but qualitative observations instead reveal that this delay is related to environmental factors, such as lack of stimulation at home (Greene et al, 1989). Additionally, qualitative methods allow for an understanding of the child's environment (family, school, relationships), which is crucial to correctly interpret quantitative results.

### **2. Triangulation**

As mentioned earlier, methodological triangulation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010) uses multiple data sources or methods to validate and corroborate findings to approach the research

problem from different perspectives. In this case study, for the validation and reliability of the results at early ages of the study population, the use of surveys (quantitative) and interviews (qualitative) helps to study the satisfaction of the students.

### **Pedagogical Design**

For solving the pedagogical challenge proposed in the present research, 3 sessions in total were designed, divided into 3 sections to give way to an intervention of 50 minutes per class. Indeed, each session begins with a warmup; these warmup activities allow mentally prepared children to focus their attention on the class that is about to begin (Medina, 2014). Moreover, emotional states such as stress and anxiety are reduced through playful and relaxed activities, allowing children to be more receptive to the introduction of a new topic. In the second instance, the topic is explained; recycling and environmental awareness are the central theme of development, the sessions touch on topics such as recycling and waste classification by type and color of basket, as well as sending a message of environmental awareness to the youngest minds to be good citizens in the future. All this goes hand in hand with improving students' writing skills in a second language, an aspect critical for academic success, which will enable them to organize and communicate their ideas in a more coherent and clear manner. In addition, warm-up activities were strategically designed to foster emotional readiness and mental focus, helping to reduce anxiety and increase engagement at the beginning of each session. These initial moments served to measure and observed improvements in students' attention spans and readiness to participate. Furthermore, environmental topics such as recycling and water care were not only selected for their social relevance, but also for their strong potential to elicit vocabulary, sentence structures, and meaningful content related to daily life (Dewey, cited in Lind, 2023). This thematic context provided authentic and engaging

scenarios that directly supported the development of written production, allowing students to express concrete ideas using familiar language.

Lastly, the use of diverse pedagogical resources — including simplified texts, visual aids, digital presentations, and interactive games — was central to enhancing the learning experience. These tools facilitated differentiated instruction and supported various learning styles, while the integration of virtual activities allowed students to connect with the content through dynamic, real-world contexts, thus improving their motivation and linguistic performance.

The following are the lesson plans for the 3 sessions in total, the estimated time for each one, the materials and general organization of the topics and activities to be conducted.

**Table 1.**

*Lesson plan created to solve the pedagogical challenge.*

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**Lesson Planning n.1**

**Time estimated:** 50 minutes

**Objectives:**

1. To practice writing and pronunciation of vocabulary focused on recycling and water care.
2. To learn to know each color and in which container to dispose of garbage, thus avoiding damage to the environment and pollution.

**Materials:**

- ***Song about recycling***
- ***Worksheet 1:*** Individual worksheet (see Figure 1) with the color of one of the 3 types of containers, and the objects that go in each of them.
- ***Worksheet 2:*** Individual worksheet with the crossword puzzle and the materials that go inside the boxes. (see Figure 2)
- ***Medals:*** Cardboard recognition medals (see Annex C, Figure 1)

**Introduction: Warm up: Recycling Song**

The class will start with a physical activation for the children to follow a repetition and memory sequence through a song to activate their attention for the theme of the class.

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**Topic Explanation: Recycling classifications**

The teacher will start the class with two questions “what is recycling? and how can we take care of water?”. Students will actively participate to communicate their ideas and thoughts freely. After that, by means of tangible objects (bottles, cans, cardboard, etc.) the teacher will explain the vocabulary of the session through the distribution of garbage and its corresponding recycling in cans.

***First Activity: Trash Cans:***

In the first part, to practice what has been covered in class, each student will be given a sheet of paper (see Figure 1) with the image of a garbage container on the left side (it can be Green, Blue, or Gray) and a black-and-white silhouette of waste of various types on the right side. Students must color the garbage in the correct container to begin recognizing how it is recycled and in what container it goes.

***Second Activity: Crossword:*** In the second part, on the reverse side of the sheet, the student must solve the recycling crossword puzzle (see Figure 2) that contains 8 of the 12 words to be learned and must place the words in the corresponding spaces using the images.

***Final Activity: Prize Medals:*** At the end of the activity and as a way to congratulate the new recyclers of the course, all students will receive a medal with a badge of awareness of caring for the planet. (see Annex C, Figure 1)

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**Learning Assessment 1**

Assessment for all sessions will be two-fold, formative and summative. The session began by asking the class whether they were familiar with the topic, what they had heard about recycling and their understanding of the vocabulary presented, to ensure that the new information was related to their previous knowledge in the cognitive structure of each student. Moving forward in the class, once the topic and vocabulary had been explained and reviewed in favor of practicing pronunciation and tone, the formative evaluation was done through

worksheet 1 (see table 1). Formative because the teacher could assess the students' performance through the observation method, witnessing the students' asking questions about the topic, redefining learning as a process and not only as a result, remembering the distinction between green, blue and gray container waste and working as a team sharing their doubts and questions and building their knowledge together.

Furthermore, a summative aspect of the evaluation was also chosen. To obtain more precise evidence about the students' final comprehension, as suggested by Nitko & Brookhart (2011). Here, as in worksheet 2 (see Table 1), participants were requested to carry out the activity individually to measure results in writing and to check vocabulary, which is why the materials on this occasion did not have the name, so that they could recall the morphology of the word, a useful task to test and assess all the students' general performance instead of its specific components.

To conclude regarding behavioral aspects of the session, as recognition for their effort and reward for paying attention and accomplishing the activities, a medal made of recycled cardboard was given to each student (in allusion to environmental care), with whom children were given a peaceful period to color it to their liking and rest, thus achieving that their behavior was modified by the systematic use of positive reinforcement (Lovaas, 1987).

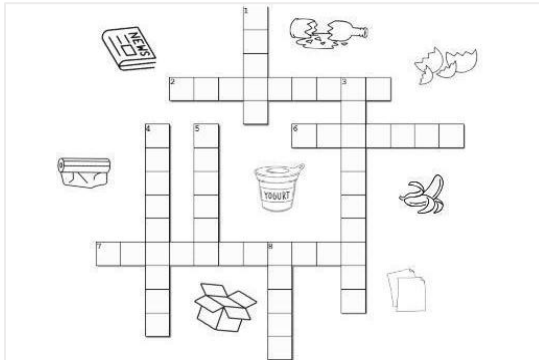
### Figure 1.

*Worksheet 1, used to carry out the formative evaluation.*



**Figure 2.**

*Worksheet 2, used for summative evaluation.*



Two weeks later, the second intervention started with the second-grade students. On this occasion, emphasis was placed on improving writing and comprehension of complete sentences using the verb tenses seen in previous classes, i.e., the present simple and present continuous, thereby advancing in their textual production and increasing the level of difficulty.

**Table 2.**

*Lesson plan created to solve the pedagogical challenge*

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### Lesson Planning n.2

**Time estimated:** 50 minutes

**Objectives:**

1. To review the structures of the present simple and continuous tense together with some examples related to recycling.
2. To practice written production through the description of a picture

**Materials:**

- **Online presentation:** Slide presentation with the activities to be developed and with examples of sentence structures using present simple and continuous. (See Annex B, Figure 1)
  - **Worksheet:** Individual worksheet with the guiding image and marked spaces to write the corresponding sentences. (See Figure 4)
-

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**RESEARCH: First part: Present Simple**

First, we will review the use of pronouns, as well as the verb "to be" when speaking in the third person related to our lesson about ***recycling and environment***. We will then go on to present the use of the present simple tense and its grammatical structure.

***First Activity: Environment Challenge:*** In a game against time, students will be shown a sentence with two possible answers, (see Figure 3) where together, the class will choose the correct option depending on the "Subject" they have.

**RESEARCH: Second Part: Present Continuous**

Continuing with the class, we will go on to explain the Present Continuous and the use of -Ing with its grammatical structure with examples to be solved together.

***Second Activity: Guess Who:*** Through educational videos that have actions, students will have to complete the sentence using the correct verb in the present continuous form within 7 seconds, after which the sentence will be revealed. (See Annex B, Figure 2)

***Final Activity: Worksheet:*** Each student will receive a piece of paper (see Figure 4) on which he/she should write:

1. Each student will have an animated scene related to actions for the care of the environment
  2. Each student will be asked to write 6 sentences to describe the scene using present simple or continuous tense and the vocabulary studied during the lesson.
  3. When the student completes the activity, they will receive a sticker (see Annex C, Figure 2) for their work.
- 

**Learning assessment 2**

On this occasion, due to the reduced time of the interventions, the class did not start with a warmup but with a refresher on verb tenses to be taught and verbs to be studied in the class (Recycling verbs such as save water, reduce, plant and throw). Indeed, the focus was on analyzing the narrative and textual development that learners have when writing, reviewing the

use of pronouns, the verb “to be”, distinction among the use of “is” and “are” when speaking in singular and/or plural, and the use of images as a method of description.

As a formative evaluation, through the virtual game of completing prayer and educational videos, the educator managed to assess the cooperative work of students by actively participating in class guessing the correct use of the "s" concerning the pronoun and verb time. Gee (2003) states that useful video games are an effective way of learning because they entangle students in interactive and meaningful backgrounds, as well as children as future "digital natives" They learn best through these technological means which help them to solve complex problems and learn from them in real-time.

In the second instance, for the summative method, a worksheet was used (see Table 2), where employing the descriptive image, students of second grade had to write diverse sentences, utilizing the verbs learned and everything seen in the virtual presentation on sentence construction. Undoubtedly, this practice qualifies the educator to catch a breakthrough in the cognitive and social development of the student, where according to Cook (2001) through images uniqueness is encouraged in the use of language, where the individual encounters better authentic methods of expressing ideas. Moreover, it's likewise a great complement to teaching writing at an early age in socio-cognitive stages, as learning a second language should be delightful and noteworthy for them. Finally, after everyone has finished, a sticker will be given in recognition of each student's effort. (see Annex C, Figure 2)

**Figure 3.**

*Online Presentation, used for formative evaluation.*



*Note.* This is an excerpt of the lesson plan 2 online presentation, the complete activity can be found in Annex B, Figure 2.

**Figure 4.**

*Worksheet, used to perform summative evaluation.*

<p>Name: _____ Date: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Listen and write</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>1) _____</p> <p>2) _____</p> <p>3) _____</p> <p>4) _____</p> <p>5) _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Describe the images using present simple and continuous tense</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> </div> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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*Note.* Writing exercises using the present simple and continuous.

**Table 3.***Lesson plan created to solve the pedagogical challenge*

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**Lesson Planning n.3****Time estimated:** 40 minutes**Objectives:**

1. To write basic sentences in English (Subject+ Verb + Complement)
2. To practice the grammatical structures of the simple present and the present continuous

**Materials:**

- **Piece of paper:** Piece of paper to write sentences and a sentence of your own according to what participants reviewed. (See Figure 5)
- **Audios:** Audios focused on the vocabularies of previous sessions along with grammatical structures (present simple and present continuous)
- **Cardboard fish:** Cardboard figure decorated with recyclable material (paper, cardboard, magazines, etc.) (See Annex C, Figure 3)

**Introduction: Warm up**

The class will start with a physical activation for the children to follow a repetition and memory sequence through a song to activate their attention for the theme of the class.

**RESEARCH: First part: Practice**

First, the participants are asked about the vocabulary studied in the previous sessions and then do a short listening practice that allows them to recognize this vocabulary.

**First Activity: Environmental awareness:** Participants will listen to 6 sentences related to environmental care, which will allow them to recognize the grammatical structure and usage. (See Figure 5)

**RESEARCH: Second Part: Creation of sentences**

According to what they have studied, the participants should create a sentence about what they remember about the topic.

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**Final Activity; Fish Decoration:** Each participant in the group will receive a cardboard fish (See Annex C, Figure 3) with recyclable material (paper, newspaper, cardboard,) They will decorate the figure as they wish with the given materials.

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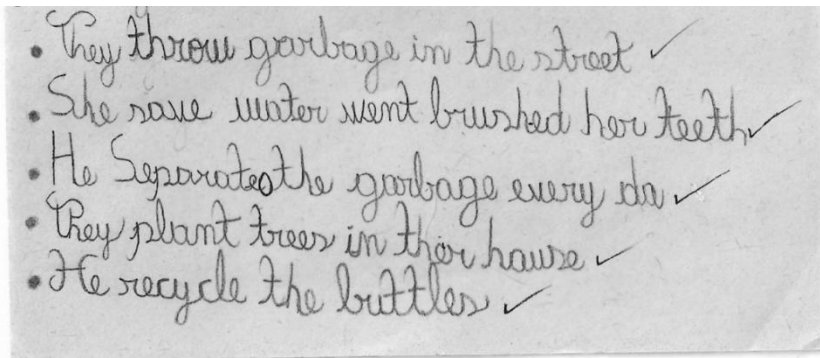
### Learning assessment 3

In this last intervention, the time was reduced due to extracurricular activities that the participants had in the school. As a final writing practice (see Table 3), it was considered that the students are good listeners, and a short listening activity was applied with instructions that would help them to write in a natural way. As a formative evaluation each participant created a sentence according to what he/she recognizes as a moment of creativity in which he/she writes what he/she remembers or what he/she knows.

At the end each participant had a space for decoration in which they could freely decorate a cardboard figure which allowed them to have as an incentive to produce something written in a correct and complete way.

### Figure 5.

*Worksheet, used to perform summative evaluation.*



*Note.* Elaboration of the listening activity by a second-grade student.

## **Research Tools**

### **Pre-test and Post-test**

In a case study, pre-testing and post-testing is a research design that aims to measure the efficacy of a specific intervention or program. The purpose of a pre-test is to facilitate an overall evaluation before applying an intervention to determine the initial level of participants regarding the study variables, Campbell & Stanley (1966) point out that “The pre-test is essential to determine the initial status of the subjects and to ensure that the groups are equivalent before the intervention” (p. 8). The post-test is carried out immediately after the application to measure the changes produced during the estimated time.

By comparing the results of both tests, the educator can determine if the strategies undertaken gave meaningful progress after the observation time. Based on this, at the beginning of the sessions, the official presentation was made to the second-grade class, and the dynamics of the sessions and the expectations regarding the activities to be carried out were explained to them. After that, a pre-test was given (See Figure 6) to evaluate in a non-summative way, students' level of English in the written part to start working on the contents of the course. It consisted of writing sentences (minimum two) referring to “environmental care” and what they know about it, using the vocabulary, grammar and structures they had previously used to check cohesion, coherence and spelling.

#### ***1. Measuring Progress Over Time***

Observing student behavior patterns, learning styles, or social interactions is often key over time. During the three-month trial period, it was possible to monitor the intellect and shortcomings of the group of 13 students and to identify certain teaching methods that resonate with how external factors such as family problems or peer pressure influence their academic performance. These perceptions enabled us to detect points to work on, such as their divided attention and distractedness.

## 2. *Providing Quantifiable Data*

Pre- and post-tests provide objective, quantifiable data that can be analyzed statistically. For example, researchers can use statistical tests to establish whether measured progress is significant. The pretest would assess students' prior knowledge, while the posttest would track their understanding after the interventions and activities were implemented.

### Figure 6.

#### *Pre-Test and Post-Test Format*

A kids guide to

## SAVING THE PLANET

Below you will find two images about "Recycle" and "Save water".

Instructions: Write your ideas in each image about how you can save the planet.

1

2

### Interviews:

Interviewing teachers in a qualitative case study is a powerful tool for obtaining in-depth, contextualized, and meaningful data. They are the ones who can provide information on complex issues that are not always visible with quantitative studies, such as pedagogical challenges, in the classroom or in their relationships with students.

#### 1. *Deep Contextual Understanding*

Educators spend a great deal of time with learners in a variety of settings, including classrooms, after-school activities, and informal interactions. This proximity permits them to

monitor students in a variety of settings, which provides rich and nuanced insights into their academic performance, social dynamics, and emotional well-being.

### ***Guiding The Research Focus***

Findings from teacher studies are context-based, validate results through triangulation, and provide a better understanding of the institutional and environmental factors that influence students' experiences. By incorporating these perspectives, researchers can achieve a more complete, balanced, and actionable insight into the issues affecting learners, ultimately contributing to more effective and empathetic educational practices.

### **Field Notes**

Field diaries allow the registry of objective notes in which the time, environment, and/or dates established by the researcher create a constant collection of data, then the investigator selects which aspects are essential for the educational problem, as well as gives qualitative and quantitative interpretations where the researcher gives his point of view from an objective perspective to focus directly on the goals and objectives of the research, proposing various what happened in each intervention routes of support and or explanations of what happened in each intervention according to *Descubre qué es un diario de campo y cómo usarlo en tu proyecto*, (2024). For the current study, 3 field diaries were implemented in which it is possible to descriptively observe and keep a record of behaviors, attitudes, patterns, and learning goals in each intervention. This allows these notes to make it possible to:

#### ***1. Analysis of a sequence:***

What may or may not affect the improvement of the second-grade participants' writing ability helps the research to consider factors that are not visible to the naked eye when doing an English class. Such a model contains Classroom (grade) activity, date, topic, observation notes, and researcher's comments (see Table 4).

**Table 4.***Field notes format*

<b>Research Question</b>	
How to improve textual production with second graders in ESL implementing language modelling activities with adapted material in divided attention context.	
<b>Classroom:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Activity:</b>	<b>Topic:</b>
Observations (Field Notes)	Researcher's Comments

**2. Development setting:**

The observation notes focus on the environment in which each intervention took place (classroom, area, distracters, material, etc.) which support to have in detail what were the patterns of development of the class in which the participants had different results either behavioral and / or development of each proposed activity. Meanwhile the researcher's notes focus on how the writing activities have a positive or negative impact on the process of each participant.

**3. Comparison of formative and qualitative processes:**

According to the products that each participant created (short writing activities) this to have insights focused on research (error patterns, distractions, motivation etc.) makes it possible to make reflections on a process of improving a productive skill such as writing and identify improving sentences in a foreign language at an early age of development.

**Learner Product**

During each intervention an activity was designed on paper focused on the creation or development of sentences in a foreign language (Suj+Verb+Compl) with the purpose of analyzing and verifying the improvements that each participant had in the different interventions and to have a product of each one as a formative analysis in their learning process.

- **Crossword:** Activity that allows the study and practice of the vocabulary of the week (Garbage separation). (See Figure 2)
- **Describe the image:** Activity that through auditory resources allows participants to write and recognize grammatical structures (present simple) along with the image description. (See Figure 4)
- **Listen and write:** Activity focused on listening skills to recognize the type of structure and vocabulary as a review method in a piece of paper. (See Figure 5).

In addition, each activity had the opportunity to maintain a creative part where the participants created a sentence, drawing, and coloring according to the theme (recycling and water care). This permitted the formative analysis in which learners, not having a grade or “summative”, had the possibility to write without any restrictions, trying to have a creative and fun process at the time and not under the pressure of a numerical grade.

#### 1. *Qualitative comparisons:*

Recognizing the type of patterns that each participant repeats as a writing error, also gives way to the recognition of how they are able to remember and apply their writing knowledge at the time of each activity (write a sentence or paragraph, describe an image, practice the vocabulary of the week) so each participant would have the possibility to explore their significant learning and thus allow a continuous process in which each one applies a significant learning to solve a specific writing task.

#### 2. *Study of results:*

As a last instance this type of collected products make it possible to compare quantitative results (numerical results) with qualitative results (formative results) since it can be determined that the participants did not achieve a “good” number result but in formative perceptions each of managed to have a continuous process in which by having a freedom of

written expression they are more creative and correct in writing something short without any limitations. This determines that the participants will not always achieve excellent numerical results but their natural process of developing this skill demonstrates that there can be many by not having a quantitative weight for each task including that the motivation of a prize or reward can change their mental process of completing a task.

## Analysis of results

### Quantitative Analysis

#### *Data Analysis: T-Test*

The t-test is a statistical tool designed to allow comparison of the means of two groups or conditions. Against the background of the pre- and post-tests given to the second graders, the t-test seeks to evaluate whether there were significant differences in their writing and grammar skills measured before and after the interventions given to validate or refute the hypothesis. Below, the tables containing the analysis of the overall results on the first and last test, as well as the evaluative criteria to come up with the final score are presented:

#### **Table 5.**

##### *Pre-test results*

PRE-TEST					
	Expression of ideas	Coherence organization	Vocabulary	Grammatical	Total
Participant A	3	3	4	2	30
Participant B	3	4	4	3	35
Participant C	2	2	3	3	25
Participant D	2	2	2	2	20
Participant E	2	1	2	2	17
Participant F	3	5	4	5	42
Participant G	5	4	3	5	42
Participant H	5	3	5	5	45
Participant I	4	5	4	4	45
Participant J	3	3	2	4	30
Participant K	5	5	4	5	47
Participant L	3	2	3	2	25
Participant M	1	1	3	1	15

**Table 6.***Post-test results.*

POST-TEST						
	Expression of ideas	Coherence organization	Vocabulary	Grammatical	Total	
Participant A	5	5	5	4	47	
Participant B	4	4	5	4	42	
Participant C	2	2	3	2	22	
Participant D	2	2	2	2	20	
Participant E	3	2	3	3	27	
Participant F	5	3	4	4	40	
Participant G	4	4	3	4	37	
Participant H	4	5	5	4	45	
Participant I	4	5	5	4	45	
Participant J	4	5	3	3	37	
Participant K	5	4	4	5	45	
Participant L	4	5	3	4	40	
Participant M	3	2	3	1	22	

The tables above show the results of the pre-test (see table 5), and post-test (see Table 6) applied 2 months after the interventions. The evaluation criteria (see table 7) considered consisted of being appropriate to their level of development; that they were clear, simple and focused on fundamental aspects of written comprehension according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Hence, 4 of the criteria considered are highlighted:

1. **Expression of ideas:** Does the student show creativity in his/her ideas?
2. **Coherence and organization:** Do the sentences convey comprehensible ideas?
3. **Vocabulary:** Does the student use an appropriate vocabulary for his/her age and in relation to recycling?
4. **Grammar:** Does the student write sentences with subject and predicate and the verb tenses studied?

**Table 7.***Evaluation criteria, pre-test and post-test*

Criteria	Description	Scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Expression of ideas</b>	The students clearly express their ideas and thoughts in their writing (number of words).					
<b>Coherence and Organization</b>	The student's writing is structured in a logical and orderly way.					
<b>Vocabulary and Use of Words</b>	Proper spelling and use of vocabulary related to the environment					
<b>Grammar</b>	The student can create basic sentences: Subject +Verb + Complement					
<b>Total</b>						

**Table 8.**

T-test: Results.

P(T<=t) one-tail	0,0345977143368439
t Critical one-tail	1,78228755564932
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,0691954286736877
t Critical two-tail	2,17881282966723

*Note.* This is an excerpt of the T-test results, the complete table is in Annex A, Figure 1.

According to the t-test based on the results, the P-value was 0.03 (see Table 8). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and statistically significant changes were observed. Consequently, it can be stated that the interventions had a positive effect on the final scores (compared to the first ones), and a clear improvement in written production. As they learned more words, their texts had fewer grammatical mistakes in simple sentences. As an illustration, consider the third-person usage of “s” and the “-ing” suffix to denote a present continuous. In some cases, extending their paragraphs from two lines to more than four or five. This reinforces the efficacy of the strategies used and suggests that they are useful for assisting second language learning in second graders.

**Table 9.**

*T-test: Expression of ideas result.*

P(T<=t) one-tail	0,0274981332231654
t Critical one-tail	1,78228755564932
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,0549962664463309
t Critical two-tail	2,17881282966723

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*Note.* This is an excerpt of the expression of ideas results, the complete table is in Annex A, Figure 2.

Going forward, the "expression of ideas" evaluative criterion provides a positive balance, as shown by the P value of 0.002 (see Table 9), which rejects the null hypothesis and confirms a noteworthy improvement in the linguistic abilities of the Savio Domingo students. Through creative play, the use of adapted materials, and experiential learning, much of the prior vocabulary allowed them to extend their knowledge about recycling and waste, which helped them to create longer paragraphs compared to when they started and knew little about it. Imagination played a powerful role in the class and their cognitive development.

**Table 10.***T-test: Coherence and Organization Results.*

P(T<=t) one-tail	0,0677902539225663
t Critical one-tail	1,78228755564932
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,135580507845133
t Critical two-tail	2,17881282966723

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*Note.* This is an excerpt of the coherence and organization results; the complete table is in Annex A, Figure 3.

Nevertheless, the p-value (see Table 10) for coherence and organization is 0.06, showing the null hypothesis was accepted and no significant changes occurred. Thus, this leads us to confirm that this component did not improve. Learners are between 7 and 8 years old, reflecting that they have not yet fully mastered their mother tongue and are only beginning to think logically and systematically, as well as to differentiate grammatical forms. However, the p-value is around the significance level, which may indicate a marginal benefit and a trend in the right direction. These findings are supported by the final exam results, which show an improvement in grades.

**Table 11.***T-test: Vocabulary results.*

P(T<=t) one-tail	0,00898874021124328
t Critical one-tail	1,78228755564932
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,0179774804224866
t Critical two-tail	2,17881282966723

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*Note.* This is an excerpt of the vocabulary results; the complete table is in Annex A, Figure 4.

Evidence also reveals progress over the use of words and variations, not limiting themselves only to picture descriptions but rather expanding their usual dialogues into two sentences and completing paragraphs about how to help the environment and build environmental awareness, a statistic that is reflected in the result that gives a total of 0.008 (see

Table 11). The use of vocabulary was the most affected item, and its increase was mostly favorable in the final textual productions.

**Table 12.**

*T-test: Grammar results.*

P(T<=t) one-tail	0,403896091605844
t Critical one-tail	1,78228755564932
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,807792183211688
t Critical two-tail	2,17881282966723

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*Note.* This is an excerpt of the grammar results; the complete table is in Annex A, Figure 5).

Despite the gains, grammar was the most affected, with a score of 0.4 (see Table 12), higher than the common significance level of 0.05. This suggests that the null hypothesis is accepted, and it is inferred that there were no statistically significant changes in the progression of grammar proficiency, with verb tenses being the most challenging. The most prevalent grammar errors that the children exhibited while learning English were associated with the conjugation of verbs (present simple and continuous), the use of articles (using “the” when discussing a noun and confusing it with the pronoun “he”), subject-verb.

To conclude, the participants experienced enhancements in their English as a foreign language (EFL) writing skill (See Annex A, Figure 4). If we can say that the improvements observed are not due to chance but are the result of the interventions carried out. Indeed, items such as vocabulary, expression of ideas and coherence showed significant value, pointing to an increase in using a wider and more precise range of words, organizing and communicating ideas in a clear and reasoned manner. It is important, however, to take grammar failures into account and study them to change the methodologies and workshops to make grammar more enjoyable and interactive to maximize the impact.

## **Qualitative Analysis**

Now we will move on to a qualitative analysis which permits us to determine in a formative way the process of improvement of the participants through the exploration of the problem. After each intervention, the field diaries were used as a support tool to create a comparison between the students' products of the three interventions focused on written production in English. In addition, the field diaries show a continuous progress in behavior, motivation and writing processes (See Annex B, Table 1, 2, 3), which not only allows us to recognize these comparisons but also reveals how the participants constantly practice what is reviewed in the sessions (vocabulary of the environment, conjugations, spelling, sentence order, etc.) so that in each intervention they are able to recognize more easily the proposed topics through formative activities so that the process is more enjoyable and playful. In this process of comparison, it is possible to find out that in the absence of a numerical grade, the participants reflected a wide range of writing in a foreign language. This also makes it possible that this tool (field diaries) permits to have subjective perspectives on each intervention and how this sequentially have a different approach according to the behaviors or developments of the participants.

These field diaries and formative activities made it possible to discover the following

### **Illustration as a distraction**

The first activity was focused on the study and practice of vocabulary related to recycling. This vocabulary was reviewed with physical materials to attract the attention of the participants and maintain the active participation of the whole group. Then they painted the elements corresponding to can ( green, blue and black) (See Annex B Figure 3), Figure on the left side with several waste products with different classifications, finally moving on to the resolution of the crossword (See Annex B, Figure 3) which focuses on the vocabulary already presented above , at the end each student received a medal (See Annex C, Figure 1) related to the topic as an

incentive to be more productive in the class. . This is how it is possible to analyze comparing the field diary ( See Annex B, Table 1) together with the collected product; that the participants are able to solve specific tasks such as a crossword which in a didactic way allows them to recognize and understand the vocabulary of the week (Recycling) in addition they are given the space to paint various images and medals this in order to identify how they left aside the writing activities .

### **Mixed up writing**

When the second activity focused on listening was implemented, participants actively participated in the explanation of grammatical structure (present simple and continuous) and sentence completion. At the beginning of the second activity, participants intuitively observed that the illustrations presented were already painted. This was done with the purpose of focusing on the creation of descriptive sentences and by means of specific audios (See Annex B, Figure 4). The listening exercise according to the field notes (See Annex B, Table 2) and the student product were the most difficult for the participants since they wrote according to what they heard, but most of them managed to complete the exercise in an autonomous and constant manner since they had studied the vocabulary and structure moments before. For the second part which focuses on the description of the images, it is determined that the participants can create basic sentences (Suj+Verb+Complement) with some failures either in the conjugation or in the confusion between the object pronoun and the subject, (See Annex B, Figure 4) but from a formative perspective it is evident that the participants were more focused on doing a good and complete job since as an incentive to finish the task they were given a sticker (See Annex C, Figure 2) and thus, maintain a constant academic workflow through a reward which allowed the task to be completed in its entirety.

**Creativity as motivation**

In this last intervention the previous grammatical mistakes (conjugation and object pronouns) were considered, and it was decided to repeat the listening exercise. In this intervention the incentive was a cardboard fish (See Annex C, Figure 3) which they were free to decorate with recyclable materials to continue with the same motivation to complete the activity completely and correctly. According to the field diary (See Annex B, Table 3) of this intervention, there were several failures of discipline since the participants were close to finishing their academic work, which kept them distracted with extracurricular activities where time was not in their favor. When reviewing the learners' products, it is possible to determine how they managed to improve their written production in a remarkable way, (See Annex B, Figure 5) where factors such as conjugation and confusion of grammatical structure are not seen so repeatedly. This shows that having constant exposure and a prize (cardboard fish for decoration) (See Annex C, Figure 3) motivates students to use their previous knowledge to solve something that had been done before, which allows them to apply meaningful learning in the classroom.

**Interview**

Now the various perspectives will be shown by means of an interview of two teachers in charge of the second-grade groups; teacher A is a professor with experience in different grades and institutions while teacher B has worked for a long time in the same institution and is also in charge of the group of participants with which the presented research was carried out. These opinions make possible analysis and objective comparisons of the whole research process and its possible development approaches.

**Does the use of printed material (guides, books, worksheets) improve the attention span of elementary school students?**

In response to this question, Teachers A and B agree that physical supplies enhance students' learning at specific ages and stages, *"The material for these ages should be descriptive and designed to create security in the children"*, (Teacher A, Personal Communication, November 15th, 2024) all types of material should be visual for their focus of attention to achieve not only to see in detail each point but to be able to solve each specific activity. Besides, the use of paper and pencil helps reinforce student learning and facilitates comprehension, memorization, and practice of vocabulary and grammar visually and tangibly *"it helps them to know how to form sentences and follow a writing pattern"*. (Teacher B, Personal Communication, November 15th, 2024)

**Does the adapted material improve the students' writing skills?**

According Professor A, before talking about a process of improvement and a type of material, it is necessary to establish the factor to be improved *"The adapted material allows us to contextualize the students but it is crucial to determine what kind of shortcomings we see in them at the time of writing as they may be just natural errors in their learning process"*.

As for the rewards, the teacher mentions that they are appropriate as long as Professor B agrees the idea, where resources such as news videos, music and magazines allow students to be exposed to real, authentic language, *"learn the second language through what they hear and read,"* become familiar with vocabulary, improve their fluency, and strengthen their ability to express themselves more naturally and accurately in the language.

**Do you think that operant conditioning, like the punishment and reward method, works with children?**

Teacher A believes that the method works because for children as young as second graders it is important to keep them aware that there are rules for certain behaviors and at the

same time there are certain consequences for any other behavior. *“All teachers in our training process apply some type of incentive for the group, this allows us to create limits with the students in order to receive some type of positive behavior with results that are more efficient.”*

As for the rewards, Teacher B argues they are appropriate as long as they do not become a major factor in learning but rather serve to reinforce positive behaviors and do not affect intrinsic motivation and their autonomy to want to do things. As well as if there is a correction of misbehavior and teaching them what is wrong *“there should be feedback of what is done, and that feedback will have a reward for them”*.

**What do you think are the causes that encourage distractions in activities?**

**Well, despite their age, what causes distractions when teaching a class?**

*“That the class is not enjoyable for them”* With this Professor B opines that distractions begin when interest and curiosity are lost *“if the activities are not attractive enough for them, that encourages dispersion”*. To avoid distractions, it is important to structure classes well, maintain an adequate pace and provide activities that capture their attention and are relevant to them.

Meanwhile, Professor A mentions that the main factor can be de massive interaction among a large group of students *“When you have a large group of students, the distraction factors are more constant, such as coexistence, emotional intelligence and/or behavioral problems”*, which gives way to various types of behavior in the classroom positive or negative.

### **Discussion Section**

The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative results from the mixed-method approach reveals that second-grade students experienced measurable improvement in their EFL writing skills. Although some limitations remained—particularly in grammar, verb conjugation, and subject-pronoun use, the interventions positively influenced students' ability to create coherent short sentences and use relevant vocabulary in context-driven writing tasks. Additionally, the T-test results, showing statistically significant improvements, quantitatively confirmed the progress. These findings directly supported the insights gained through field journals and teacher interviews, where students were noted to demonstrate greater creativity, engagement, and written fluency when provided with adapted materials and meaningful tasks. For example, field notes documented students shifting from fragmented writing to more complete sentence structures over the three interventions. Furthermore, interviews with teachers revealed that materials not only maintained students' interest but also supported vocabulary retention and idea organization — both of which are reflected in higher test scores. Moreover, quantitative tools such as the rubric provided structured indicators to measure aspects like grammar accuracy and coherence, while qualitative tools captured contextual behaviors, such as attention span, classroom engagement, and motivation (Abdullah et al., 2022).

This integration enriched the analysis: where a numerical score might suggest partial progress, classroom observations frequently uncovered subtler gains, such as increased willingness to write or improved peer collaboration. The observed behavioral improvements, especially the reduction in distractions through reinforcement strategies, also complemented academic outcomes. Positive reinforcement (stickers, medals, creative activities) helped students internalize routines, showing that a structured yet flexible environment can benefit both behavior and academic focus.

In sum, the quantitative evidence validated the interventions' effectiveness, while the qualitative data provided a deeper understanding of how and why those changes occurred. Together, they formed a coherent narrative of improvement in second-grade students' written production in English, rooted in both cognitive development and emotional engagement.

### **Conclusion**

Improving writing in a foreign language is a process that requires consistency, practice, and continuous exposure to the language. Through the development of skills such as grammar, vocabulary, coherence and textual cohesion, students can communicate their ideas with greater clarity and precision. In addition, constant feedback on the language is essential for acquiring a more natural and fluent style. In short, writing well in another language not only strengthens linguistic competence, but also expands the learner's academic, professional and cultural opportunities. As a result the improvement process is achieved by observing students' abstract or complex ideas to develop a position of what they want to communicate or express, this process is reflected in the school's methodology to recognize the structure of a text, its function, parts of speech and interpretation, this procedure helps them develop a connection between reading and writing to make decisions about what they need to interpret through the written words.

Subsequently, participants obtained positive changes in a summative and formative way through the application of various interventions focused on language modeling activities. These tasks were based on the stimulation of attention strategies, interaction with students, grammar study and intrinsic motivation, through the contextualization of "environmental care". In this way, it promoted meaningful learning in their process of improving written production.

In addition, it is possible to establish that the methodologies of “punishment and reward” (behaviorism) make it possible for students to be motivated and focused on a specific activity, considering that having an incentive for the work done in class gives way to their behavior and distraction patterns being regulated in certain periods of time. Therefore, it is crucial to understand that the participants considered for this research progressed positively in the different didactic assessments, which makes possible the deep analysis of their progress.

Furthermore, the creation of multilingual activities facilitated the creation of spaces of constant work and playful practices at the end of each class (decoration of medals and fish, recycling applications, workshops on environmental care, etc.). Through this, it is recognized that students are more attentive to the activities in which they can participate freely to give an opinion on something they know. This is how these tasks allowed collaborative learning among students and the development of communicative skills in a foreign language.

Moreover, this type of activity (language modeling) allows teachers to connect a grammatical topic to an everyday topic and adapt to the needs and characteristics of students and thus use the language in a real context that allows effective and progressive communication in a foreign language. These results are evidenced in how students progressively manage to create short sentences with a communicative purpose.

Despite the good performance of each participant, it can also be concluded that the students have confusions in the written production with their mother tongue and the foreign language. The reason is based on how having all their academic context in another language they may have confusions in the natural translation of expressions, words, verbs, etc., from the basis of what they know, which may bring some moments of frustration or boredom in not being able to accurately express their ideas. This creates several contradictions between what they use naturally every day (Spanish) and the new language they are learning (English). This is how several linguistic problems are created in productive and receptive skills, where the impact of

learning a foreign language is contextualized. This increases the distraction of the proposed task by not understanding how to solve the assessment. Therefore, research reveals that participants at this stage of development are naturally distracted by external factors (classroom, environment, work area) and internal factors (attention problems, mistrust, personality, etc.). This suggests that each student has a different level of concentration, and their academic and formative outcomes will have different developmental approaches.

On the other hand, it is important to recognize that attention problems and linguistic confusion require a combination of cognitive, pedagogical, and emotional strategies. Techniques such as task division, use of visual aids, structured repetition, and multisensory practice can significantly improve concentration and comprehension of a foreign language. In addition, fostering a clear, predictable and distraction-free learning environment helps reduce cognitive overload. By applying these strategies consistently, learners not only strengthen their language skills, but also develop greater autonomy and confidence in their learning processes.

Finally, it is possible to demonstrate that the research reveals how language modeling activities are fundamental to language development, as they provide learners with clear and contextualized examples of appropriate language use. Through exposure to grammatical structures, vocabulary, and communication patterns, learners can internalize language more naturally and effectively. These activities not only foster oral and written comprehension and production but also build confidence and communicative competence in real-life contexts. In addition, this demonstrates how the use of adapted materials is essential to ensure inclusive and effective education, as it allows us to respond to diverse needs, learning styles, and proficiency levels of students. By modifying and personalizing educational resources, understanding is enhanced, frustration is reduced, and active and meaningful participation in the learning process is promoted. This gives the opportunity for the teaching practice processes to become professional growth along with improvements in the foreign language teaching experience.

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