

**Let the Words Fly: A pedagogical proposal to work on EFL writing short stories with
women victims of the Colombian armed conflict**

Johana Gutiérrez Lol

Licenciatura en Español y Lenguas Extranjeras

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Asesor: Nelson Mellizo Guaqueta

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Abstract

The present research is an exploratory action research that aims at developing contextualised material to work on writing skills in EFL with adult women victims of the Colombian armed conflict. After exploring the social background and the English level of women students of cycle 3.1 of Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño, who are part of the program *Días y Noches de Paz y Amor por Siempre*, a pedagogical proposal emerged that intends to work on a learning problem found. This pedagogical proposal is called *Let the Words Fly*, it is based on the pedagogical approach Task-based, and seeks to encourage students to create short fictional stories with the help of the storytelling elements of characters, setting and plot. *Let the Words Fly* comprises material for both teachers and students. For teachers, there are thirteen lesson plans that describe the different stages for each session. For students, there are eleven workshops that aim to work on the process of writing short fictional stories and seven cardstocks where students place the final version of their short fictional stories.

Key words: Writing skill in EFL, Storytelling, Adult education, Victims of the Colombian armed conflict, Material development.

Chapter I: Characterisation

The present chapter presents the characterisation of the context in which this research is carried out. Moreover, the characterisation of the participants is analysed in order to describe them and their English level to define any learning problem. This chapter is divided into six main parts: 1) general contextualisation (local context, institutional context and English syllabus); 2) characterisation of the participants (a cognitive and sociocultural description and its analysis); 3) diagnostic English Test applied to the participants (description and analysis); 4) statement of the research problem; 5) rationale of the study; 6) objectives of the pedagogical proposal.

Four different instruments were used to obtain this information: field notes based on in-class observations, an interview for the head English teacher of the course, a survey for the students, and a diagnostic test of English.

General Contextualisation

Local context

Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño is a public girls-only high-school institution located in San José Sur neighbourhood, Bogotá, on Avenida Caracas # 23 – 24 sur. This neighbourhood is part of the locality Rafael Uribe Uribe number 18 in the south of the capital. This locality was historically created through the construction of big properties as country houses by the most influential people of the colonial times. In the XX century with the expansion of the capital and the armed conflict in Colombia, there was a great migration of the people who were internally displaced due to violence. This led to the creation of working-class neighbourhoods where people with limited resources currently live.

Referring again to the school, it has two branches. The main one is divided into the primary school zone and the high-school zone; both parts have their own classrooms, bathrooms, computer laboratory and a court to play basketball, soccer and volleyball. In the middle of this branch, there is a Catholic chapel. The other branch is close to the main one, and it is a three-storey building with bathrooms on the second and third floor and a computer laboratory on the first one. The participants of this research have class in the main branch in one of the buildings of the high school. This means that they do not need to constantly move about the two branches.

This school counts with three different shifts: morning, afternoon and night shift during the week; in the three shifts are offered pre-school, elementary school and high school. In addition, this school currently has a program on Saturdays for teenagers and adults to study elementary and high school.

Institutional context

The P.E.I. (Proyecto Educativo Institucional) (2019) of Liceo Femenino has the motto “*Liceísta, crítica, reflexiva y autónoma, transformadora de contextos para la convivencia*” (p.6) which translates into High schoolers, critical, reflexive and autonomous, transformers of contexts for living together.

In terms of the mission and the vision of the school, as stated in *Manual de Convivencia I.E.D Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño* (2018), the mission aims at fostering a comprehensive training that promotes values as respect, honesty, identity, solidarity and autonomy for the students to transform the contexts where they interact in order to have a dignified and happy project of life.

With regards to the vision, for the year 2025, the School Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño aspires to be globally recognised for its superior quality and the excellence of its graduates who will have the knowledge necessary for society and living together as an additional element of English and French as foreign languages, basic sciences, arts, information technology and communication in order to build a respectful society.

For Liceo Femenino, it is essential to strengthen the human and pedagogical sense in order to provide a quality education for the common happiness. Bearing this in mind, three main projects have been implemented: *Bitácora de sueños para vivir y aprender a convivir*; *Escuelas Liceístas...*, *un espacio para desarrollar talentos y atrapar los sueños*; and *Vive tu Liceo, una experiencia para aprender a convivir, soñar, crear y ser feliz*. The first, *Dream log to live and learn to live together*, is a pedagogical proposal that influences the living together and socio-affective development of students and their families. The second, *High Schoolers Schools ...*, *a space to develop talents and catch dreams*, is a strategy for the students to overcome their difficulties in the academic world. The third, *Live your high school, an experience to learn to live together, dream, create and be happy*, is a project to encourage longer school attendance among students.

Besides, according to the P.E.I. (2019) of the school, three educational models are implemented in order to include vulnerable population in the education offering. First, *Modelos flexibles-Aceleración del Aprendizaje* (Flex Models – accelerated learning) for beyond-school-age adolescents between 14 and 17 years old. Second, *Modelos flexibles: Sabatina Educación para Jóvenes y Adultos* (Flex Models: Education for youth and adults on Saturdays) for students between 14 and 17 years old, adult women and adult men. Third, *Modelos Flexibles: Mujeres Sobrevivientes del Conflicto Armado* (Flex Models: survivor women of the armed conflict) for

women who have suffered the armed conflict in Colombia and do not have access to the educational system (p.21). The latter flex model is relevant for this research due to the population studied (adult women victims of the Colombian armed conflict).

According to the Colombian National Ministry of Education - MEN (2018), these flexible models are conceived to guarantee the right of education to people who, for different circumstances, did not study the regular years of school in the stipulated ages. This model aims at educating youth and adults from vulnerable contexts or victims of the Colombian armed conflict.

As stated Galtung (1969) there is a distinction between *negative peace* which implies the absence of direct or personal violence by avoiding war and stopping violence and *positive peace* which implies a condition of nonviolence, ecological sustainability and social justice to remove the causes of violence. From this perspective, educational institutions have to provide an equitable distribution of resources to resolve conflicts peacefully (Harris, 2002). In this way, peace education could liberate people from structural violence by providing quality educational opportunities to those who, due to different social concern, have experienced different forms of violence. These forms of violence are an educational concern and a responsibility of the Colombian government. Therefore, educational institutions are the central axis for peace education in Colombia as part of the rights and the legal principles underlying State policies (Sánchez, 2010).

Furthermore, Colombia has still a gap in terms of adult and youth literacy. In *Lineamientos generales y orientaciones para la educación formal de personas jóvenes y adultas en Colombia* (General guidelines and orientations for the formal education of young people and adults in Colombia) by MEN (2017) it is mentioned a survey applied in 2016 in 23 cities of Colombia which shows that the rate of national illiteracy is 5,35% of the population. Another

survey mentioned by MEN (2017) highlights that for the year 2016 about 16.5% of people over 60 years old had not passed any educational level. This shows a high level of illiteracy in adult population. The same guidelines emphasise that this illiteracy is a challenge mostly for people from the countryside, ethnical groups, adults, people in disability and people who are victims of the Colombian armed conflict.

Thus, MEN defines education for adults as the literacy and basic education for youth and adults who, for any reason, did not enter the educative service or desert prematurely. This way, they are educated in basic competences of language and communication, mathematics, social studies, natural sciences and civic competences. Moreover, the syllabus and the methodology are implemented according to the students' psychology, sociocultural conditions and in flexible shift.

In this way, the school Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño promotes and implements different flexible educational models for youth, adults and elderly people. One of them, offered on Saturdays, *Días y Noches de Paz y de Amor Siempre* (Days and Nights of Peace and Love always), responds to a national need of educating victims of the Colombian armed conflict. After the signature of the peace agreement that led to the demobilization of the biggest guerrilla group, the Government and the MEN had to establish different laws and strategies to guarantee the right to education for victims of this conflict and for people who took part in the conflict.

First, the Law 1448 of 2011 or *Ley de víctimas y restitución de tierras* (Law of victims and restitution of lands) which constitutes an instrument to access the educational system with special guarantees and protection for victims of the armed conflict such as farmers, social leaders, among others. Second, the Decree 408 of 2011 that orders the State to guarantee the access and the continuity in the educational system for the population victims of the conflict through the extension of the academic costs in public institutions, the delivery of supplies and uniforms and

transportation. Besides, this decree orders the State to prioritise the attention of the illiteracy population victims of the conflict by this kind of flexible educational models.

One of the scenarios that the *Lineamientos generales y orientaciones para la educación formal de personas jóvenes y adultas en Colombia* (General regulations and orientations for the formal education of youth and adults in Colombia) (2017) specifies is the scenario of Education for the post-conflict and victims of the conflict. This is very important because it is an opportunity to rebuild Colombian society guaranteeing the right of education for people who interrupted their school for the risk of having armed actors in their territories, forced recruitment, land mines around, among others.

English syllabus of cycle 3

As mentioned before, the syllabus of the flexible models is designed according to the needs and the characteristics of the specific population. Concerning the model of the English syllabus of cycle 3 designed by the head English teacher for the Saturday's program *Días y noches de paz y amor por siempre* in 2018, the general objective of the course is "to promote autonomy on students to make them feel responsible for their own action and able to deal with choices" (p. 1). The specific objective of the English course is "to develop student's skills in learning how to learn, creating their own learning opportunities when the circumstances allow and taking learning actions by their own" (p. 1).

The course is designed for 20 weeks. The syllabus is structured taking into consideration reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. Its topics comprise greetings, commands, routines, personal pronouns, adjectives to describe people and things, the verb to be in present simple, affirmative and interrogative forms, Wh-questions, counting cardinal and ordinal numbers from 1

to 50. The content includes nouns, personal pronouns, possessives her and his, colours, clothes, body parts, animals, farm, occupations and places.

The methodology designed and described in this syllabus focuses on five approaches. First, communicative approach in which the students interact through speaking using the knowledge acquired; second, historical and cultural approach in which English language commands allow students to expand their cultural background; third, the humanistic approach in which the new knowledge helps students in their personal and spiritual growth; fourth, the collaborative approach, in which students learn how to work individually or in groups in order to build their knowledge; and fifth, independent learning, which involves the ability of students to follow, control, regulate and evaluate their own way of learning.

The didactic design and the resources described in the syllabus comprise oral presentations, workshops, flash cards, lotteries, videos, recordings, handbooks, collages, bilingual dictionaries and billboards. Additionally, the assessment process is divided into three aspects: know, know-how and know how to be.

Characterisation of Participants

Description

Women of cycle 3.1 are part of the education program for young and adult people who are survivors of the Colombian armed conflict, *Días y Noches de Paz y de Amor Siempre* (Days and Nights of Peace and Love always). This program was initially created only for women victims of the conflict but, as time went by, the program started to include men victims of the conflict and, afterwards, people who came from vulnerable contexts, not necessarily victims of the conflict.

The information included below was gathered through a survey applied to students of cycle 3.1 (see Annex 1) and an interview for the head teacher (see Annex 2).

Regarding the cognitive aspect of the students, the group is made up of ten women between 13 and 55 years old. Only three of them said that they had studied English before. According to the head teacher's interview (Annex 2), their learning process is diverse and slow; students have the capacity of retaining information, but it is difficult for them to learn new concepts by heart. The head teacher considers, however, that they are intelligent, and they are interested in learning English.

The methods of teaching the head teacher stated he incorporated are, for instance, the Direct Method in which he asks students to write short texts with a specific grammar topic learnt through images or actions, dramatizations in which they represent their daily routine, dictations of short sentences, games and teamwork activities, among others. Besides, the teacher manifests that the students' attendance is not constant; new women attend the class every Saturday and some of them stop attending it.

In terms of the socio-affective aspect, all women come from different departments around Colombia, such as Tolima, Chocó, Cesar, Nariño, Huila, Caquetá and Cundinamarca. These places are recognized for being zones where the armed conflict has taken place. In fact, seven out of ten women state that they are victims of the conflict.

In Bogota, the students are currently living in different localities from the South of the capital; five in Rafael Uribe Uribe, two in Usme, two in Ciudad Bolívar and one in Mosquera, Cundinamarca (outside the Capital City). Their families also come from outside the capital.

Additionally, their nucleus family is made up mainly of their mother, their siblings and their children; actually, seven of them have children.

Moreover, four of them are currently working and six are unemployed. All women students have a mobile phone, nine have a TV, eight have a refrigerator, six have internet connection at home, and four have their own house and computer. In addition, the head teacher mentions that they come from contexts of violence, drugs, economic instability and lack of affection. The head teacher has found different roles among students in their learning process as leadership and he considers the most strengthened value is enthusiasm, but they need to strengthen their autonomy. Concerning their experience with the English language, everyone likes English and considers it important.

Relating to the cultural aspect, only one of the students is identified as an afro-Colombian person. Among the hobbies these women mention, most of them like watching TV, dancing, playing football soccer and singing. The music they prefer the most is popular music, reggaeton, salsa and ballad. The art expressions they enjoy the most is music, dancing and singing. All of them have been at different places around Colombia but they have never travelled abroad. Finally, in the interview they were asked if they knew any English movie or any English song and seven of them answered affirmatively.

Analysis

As it was previously shown in the results of the survey, women in cycle 3 come from diverse contexts. This information guides an approach to the understanding of the English learning process in students. Brown (2006) proposes some questions divided into different categories that are crucial variables affecting the foreign language acquisition of the population

being taught: Learner characteristics, linguistic factors, learning processes, age and acquisition, instructional variables, context and purpose.

1) Learner characteristics: students in cycle 3.1 come from vulnerable and violent population backgrounds, they have experienced some episodes of the Colombian armed conflict, their level of education is not higher than primary school despite most of them are adults. Besides, in their learning process, it is shown that their weakness is autonomy, and their strength is enthusiasm.

2) Linguistic factors: Students' first language is Spanish, nevertheless, as they are restarting their educational process, some of them have not internalised some of the grammar structures and rules in their native language. Moreover, there are many differences between their native language and the foreign language they are being taught which is a possible difficulty for the English learning.

3) Learning process: The students' learning process, according to the head teacher, is slow and diverse. The strategies the learners use the most are translating and asking for the meaning of significant topics and words that they only know in Spanish. They also like to repeat what they hear in English and write it down.

4) Age and Acquisition: Most of the students are adults, but there are two adolescents. Adult women students show a difficulty when trying to learn new concepts by heart and they easily forget the correct pronunciation of the words they write. Nevertheless, the eldest students try to participate more frequently in order to share their experiences; they want to point out examples of their real life and their own memories.

5) Instructional variables: The foreign language acquisition takes place inside an educational context, a public institution in which students are in a classroom with an English teacher. The content also corresponds to an institutional instruction in which students of cycle 3.1 have a syllabus similar to regular students in Colombia at sixth and seventh grade. The difference is that they are exposed to the English class only 55 minutes fortnightly, which means that the English course is not an intensive language program.

6) Context: The learning process is focused on English, a foreign language that is heard and spoken only in an artificial environment, in this case, the classroom. The socio-political conditions do not allow students to be in constant touch with the language.

7) Purpose: Even if most of the students consider important to learn English and they like the language, they are attempting to learn the language because it is a requirement of all the Colombian formal institutions.

Thanks to the previous analysis, it is possible to highlight some factors to be considered. One of them is the age of the students. Galvan (2010) reaches the conclusion in his research that “the findings provides evidence for the hypothesis that age is not a detrimental factor for learning a foreign language as long as adult learners feel motivated enough to spend time on task to succeed in L2” (p.82). Students in cycle 3 are always motivated, but the time they spend learning English is not enough, although this is a crucial factor to succeed in the learning process.

Another aspect to underline in the English learning of this population is the psychological conditions. The psychological conditions are different for a child and an adult. It is mandatory to have in mind the intellectual capacities, the motivation, the immediate needs and the empathy that adults have towards the new culture and language they learn (Ussa, 2011). Therefore,

understanding the context of the students is important; their likes, their motivations, what they do in their free time, among other aspects.

Bearing in mind the previous analysis in which the students' context was presented, a diagnosis test was designed in order to examine the English language level of students in cycle 3 in a quantitative way.

Diagnostic English Test

Description

Based on the head teacher's interview (see Annex 2), the English level of the students is very low, approximately 80% are A- and the other 20% is A+ following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. When it comes to observing the class (see Annex 3), the students showed a scarce previous knowledge about the language and a difficulty to retain information. Furthermore, students do not speak in English in the class. They relate the new knowledge in English with their own experiences, but when sharing the experiences, they speak in Spanish. For this reason, a diagnostic test was applied (see Annex 4 & Annex 5)

Each part of the diagnostic test evaluated a different skill related to the syllabus of this cycle. The English syllabus for the Saturday project states that students should be able to introduce themselves, describe where they live and what they do. In terms of structures, students should know how to use the verb to be and should be able to express themselves in present simple and in present continuous. This diagnostic test took between one and a half hours to two hours to be completed. Each skill was marked from 0 (the lowest score) to 10 (the highest score).

For the grammar part, the students had to fill the blanks in a test with the correct verb and conjugate it in present simple. It had twelve blanks, and each correct answer was worth 0.83

points to complete 10 total points altogether. In the results the lowest score the students obtained was 0.4 points and the highest was 2.49; the average score for the grammar part was 0.989. None of the students added the “s” at the end of the verbs for the conjugation of present simple in third person singular (he, she or it).

For the vocabulary text, the students had to match the pictures with the sentences in present continuous related to vocabulary of daily routines. The exam had eight sentences and the same number of images; each correct match received 1.25 points, to complete 10 points altogether. The lowest score the women obtained was 1.25 and the highest was 5; the average score of the course for vocabulary was 3.25 points. The answers that most of them gave correctly were related to basic verbs as sleeping, washing and having a shower.

In the reading part, the students had to read a short story named *My favorite day-Diwali* taken from the British Council web page. The exercise was divided into two parts; in the first part, they had to identify the meaning of some words from the text matching them to an image; in the second part, they had to complete some sentences from the text with the correct word. The reading exam had 15 answers to complete; each correct answer received 0.6 points to complete 10 points altogether. The lowest score they obtained was 1.32 and the highest was 8.58; the average score of the reading exam was 5.766. It should be pointed out that this reading exam showed only a literal comprehension in which they had to show that they were able to identify the location in the text of the idea mentioned.

For the writing exam, they had to write a story with a sequence of images related to the daily routine of a girl, and they were given some time expressions as first, then, finally, among others. The sequence of sentences was divided into six to complete a total of 10 points, each one of 1.6 points. The lowest score obtained was 0 and the highest one was 1.6; the average score for the

writing section was 0.44 points. None of the woman wrote a whole sentence, some of them only wrote isolated words like “sleeping”, “she are” or “she is”. Others did not answer anything but below the page they wrote “No entiendo cómo escribir las respuestas” (I do not know how to write the answers) “No sé cómo escribirlo” (I do not know how to write it) or “No sé” (I do not know); one of them wrote the sentences in Spanish.

In the listening part, they were shown four images of a sequence of the short story *The three little pigs* and the student-teacher-researcher read while performing the short story divided into four main parts. Then, the students had to select the image that corresponded to what the teacher had just read. This part had four answers to respond; each correct answer received 2.5 points to complete 10 points altogether. The lowest score was 0 and the highest score was 10; the average score for the listening text was 4.7 points. The students asked for a repetition of the story only once.

Finally, for the speaking part, the students were asked to answer some basic information related to their presentation like their names, their age, where they come from, among others. There were six questions; each correct answer received 1.6 point, to complete 10 points altogether. The lowest score of this section was 0 and the highest was 4.8; the average score was 3.84. Two kinds of answers were taken as correct, the ones that they answered with a complete answer (e.g. I am 22 years old) and the ones in which they only gave the essential information (e.g. 22). The only question most of them could answer with a complete answer was “What is your name?” They answered, for example “My name is Clemencia”. Some of them mixed up the question “How old are you?” with “How are you?” (The last one was never asked).

Analysis

Summarizing the averages from the worst result to the best result (marks from 0 to 10) writing obtained 0.44 points, grammar obtained 0.989, vocabulary obtained 3.25, speaking obtained 3.84, listening obtained 4.7 and reading obtained 5.766. This means that students have got more experience in terms of reading and listening, which are input skills, and they have more difficulties when they have to generate a language output in terms of writing and speaking. This also shows that students are better at comprehending the English language than at producing it.

Students in cycle 3.1 are cursing sixth and seventh grade according to the standard Colombian schools. This means that according to the *Basic English competencies standards in Colombia* they are in basic 2 level, which is equivalent to A2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

At this level, taking into consideration the Colombian standards in English (2006), in terms of listening, students understand basic information and questions related to themselves. Besides, they understand and identify the general idea of a description of a narrative (situations, characters, places). As it was shown in the listening part of the diagnostic test, the average score was 4.7 points (from 0 to 10 points). This shows that they obtained less than half of the highest possible score. Most of them understand basic questions like what their names are and they comprehend the characters and the sequence of a story, but they cannot answer specific information.

Considering the Colombian standards in English (2006) for sixth and seventh grades while reading, students understand written instructions in order to accomplish different kind of activities and extract general and specific information from a short text. Moreover, students identify the meaning of the words, the sequence of events and the cultural elements through the context of the text read. As shown in the reading part of the diagnostic test, the average score was

5,766 (from 0 to 10 points) which means that it is more than a half of the highest possible score. Thus, women in this cycle identify the words and the cultural elements from a text read but sometimes they do not understand the written instructions given and they ask for explanation.

In terms of the speaking skills (which is called *conversation* in the Colombian standards in English) at this level, students answer simple questions about their school, their family and their environment. They ask favours, apologise and express gratitude. Likewise, at this level students start, keep and end simple conversations. Taking into account the results of the speaking part of the diagnostic exam, the students in cycle 3.1 obtained an average of 3.84 point (from 0 to 10). The results show that most of the students give some basic information like their names, their age, where they come from; but most of the cases, they do not give a complete answer, they only say the number of the age or their names.

Finally, the Colombian standards in English (2006) describes that for the writing skill students describe people, places, objects or facts with short sentences. They write short messages with different purposes; for instance, texts about their personal information, short texts describing their family, friends and environment. Equally, they use the pertinent vocabulary in order to be coherent in their writings.

Bearing in mind the writing part of the diagnostic test, this is the skill in which students obtained the lowest score, from 0 to 10 points they obtained an average of 0.44 points. Most of the students do not write complete sentences or do not write anything. They write isolated words, they do not know the correct grammar structure for basic verbs like the verb to be or they write in Spanish, which means that they understand the instruction, but they do not answer in the foreign language. Besides, the grammar test shows that students do not make a difference between the description of a third person noun or a first-person noun.

Statement of the Problem

Considering the information obtained in the field notes, the head teacher's interview, the survey and diagnostic test, it is possible to describe the two main problems found. The first one concerns the English level of students in cycle 3.1, and the second one is related to the scarce rapport between the writing skill in EFL (English as a foreign language) and aspects relevant for students, as their own experiences.

The first issue leads to considering the English level of students of cycle 3.1. As mentioned before, students in this cycle have the same curriculum as students of sixth and seventh grades in regular Colombian schools. This means that in this cycle, according to the Basic English competencies standards in Colombia, students are in basic 2 level, which means A2 in The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Nevertheless, all the information gathered ratifies that their English level does not correspond to the English level expected for the standards in the Colombian institutions. The learning process of women of cycle 3.1 is different from that of regular students in Colombia. For instance, most of the formers' contact with the language started shortly before the second cycle.

In this way, one of the most remarkable weaknesses that emerged in the results of the diagnostic test is the writing skill. According to Rao (2019):

Writing is a productive skill and it is the most complex skill of the four language skills. The ELLs have put their thoughts and ideas in the form of writing as they cannot miss the information. Writing in English is considered the most difficult skill because of its complexity of structure and vocabulary. Moreover, the spelling system of words in the English language is entirely different from its pronunciation. (p.140)

For these students, this productive and active skill is the hardest one. They do not produce a written text by themselves, they need to obtain an input and write down a pre-established idea which is not their own idea. As stated by Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, & Pincas (2003), one of the biggest problems that the writing skill has in a foreign language classroom is that it “is not primarily concerned so much with developing writing skills as with reinforcing the teaching of particular structures. This very often consists of copying down sentences in order to establish patterns which have just been orally presented” (p.117).

The purpose of writing in the foreign language classroom of students in cycle 3 is to record what they have been taught in class, but in this case, writing is not a reflective process that implies students’ creativity. Thereby, the writing skill as a productive and active skill is not accomplished by students in cycle 3.1.

On the other hand, the second issue to be described is the missing rapport between the writing skill in EFL and adult women students’ relevant aspects such as their own experiences. As indicated in the field notes of the observations, students enjoy sharing their own experiences when they relate them to the topic they are learning, and that is the way in which students participate the most.

Experiences of students in cycle 3 are different from experiences of children. Thus, educating adults is different to educating children according to Sandhu (2014) for six main reasons. First, adults have accumulated knowledge thanks to their life experience. Second, this kind of education is usually voluntary, which implies that they are self-motivated. Third, they apply their previous knowledge and expect the new knowledge is going to help them at work or to achieve their goals. Fourth, adults who dropped out from school come back to complete their studies. Fifth, the timings of educating adults are flexible. Sixth, educating adults is essential to

get a sustainable progress to society (Sandhu, 2014). Nevertheless, these advantages are not considered while teaching English to this population.

In education for adults, “teacher’s task is to utilise and channel his student’s motivation so that his specific needs and aims are optimally fulfilled” (Broughton et al., 2003, p.187). As the data collected suggests, the students’ experiences motivate them to participate in the class. These women relate their experiences to the new knowledge and share them in the English class although, most of the times, they do not speak in English. Therefore, students’ experiences are relevant for them but they are not used in the class as an excuse to learn the foreign language.

As students in this cycle need to work on the writing skill, their experiences and their stories are an attempt to increase their motivation. As mention by Hayik (2018) in her research, teaching writing in problematic contexts needs explicit instruction, guidance and support on the part of the teacher, that is why it is important to find creative ways to involve and motivate students in the writing process. In this way, in order to find a creative way to involve students in EFL writing is to include their experiences through stories.

Rationale of the Study

This research has two main rationales to be done. The first one is related to the necessity of looking for a strategy to work on the writing skill in EFL with adult women students in cycle 3.1. The second one involves the importance to match students’ context and experiences to their English learning process, as they are adults who are victims of the conflict.

On the one hand, this population needs to work on the skill they obtained the lowest score in, which is the writing skill. According Hayik (2018) teaching writing is important because it “not only does provide students with academic English capabilities, but it also prepares them for

life in an interconnected world that requires them to write for different purposes and to use different genres (i.e., expository, descriptive, narrative, and persuasive)” (p.193).

In this way, this research develops a proposal based on writing narratives in a creative way. According to Fedicheva (2011) creative writing helps students to communicate information about themselves, their needs and their problems; to express ideas and thoughts; to think through their own experience; to organise their ideas and communicate them to others, among others.

Hence, a strategy that combines creative writing and narratives is storytelling. Haven (2000) mentions ten benefits of storytelling as an educational tool. For this research some of them are highlighted:

1. Storytelling is a powerful and effective element in an effort to improve and develop all four primary language arts skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking).
2. Information (both concepts and facts) is remembered better and longer when presented in story form.
3. Storytelling is a powerful and effective interdisciplinary, cross-curriculum teaching tool.
4. Storytelling positively motivates students to learn. Told stories focus student attention and learning and excite students to pursue related studies. (...)
6. Storytelling effectively engages and develops the skills of imagination and creativity better than any other single classroom activity. (...)
8. Storytelling creates empathy and a sense of connectedness.
9. Storytelling improves analytical and problem-solving skills.

10. Storytelling creates valuable links to community and heritage. (p. XVIII)

Thusly, storytelling is a complete strategy that have many benefits that can be profited from by students in cycle 3.1. Above all, it allows to work on writing skills, it motivates students to be creative and imaginative and it is a way to share the students' stories and experiences.

On the other hand, concerning the second rationale, students are victims of the Colombian conflict and carry different kind of experiences. These experiences and this specific context are relevant in their learning process and can be profited in the English learning. Kruger (2012) introduces two aspects of peace education into TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) classrooms. The first one is to add to the curriculum the principles of peace education such as role-plays, problem-solving, games and teamwork. The second one is to introduce peace-related content into the curriculum in order to understand, analyse, evaluate, appreciate and become part of global civil society through English. From this perspective, learning English, the globalised language, is part of the students' rights within peace education.

Thereby, storytelling, as a strategy to work on the writing skill, allows students to perform a role-play as different characters and to be involved in problem-solving situations while contributing to a peace education. Equally, telling stories, as a natural human activity, according to Haven (2000), allows to recall memories and to talk or write about personal experiences. Even, "most students will periodically compare these story characters to their own life experiences or to those of friends and relatives" (p. 80), as students in cycle 3.1 usually do in Spanish. In storytelling, students do not have necessarily to talk about real experiences, as they have to do in other kind of subjects at school. In this way, writing short fictional stories through storytelling are a good option to work on students' writing skills.

Consequently, the pedagogical proposal that emerges from the analysis of this population is divided into lesson plans (material for the teachers) and workshops and cardstocks (material for the students). Thus, students create a fictional story through workshops and cardstocks that describe, step by step, the parts of a story with the aid of storytelling. Therefore, the significance of this study is to help future teachers and researcher-teachers to have a general vision about the possibilities of working on teaching English as a Foreign Language with an adult population that comes from a violent context, and about motivating them to communicate in the English written language by creating fictional stories and expressing themselves.

General Objective of the Proposal

To develop contextualised material for the creation of short fictional stories through storytelling considering the EFL writing skill of adult women who are victims of the Colombian armed conflict.

Specific Objectives of the Proposal

To characterise the context of adult women students in cycle 3.1.

To characterise the EFL skills of adult women students in cycle 3.1.

To define the main concepts writing skill, storytelling and material development.

To describe the development of contextualised material for workshops on writing short fictional stories based on storytelling.

Chapter II: State of the Art and Theoretical Framework

The present chapter introduces the State of the art and the Theoretical framework based on the two main theoretical concepts that are involved in the material development of the proposal: writing skill in EFL and storytelling.

State of the Art

The selection of research studies presented in the State of the Art is based on two main concepts: storytelling and writing skills in EFL. Besides, it brings up some research related to the population under study: victims of the Colombian armed conflict. The following table summarises nine significant research studies that have to do with the concepts previously mentioned. The first three are institutionally framed in Universidad Pedagógica Nacional of Colombia, the following three are local and national research, and the final three are international research.

Figure 1

Overview of the State of the Art for the present research

OVERVIEW				
	TITLE	AUTHOR	YEAR	EXTENT
1	Shaping Narrative Writing Skills Through Creating Picture Books	Vargas, C	2017	Institutional: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Bogotá.
2	Storytelling to Improve the Process of Listening Skills	Romero, D.	2018	Institutional: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Bogotá.
3	Developing Oral Interaction Skills Through the Use of Storytelling	Bello, D.	2017	Institutional: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, Bogotá.
4	Peace Education: Memory Artefacts in EFL Environments	Aldana, Y., Fonseca, M. & Jerez, G.	2019	Local: Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá, Colombia

5	Memories of Political Violence in Narratives Made by School Students from the South of the Casanare Department	Pérez, M.	2016	Local: Revista Colombiana de Educación, Bogotá, Colombia.
6	Personal Narratives: A Pedagogical Proposal to Stimulate Language Students' Writing	Salamanca, F.	2015	National: Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia, Tunja, Colombia
7	Digital Storytelling: A Case Study of the Creation, and Narration of a Story by EFL Learners	Soler, B.	2014	International: Facultat de Magisteri. Departament de Didàctica de la Llengua i la Literatura Universitat de València, Spain
8	Children's Struggles with the Writing Process Exploring Storytelling, Visual Arts, and Keyboarding to Promote Narrative Story Writing	Dunn, M. & Finley, S.	2010	International: School of Education at Washington State University
9	A Story-Telling Approach to Teaching English to Young EFL Iranian Learners	Kalantari, F. & Hashemian, M.	2016	International: Department of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan), Iran

First, *Shaping narrative writing skills through creating picture books* (Vargas, 2017) aims at analysing students' EFL writing skills while narrating simple stories using picture books. The conclusions suggest that implementing picture books has a positive and meaningful effect in the writing students' process in a foreign language. It is significant for the present research because it covers two of the main concepts mentioned before: narrative writing skills in EFL and the creation of simple stories.

Second, *Storytelling to improve the process of listening skills* (Romero, 2018) that has the objective of characterising if listening skills, such as receiving, attending and understanding, are shaped by using storytelling with high-school students. This objective is achieved, and it shows

that storytelling as a strategy is useful to improve listening skills, which means that a foreign language can be understood with listening to stories. In addition, it indicates that strategies such as using images, real material, gestures, movements and the act of reading aloud allow the researcher-teacher to catch students' attention, learn English and have fun. This research is relevant for the present research because it is institutionally situated, it is an action research, it is focused on learners of EFL and it works on storytelling as a strategy.

Third, *Developing Oral Interaction Skills Through the Use of Storytelling* (Bello, 2017) aims at implementing storytelling as a pedagogical strategy to develop oral interaction skills in second-grade students at Domingo Faustino Sarmiento School in Bogota, Colombia. The conclusions suggest that applying storytelling in EFL classrooms has a significant impact on the development of children's oral interaction skills, on students' perceptions towards the English class and on students' English vocabulary. The significance for the state of the art of the present research concerns to EFL learners and the use of storytelling. Though this research uses storytelling to develop speaking skills and not writing skills, it is meaningful because through the creation of stories learners improve oral interaction, vocabulary, attention and motivation.

Fourth, *Peace education: Memory artefacts in EFL environments* (Aldana, Fonseca & Jerez, 2019) is framed in a local context and aims to explore memory artefacts based on primary-school students' experiences in the context of the Colombian armed conflict within an EFL class. It concludes that memory artefacts contribute to the re-elaboration of experiences of the victims of the conflict and to the resilience process through didactic interventions and teachers' support within the EFL class. The present research works with victims of the conflict as well and on EFL teaching, in this way, this research is meaningful because it shows how different didactic

strategies help students from vulnerable and violent contexts express their experiences in an EFL environment.

Fifth, *Memories of Political Violence in Narratives Made by School Students from the South of the Casanare Department* (Pérez, 2016), framed in the national context, is a Case Study that seeks to understand political violence and the development of subjectivity through narrative memory in a group of young people from the South of the Casanare department. The conclusions of this research show the importance of bearing in mind the voice of all inhabitants of the population through their direct narratives in order to link the activities at school to the common past, the culture and the traditions that frame the identity process of a social collective. As the present research aims at working on narrating stories with victims of the conflict, the significance of this research resides in the fact that the researcher used narratives as an expression to find elements that shape memory of the politic violence that victims lived, specifically the events that happened in that territory during 2003 and 2004.

Sixth, *Personal Narratives: A Pedagogical Proposal to Stimulate Language Students' Writing* (Salamanca, 2015) is framed in national context and aims to implement a pedagogical intervention in which students are required to write narratives to portray their experiences in English. The conclusion is that the inclusion of narratives is relevant to motivate students to write. By means of writing, students enrich their vocabulary, give meaning to their text and explore their writing abilities based on their own feelings. For the present research, one of the most appreciable aspects that is relevant in this study is the relation between writing narratives and experiences; writing narratives does not only have to do with grammar and vocabulary but also, the most important, with students' experiences, feelings and communicational intentions.

Concerning the international context, the seventh research, *Digital Storytelling: A Case Study of the Creation, and Narration of a Story by EFL Learners* (Soler, 2014) explores the traditional use of storytelling and technology to foster writing and speaking skills in EFL students. The researcher concludes that digital storytelling is an effective way to develop and improve writing and speaking skills in which audio-visual material is innovative and attractive for students. For the present research, the significance of this study consists in the fact that using storytelling, even digitally, is effective to improve writing skills in an EFL class.

The eight significant research *Children's Struggles with the Writing Process Exploring Storytelling, Visual Arts, and Keyboarding to Promote Narrative Story Writing* (Dunn & Finley, 2010), an international study as well, incorporates the use of *Thirsty Thinkers Writers' Workshop* which is a strategy to learn narrative story-writing through art with children. This research shows that this strategy offers students a model of how to help those who struggle with writing narrative stories. The relevance of this research in the present research is that, even though it is framed in the students' mother language, it enables to understand the important role of art in stories creation. Besides, it emphasises on writing as a process that is explored with different strategies, including storytelling, in order to encourage students to write narratives.

Finally, the ninth research, *A Story-Telling Approach to Teaching English to Young EFL Iranian Learners* (Kalantari & Hashemian, 2016), also international, aims at using storytelling, specifically adapted stories, in which the vocabulary is taught via pictures and gestures and then, the story is read in order to teach English to young learners in a fun and meaningful way. In the conclusion it is mentioned that the storytelling approach brings an effective result in learning vocabulary and a meaningful improvement in terms of students' interest rate in the EFL class.

This research is significant for the present research because it uses storytelling as a strategy to learn English as a Foreign Language, especially to learn vocabulary.

To conclude, this state-of-the-art shows that there are many studies that have worked on storytelling as a strategy to improve different skills in a foreign language. Besides, as shown previously, there are different kinds of research in which victims of the conflict participated related to the use of narratives of their real experiences to obtain a historical memory background. Nevertheless, very few of them have worked on teaching English as a foreign language with vulnerable populations and victims of the Colombian conflict, and none of them have worked on telling narratives through fictional stories to express students' experiences.

Theoretical Framework

Introduction

As the main objective is the development of material for the creation of short fictional stories through storytelling considering the EFL writing skill of adult women who are victims of the conflict, this theoretical framework focuses on the three main concepts EFL writing skill, storytelling and material development. First, EFL writing skill, in which writing narratives is highlighted. Second, storytelling, in which its connection with writing short stories, people's experiences and adult education is explored. Third, material development and its principles. Before defining the main concepts, it is defined what language learning is for this research.

Previous considerations

In this research, as stated by the CEFR (2001), "Language learning may be used as the general term or confined to the process whereby language ability is gained as the result of a planned process" (p.139). Besides, "Language learning involves a conscious knowledge of the

language” (Fedicheva, 2011, p.208). Thus, for this research language learning is considered as a process that implies a conscious learning of the language.

This process, as defined by the task-based instruction, views learning as “a set of communicative tasks that are directly linked to the curricular goals they serve, the purposes of which extend beyond the practice of language for its own sake” (Douglas, 2000, p.50). In this way, according to Harmer (2007), the task-based learning is a natural extension of communicative language learning because it emphasises on real-life tasks rather than on the language. Therefore, this approach puts communicative activities at the heart of learning.

Equally, it is important to mention that the development of the material focuses on teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in which, according to Broughton et al. (2003), the foreign language does not play an essential role in national and social life, that is to say, the citizen does not need English to live the daily life or even for social or professional advancement. This means that the language learning contexts where students learn the foreign language do not have ready-made contexts for communication different from the classroom, language clubs, books, occasional tourist, and suchlike (Douglas, 2000).

Writing Skill in EFL

According to Burns & Siegel (2018), the four language skills, that is, listening, speaking, reading and writing, are the heart of current practice in English language teaching. The focus on skills emerged from different factors such as “communicative competence as the main aim of language teaching and learning; improved understandings of genres and their importance in social practice; and theoretical insights into how we listen, speak, read and write” (Burns & Siegel, 2018, p. XIII).

Thus, these four skills are a wider overview of those traditional activities of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary where communication plays the main role. Additionally, “Reading and Listening are known as ‘receptive’ skills (students receive and understand the language). Writing and speaking are ‘productive’ skills (the student needs to produce the language)” (Riddell, 2012, p. 11). Thereby, reading and listening have to do with receiving communication and writing and speaking have to do with producing communication.

Nevertheless, related to the productive skills, as stated by Broughton et al. (2003), the act of writing differs from speaking in that writing is less spontaneous and more permanent, and the resources for communication are fewer because there is not interaction to adapt the communication as it goes ahead. In this way “writing tends to be more economical in its use of the language. There are no ‘hesitators’ (‘mmm’, ‘er’, ‘well’, etc.) that litter our conversation. Written language is direct and efficient” (Riddell, 2012, p.183)

Besides, writing is seen as a creation process. Barbuzza, Del Giusti, Del Moral, Vernier (2008) introduce what currently is known as the process approach to writing instruction: “a few decades ago, teachers used to focus on the final product of their students’ writing and its format. Nowadays, the focus lies on content and message since learners are seen as creators of language” (p.279). By writing, learners are creators of a process that involves a content in the message.

Equally, the process of writing implies thinking, planning and revising where the process is the means to reach an end (Barbuzza et al., 2008). Consequently, a balance between process and product is advisable. As Douglas (2000) states, “The product is, after all, the ultimate goal; it is the reason that we go through the process of prewriting, drafting, revising and editing (...) Process is not the end; it is the means to the end” (p.337). Both process and product are essential

for writing because the first enables the second one. Therefore, the planned activities in the development of material involve a process that enables a final product; a short-fictional story.

Additionally, in order to understand the writing process, it is important to highlight the stages this process consists of. For Smith (2003) the writing process includes: 1) prewriting/brainstorming: the ideas and thoughts that you have about the topic; 2) drafting, which is turning those thoughts into a draft, organising a plan; 3) revising as you go, which means that while you are writing you are checking and reviewing previous and new ideas; 4) proofreading, that is, careful readings in order to find errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling and grammar; 5) editing in order to get a clear and concise writing; and 6) revision, which implies reading and verifying. These steps are part of the students' creation process.

Concerning EFL learning, in accordance with Harmer (2007), there are several reasons for teaching writing. First, it allows the language processing that gives students more thinking time to think about the language than while in a spontaneous conversation. Moreover, in the case of the EFL students, writing is used as an aide-mémoire or practice tool to help students practise and work with the foreign language, it means, a process of writing-for-learning. In this respect Harmer (2007) makes a distinction between writing-for-writing and writing-for-learning. The former entails the development of students' skills as writers while the latter is related to giving students reinforcement of learning the foreign language through writing activities.

In order to teach EFL while developing the writing skill, Broughton et al. (2003) suggest three main stages for the writing course: controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. Controlled writing refers to writing compositions whose final product is determined by the teacher; this means that there is a model presented that leads to the students reproducing to some extent the same final product. Guided writing is the composition in which the teacher provides

the situation and helps the students to prepare the written work. This means that each final work is different, even if the content and the organisation are the same for each student. Free writing is a composition where the only element provided is the title and the students create the rest.

The material that emerges from this research is more focused on guided writing to reach the free writing because the former “(...) will help students produce appropriate texts even with fairly limited English. However, as their language level improves, we need to make sure that their writing begins to express their own creativity within a genre, rather than merely imitating it” (Harmer, 2007, p.113).

Writing narratives.

According to Gramly & Pätzold (2003), there are five types of texts: descriptive, narrative, directive or instructive, expository, and argumentative. As claimed by Baugh, Mitchell, & Kelly (2007), at the beginning of the writing process it is important to define the type of text that the writer wants to write because it specifies the purpose of communication and the writer's intention. For this research, the writing process deals with a narrative composition.

Conforming to Sorenson (2010), by writing a narrative, a story is told that explains the writer's purpose. Besides, narration is part of different types of writing as character sketches, autobiographies, biographies and short stories. Additionally, Gramly & Pätzold (2003) consider that narrative texts involve real-world events in time. The event is immaterial, and it is either fictional (a fairy tale or novel) or non-fictional (a newspaper). In this way narrative texts follow a sequence of events that are provided through a basic narrative structure given through a sequence of adverbs such as and, then, first, second, among others.

Moreover, writing narratives, especially short stories, has been used in order to improve the writing skill in EFL. For instance, the British Council (2009) created a *Module for Learning English through Short Stories*. The learning targets of this module seek that, first, students understand the features of short stories such as openings/closings, character and plot; second, students create the imaginative ideas and feelings expressed in short stories through oral, written and performative means; and third, students understand how English works in short stories and apply this knowledge to their learning and use of the foreign language. In other words, working on short stories helps students develop the learning of English while understanding the features of short stories and expressing their imagination through an output, whether in writing or speaking.

Likewise, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) proposes that users of a foreign language need to handle the different uses of the language. One of them, related to writing short fictional stories, is the Aesthetic use of language in which “Imaginative and artistic uses of language are important both educationally and in their own right. Aesthetic activities may be productive, receptive, interactive or mediating, and may be oral or written” (2001, p. 56). The activities of the aesthetic use of language include retelling and rewriting stories, writing imaginative stories, production, reception and performance of literary texts as short stories, novels, and poetry, among others.

Storytelling

As mentioned before, writing narratives, such as imaginative stories, is part of the EFL writing skill. One of the strategies to work on narratives is storytelling. For this reason, storytelling is well situated as a strategy for: first, developing the students’ writing skill in EFL; second, working on the creation process of short fictional stories; third, expressing students’ experiences through their fictional stories; fourth, working on adult education.

One of the most amazing abilities that human beings have is the ability of expressing themselves through narratives. People are able to speak, not only in order to transmit instinctive needs but also in order to express their experiences, even if they are not actually related to a present reality. As claimed by McCarthy (1998) a narrative tells a story and “telling stories aloud is probably the oldest form of human discourse. The oral form comes so naturally to us that we tend to overlook the important ways in which it is different from a written narrative” (p. 5).

Narrating stories is inherent to humans and it implies an interaction between themselves and the others or an interaction between themselves and the world. From this perspective, working on storytelling is important to understand how human events and experiences are represented in people’s voices. According to Haven (2000), “a story is a unique and specific narrative structure with a specific set of necessary characteristics and which includes a sense of completeness” (p. 16). The author also highlights that stories connect humans to their humanness, they link humans to their past, present and future.

Having said this, the definition of Storytelling given by Miller (2011) is “*Story* can be defined as, a series of events. *Storytelling* can be defined as, relating a series of events. *Story* and *narrative* mean the same thing. *Narrative* is simply a more academic term than *story*” (p.1). Moreover, when it comes to understanding the narrative, the three main characteristics elaborated by the JB Media Institute (2017) are taken into consideration. The first one is Understanding events, which means that humans share their understanding of sequences of events with others and these take a new form of understanding. The second one is Meta-representation of narratives in which humans recognise that language, objects, actions and music are representations that can be produced and understood by them. The third one is Appetite for the true which means that humans prefer stories about real situations, people, problems, experiences, among others.

Furthermore, as stated by Haven (2000), “storytelling is unique among language-related activity in that it directly engages all four language skills. The process of telling a story virtually requires the teller to read, write, listen, and speak” (p. XVIII). Although the writing skill is part of storytelling, this author makes a difference between storyteller and storywriter:

Story writers are not *storytellers* until they stand up and tell the story (orally and physically) to their audience. As long as the medium for offering their story is printed materials read in isolation by the reader, they are not storytellers (Haven, 2000, p. 217)

For this research, the bases of storytelling are considered in the development of the material of the proposal in order to work on the writing skill. This is how students are conceived as storywriters instead of as storytellers.

Writing skill in a foreign language through storytelling.

Storytelling has been used as a pedagogical strategy to teach English as a foreign language. It is also a good way to teach students writing through the creation of stories. According to Ellis & Brewster (2014) in the book *Tell it Again! The Storytelling Handbook for Primary English Language Teachers*:

The telling of stories has been a vital mechanism ever since humans developed language – perhaps the most vital in transferring knowledge of all sorts. The invention of writing, then printing, word processing and home computers means that we now have many other methods. But storytelling remains a powerful and appealing tool. (p. 2)

Thus, telling stories and writing are part of the developing of the human being by means of working on the language. Concerning the writing process, storytelling has two main goals, according to Ellis, G. & Brewster, J. (2014), which are practice of language items and practice in

communication ideas while students organise descriptions, create narratives, re-write a story by changing the end or the characters, among others. This means that writing activities can be divided into guided activities that tend to encourage students to copy any form, and creative activities that encourage students to be more creative and independent while planning, organising and understanding ideas.

Storytelling as a creation process of short fictional stories.

While it is true that people love real stories and feel related to them, the fictional component in storytelling is important as well because it allows tellers or writers to be creative and it allows the listener or the reader to be imaginative. To build fictional worlds through storytelling Hynes (2014) advises writers to show instead of to tell the sequence of events. Through showing, the writing is more immediate, vivid, detailed and visceral; besides, “it invites readers to identify with your characters and participate in the story, if only in their imaginations” (Hynes, 2014).

In this sense, showing means using more details and making the sequence of events more dramatic. According to Hynes (2014), writing fiction by showing involves, first, engaging the readers’ senses and imaginations by drawing the event on their own experience. Second, it involves evoking the experience of the writing or reading, which means calling out, re-creating, or calling up memories, imaginings, associations and emotional responses in order to make the writer and the reader draw out something in their imagination and produce a compelling impression of reality through a fictional narrative.

Working on fictional narratives has another advantage in terms of how life is conceived through the story by imagining elements that are not part of people’s Primary World. As Tolkien

(1988) remarks, fantasy is a human right and it implies a rational cognitive process in which the story is believable in the Secondary World, even if the writer and the reader are aware that the story is unreal. In this way, the activity of imagining a new world helps to release the individual by a controlled, conscious and rational activity. Through fictional characters, settings and situations the individual is able to create a new world with new rules that are impossible to accomplish in the real world but that show the deep human desire and cognition.

Concerning the creation process of short fictional stories by means of storytelling, Hynes (2014), in his book *Writing Great Fiction: Storytelling Tips and Techniques*, proposes a way to approach starting a work of fiction. He suggests answering the five Ws: who, what, where, when and why. The first, who, is related to the characters: Who is the protagonist? Who is the narrator? and so on. The second, what, answers the questions: What happens in the story? What is the story about? The third, where, ties the story to a specific geographical context, so it answers: Where is the story set? The fourth, when, is related to the historical time of the story or the time it takes place in the lives of the characters: How is the order of the events in the plot? (chronologically, backward, or moving backward and forward in time). The last one, why, answers: Why do the characters do what they do? This structure is used in the material development of the proposal that emerges from the present research in order to create short fictional stories.

Storytelling and students' experiences through fictional narratives.

Storytelling is also a creative way to express the students' experiences as well as to identify and to think how to solve both personal and social experiences.

Storytelling creates a learning situation. It allows our minds to think outside the box of our own experiences and to develop creative ways to problem-solve. It also allows us to

identify with the theme and character of the story and to see their way of thinking.

Through this process, one's own errors in thinking tend to be realized. A number of professionals have linked storytelling as being relevant to learning, adult education and the incarcerated population. (Butcher, 2006, p.197)

Hence, according to Butcher (2006), stories are not separated from one's lives and experiences and that allows people to open new doors of deep thinking in which they tell what they know, what they believe, their fears and their prejudices in order to relate past and present experiences and prepare people for future events.

Besides, every single culture around the world has used narratives in different ways to spread their worldview, their experiences and their knowledge:

Through this sharing of experience, we use stories to pass on accumulated wisdom, beliefs, and values. Through stories we explain how things are, why they are, and our role and purpose. Stories are the building blocks of knowledge, the foundation of memory and learning. Stories connect us with our humanness and link past, present, and future by using past experiences to teach us to anticipate the possible consequences of our actions". (Haven, 2000, p. 219)

In this way, telling stories always implies a teller and a listener who, according to Miller (2011), needs Projection, Identification, Empathy, Imitation, and Imagination between people and stories. "People project themselves into story characters. They identify with the characters. They feel empathy with the characters. This occurs through the use of the listener's imagination. The listener may then imitate the character" (p. 2). Storytelling has a big influence in human beings'

perspectives and performing; it is possible to say that what people listen to and what people say is what make them be what they actually are.

Additionally, for Miller (2011) stories are made mainly of feeling (emotion) and intellect (thought). Thus, this allows tellers/writers to give meaning to life, express values, teach the young and convey culture. In terms of the individual, it can connect elements in one's own self, experience and life. With regard to a community, it can connect to one's past (individual and group) and to other cultures; it can give a sense of wholeness to the pieces of one's life.

Thereby, expressing experiences through storytelling is not only possible by creating narratives from the real world but also by creating fictional stories. Mar & Oatley (2008) state:

The function of fiction can thus be seen to include the recording, abstraction, and communication of complex social information in a manner that offers personal enactments of experience, rendering it more comprehensible than usual. Narrative fiction models life, comments on life, and helps us to understand life in terms of how human intentions bear upon it. (p.173)

It is said that fictional narrations are not direct copies of reality but are simulations of reality through abstraction. Thus, a person who writes a fictional story is communicating complex social information in which they show personal experiences in an abstract way while simulating reality. Moreover, this narrative simulation has two main implications; the first one is empathy and perspective-taking while the second one is transmission of social knowledge. Hence, narrative fiction has played an important role in the history of society concerning the spread of relevant information (desires, emotions, goals, conflicts) through showing the problems presented in the content of stories (Mar & Oatley, 2008).

Therefore, writing fictional narratives through storytelling allows students to express their experiences while feeling empathy and transmitting their social knowledge by creating a simulation of their reality. “Storytelling validates student experience, particularly in adult education. Stories are beneficial in relation to what is going on the students’ lives. They allow students to take ownership of their behaviour, actions and thoughts. Stories allow change and growth” (Butcher, 2006, p.206).

Storytelling in adult education.

As mentioned before, storytelling has been used in adult education as well. McAllister (2017) provides a digest in which she relates storytelling to some adult learning concepts. In her findings, for instance, she highlights that adults learn by experience, and stories represent experiences that can surrogate the first-hand experience. Another example that McAllister points out is that adults bring their prior experiences and mental models (prior knowledge, assumptions and values about content and context) into any new experience; thus, asking adult students to be storytellers is worth it first, because they “draw on prior experiences as they visualize themselves in similar situations as story characters” (p.5); and second, because telling “experiences related to content taps into prior experience, improves analytical and critical thinking skills” (p.5).

To conclude, storytelling provides a broad possibility to work on different aspects that are indicated above. It allows for working on the writing skill in EFL, for working on writing narratives as short-fictional stories, for working on students’ experiences and for working with adult students.

Material Development

The last concept to be explored is material development which is the basis of the pedagogical proposal that emerges from this research. According to Tomlinson (2001), material development is both a field of study and a practical undertaking (as cited in Tomlinson, 2011). For this research, the material development is considered as a practical undertaking that:

refers to anything which is done by writers, teachers or learners to provide sources of language input, to exploit those sources in ways which maximise the likelihood of intake and to stimulate purposeful output: in other words the supplying of information about and/or experience of the language in ways designed to promote language learning.

(Tomlinson, 2011, p. 2)

In this way, according to the author, a material developer provides input through different sources as textbooks, stories, poems, among others, in order to relate what can be effectively learned by language students.

The language learning materials have to be based on learning and teaching principles. To achieve this, Tomlinson (2010) proposes six basic principles to take into consideration for material development. First, “a prerequisite for language acquisition is that the learners are exposed to a rich, meaningful and comprehensible input of language in use” (p. 2). This implies that “the language input is contextualised. Language use is determined and interpreted in relation to its context of use” (Tomlinson, 2010, p. 3). Besides, the materials should provide extensive experience of language, such as different text types and genres, that is used to achieve outcomes. In the specific case of material development used in this research study, learners are exposed to

material related to written stories and storytelling and both input and output are related to the students' contexts and their English level characterised in Chapter I.

Second, "in order for the learners to maximise their exposure to language in use, they need to be engaged both affectively and cognitively in the language experience" (Tomlinson, 2010, p. 4). To comply with this principle, it is important to relate students' feelings and emotions in their learning process. In this proposal, students relate their feelings and experiences to the characters, the settings and the situations presented in the short fictional stories.

Third, "language learners who achieve positive affect are much more likely to achieve communicative competence than those who do not" (Tomlinson, 2010, p. 4). Following this principle, the material development has to be interesting, relevant and enjoyable in order to influence learners in a positive way and raise their self-esteem in relation to the language. An example of the proposal that emerges from this research is a warm-up activity in which students learn positive adjectives that are related to themselves. Additionally, as suggested for the implementation, at the beginning of the course three big posters are introduced to students that define rules of the class, some phrases of survival English and a list of verbs in present simple and past simple as a way to encourage students to participate using them.

Fourth, "L2 language learners can benefit from using those mental resources which they typically utilise when acquiring and using their L1" (Tomlinson, 2010, p. 5). Even though learners of this research are EFL students, this principle leads to developing activities in which students can mentally visualise the language through different mental activities in a task. For instance, in the material development of the present proposal, students have to visualise in advance the setting, the characters and the situations they want to write about in the creation of their stories with the input that they obtain through the activities.

Fifth, “language learners can benefit from noticing salient features of the input and from discovering how they are used” (Tomlinson, 2010, p. 6). For the materials, the author proposes to provide students with an experience from which students focus conscious attention on any specific feature of the experience. This principle is shown in the proposed development of material, for example, in the different activities of the presentation of the topics in which students are introduced to the main activity through matching activities, answering random questions, among others. Then, students learn intuitively how to develop the main activity.

Sixth, “learners need opportunities to use language to try to achieve communicative purposes” (Tomlinson, 2010, p.7). In this principle, students generalise about the language and interact through it, being able to communicate and produce language outcomes. In the proposed material development, students have to accomplish different kinds of tasks that produce written outcomes. Moreover, some of the activities imply that the students interact with their classmates in different communicative situations such as asking for information, performing roles, etc.

In this way, the material development of the present proposal bears in mind the theoretical concepts presented above and follows the principles proposed in the material development theory for language teaching. The material of the present proposal is organised through thirteen lesson plans, eleven workshops and seven cardstocks shown below in the planning model, Chapter IV.

Chapter III: Research Design

Research Approach

The present research is classified as a qualitative research which allows the researcher to explore different kinds of dimensions of the social world and produce a general picture of how things work in a particular context (Mason, 2002, 01). As a result, well-founded cross-contextual generalities are produced. Besides, this kind of research requires a highly active engagement from the participants. Thereby, the researcher is also actively involved in a sustained experience with the participants, connecting the researcher's context and the study (Creswell, 2014).

According to Jennifer Mason (2002), a qualitative research has three common elements. First, an interpretivist position, which is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted. Second, in terms of the methodology of data generation, flexible and sensitive data are produced from the social context. Third, with the help of methods of analysis, explanation and argument, the qualitative research aims to produce rounded and contextual understandings based on detailed data.

Based on Cropley (2019), the qualitative research has to gain insights into the constructions of reality that the participants have experienced, structured and interpreted. Thus, in order to gain necessary insights, the qualitative data are obtained mostly by means of narratives (speaking or writing) that can involve other forms of communication as interviews, diaries, video tapes, among others. In this research this kind of data collection helps to gather information about the participants: their social background and their English level.

In order to analyse and interpret the data, in qualitative research, Creswell (2014) proposes six steps after obtaining the raw data. The first step is to organise and prepare the data for analysis, which involves transcribing the interviews, scanning material, etc. The second step is to read or look at all data. The third step is to code the data, which involves finding repeated patterns in the data gathered and labelling them with a term or concept that is classified as a category. Creswell (2014) highlights three types of coding: First, codes on topics that are expected to find, based on the past literature and common sense. Second, codes that are surprising and that were not anticipated at the beginning of the study. Third, codes that are unusual, and that are, in and of themselves, of conceptual interest to readers.

The fourth step, based on Creswell, is to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis. The fifth step is to write a qualitative narrative that represents the findings and the discussion in detail (themes, subthemes, multiple perspectives of individuals, and so on). Finally, the sixth step involves making an interpretation of the findings.

While going through the previous process the expectation is to find some categories that emerge from the gathered data. In this way, there are three main expected categories: categories related to writing skills in EFL, categories related to the writing process of narratives through storytelling and categories related to the common themes that are represented in the stories.

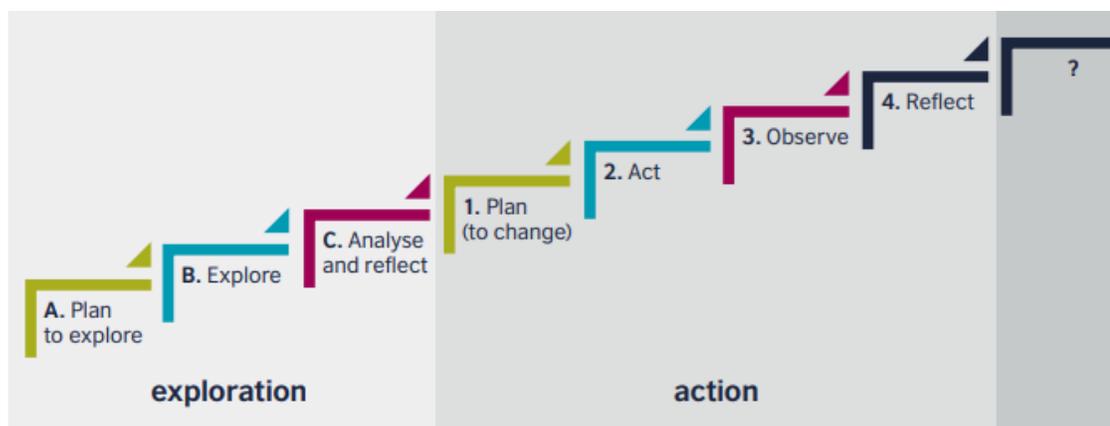
Research Design

This research aimed to be an *action research* that “is seen as means towards creating meaning and understanding in problematic social situations and improving the quality of human interactions and practices within those situations” (Burns, 2005). Burns (2005) considers that action research in education has two main components: the action and the research component.

The former, the action component, is a planned intervention with strategies, processes and activities that are created having in mind the context in which all the participants are involved. This is a response considered a possible change of a gap or problem related to teaching, learning, curriculum, among others. The latter, the research component, is the collection of data, their analysis and the research's reflections. Furthermore, "action research is systematic... It involves a self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and re-planning. It requires teachers to be acutely aware of a sense of process, and to refine their perceptions to account for that process" (McNiff, 1988, p. 7 as cited in Carr & Kalmbach, 2010, p. 16).

Nevertheless, for the reasons mentioned in Ethical Considerations, the present research only involves a pedagogical proposal for a further intervention that relates theory and practical processes in order to improve the problem found in Chapter I. It means that the spiral cycle could not be accomplished. In this way, whenever the proposal emerged from this research is applied, and the data collected is analysed, the spiral cycle should be continued by the researcher-teacher.

From the educative vision of the research "it is related to the ideas of 'reflective practice' and 'the teacher as researcher' and involves taking a self-reflective, critical, and systematic approach to exploring your own teaching context" (Nelson, 2013, p. 185). Consequently, this action research corresponds specifically to an *Exploratory Action Research*, which "is a way to explore, understand and improve our practice as teachers. We will first discuss the value of 'exploring' and later we'll move on to show how this can contribute to appropriate forms of 'acting' for change" (Smith & Rebolledo, 2018, p. 20). The research questions of this exploratory action research aim to explore the social background and the English level of women students in cycle 3.1 of Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. The exploratory action research follows the following steps of the exploration component:

Figure 2*Steps of Exploratory Action Research*

Note: *Steps of Exploratory Action Research*. Copyright 2018 by British Council: Smith & Robolledo

The present exploratory action research only reaches the exploration steps and the first action step. In the step Plan to explore, the teacher-researcher reviews her practice and decides on an area or situation to focus on, as well as on the questions that need to be answered and, on the information to be gathered. In the step Explore, the data are collected. In the step Analyse and reflect, the questions are answered based on the collected data; in this step, the challenging situation is identified in order to make an action plan if needed. “These three steps may be enough - the new understanding you gain can help, in many ways, on its own. Alternatively, you may want to take it further, into action research” (Smith & Robolledo, 2018, p. 26)

In the present research the first step of the action research, Plan (to change), is accomplished as a suggestion for the solution of the learning problem found in the population and to be applied in a subsequent action research. This step consists in deciding what needs to be changed and planning an intervention that also allows to collect further data (Smith & Robolledo, 2018). The next three steps, act, observe and reflect, are also a suggestion for further research in

which the plan is implemented, the teacher-researcher observes what happens through collection of data and interprets what occurs.

Data Collection Instruments

In the field of language education, data collection in action research is useful not only for research purposes but also for students' learning process because it reproduces real-life communication scenarios in which the participants make oral or written contributions (Canals, 2017). Thus, according to Carr & Kalmbach (2010), for action research there are three methods to collect data in the classroom: observation, surveys and interview and artefacts.

Observation, as stated by Carr & Kalmbach, is the action of critically and deliberately observing students as participants in the classroom and of recognising the live action that provides powerful insights. For this research, the observation is organised in field notes that are divided into guiding question, descriptive level, interpretative reflexive level, category of analysis and problem-solving level.

Surveys and *interviews* that are designed and applied to the population to provide some information about the characteristics, attitudes and behaviours of the participants (Creswell, 2014). The interviews imply that the teacher-researcher asks questions of students and listen to people who are connected to the research (Carr & Kalmbach, 2010). That is how interviews "provide indirect information filtered through the views of interviewees" (Creswell, 2014, p.241). For this research, the interviews are face-to-face and one-on-one and they have open questions.

Artefacts that are "any kind of physical documentation that sheds additional light on your research question and topic" (Carr & Kalmbach, 2010, p. 78). The artefacts in this research are the students' short fictional stories that are collected as soon as the proposal is implemented.

Additionally, another instrument used in this research is a *diagnostic test for English* that is applied to students in order to gather data related to their English level, that is, to measure the student achievement in English, where student achievement is understood as “the result of learning that can be measured through achievement indicators generally refers to student performance in the academic field” (Lestari & Setiawan, 2017, p. 171). According to the authors, one of the instruments to collect data related to student achievement in learning is a test. The test to examine the English level of students is designed by the teacher-researcher according to the Basic English Competences Standards in Colombia (MEN, 2006) and the English syllabus of the course.

Finally, this research makes use of *audio and visual materials* such as photographs, videotapes, recordings, among others. This data collection instruments “provide an opportunity for participants to directly share their reality” (Creswell, 2014, p. 242). Those instruments are useful not only to register the previous instruments but also to record the students’ process.

Procedures

In order to validate the findings that have emerged from the data collection and analysis, this research considers three strategies stated by Creswell (2014). The first is triangulation, which consists in examining evidence from different data sources to build a coherent justification for the themes. The second is to use peer debriefing, which is locating a person, in this case, the adviser, who reviews and asks questions about the study. The third is to use an external auditor, who is not familiar with the research, in order to review the entire research and contribute with an objective assessment. This external auditor is provided by the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

Population

The population comprises 10 women between 13 and 55 years old. They are currently coursing the cycle 3.1 in the school Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. This population is part of the education program for young and adult people who are survivors of the Colombian armed conflict, *Días y Noches de Paz y de Amor Siempre* (Days and Nights of Peace and Love always).

Ethical Considerations

On the one hand, the permissions from students and the institution are provided and, as agreed, the names of people are masked as well as some information required in order to protect their human rights. Moreover, the participants of this research come from vulnerable and unsteady contexts, which has led to an intermittent attendance of some of the students. Other students have suddenly dropped out of the course.

On the other hand, the present research aimed to be an action research with three main stages: first, characterisation of the population and identification of the problem through different data collection instruments; second, design and implementation of the pedagogical proposal that emerged from the problem; third, analysis of data collected through triangulation. However, due to the global lockdown caused by the newly discovered coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the implementation of the proposal could not be carried out, and no more data could be collected. For this reason, the present research is an exploratory action research that has accomplished the three steps of the exploration phase and the first step of the action phase. Hence, a pedagogical proposal emerges from these phases and it aims to solve the problem found in Chapter I. This proposal also aims to be implemented in the future in similar populations (EFL adult students in a basic level from violent and vulnerable contexts).

Chapter IV: Pedagogical Intervention Proposal

This chapter explores the pedagogical proposal *Let the Words Fly* that emerged after the discussion of the previous chapters. In this way, this chapter presents the pedagogical approach used for the development of the proposal, task-based approach; a general description of the proposal; the stages of the intervention of the proposal; a table with the chronogram of activities; the planning model of the proposal; and, the development of the proposal.

Pedagogical Approach

Task-based approach

The pedagogical approach used to develop the material of the proposal is the Task-Based Approach. This approach has been selected because, first, it corresponds to an inductive way of learning a foreign language and, second, because it helps to accomplish different smaller tasks to reach a final task, which in this case is a short fictional story created by the students by means of tasks. In this approach, language is communicating and doing, and culture is seen when the task has a cultural focus (Larsen and Anderson, 2011). Additionally, Harmer (2007) considers that Task-Based Learning is an extension of communicative language teaching, and it emphasises on the task rather than on language. Thus, students perform real-life tasks, then, they look at the language they have used and work on the imperfections in terms of grammar and style.

Although in this pedagogical approach the role of students' native language is not explicit (Larsen and Anderson, 2011), for the implementation of this proposal, as students are at beginner levels, "students are going to translate what is happening into their L1 whether teachers want them to or not. It is a natural process of learning a foreign language" (Harmer, 2007, p. 38). However, English is heard as much as possible in the environment of the classroom.

In this way, the role of L1 (Spanish) is used in few situations as “once we give instructions for an activity, for example, we can ask students to repeat the instructions back to us in the L1 – and this will tell us whether they have understood what they have to do” (Harmer, 2007, p. 39). Thereby, the L1 role is to encourage students to explain back complicated instructions. Another situation mentioned by Harmer (2007) is to translate particular words, phrases or sentences that require an abstract explanation. These are the two main situations in which the Spanish language is recommended to be used in this pedagogical proposal.

On the other hand, the conception of learning as a process is presented. Instead of learning language items in a specific sequence, students work on relevant and meaningful content texts through tasks that actively engage students (Larsen & Anderson, 2011). Therefore, the tasks have clear outcomes that show the learning process of and to students. To bring this meaning into the tasks, Willis & Willis (2007) state that the most successful activities are those that involve a spontaneous exchange of meaning. “Perhaps the teacher starts by telling a personal story which immediately engages the learners’ interest. They respond with stories of their own” (p. 8). Consequently, by means of a task, there is a real personal involvement between the learner with the language, and this makes confidence and fluency increase.

In terms of the teacher’s role, they are the input providers, it means, the ones who choose the task based on an analysis of students’ needs and level. Thus, teachers create the different phases of the task: a pre-task, a task follow-up and the post-task (to reinforce students’ learning and address any problems arisen). Moreover, teachers monitor the students’ performance and intervene as necessary. To select the task, teachers can negotiate with students or make a good analysis to determine a real-world task. The students’ role is to communicate with their peers to

complete a task as they are actively engaged with it. In this way, they work closely together to help each other accomplish the task.

In addition, in order to define what a task is, the perspective of Peter Skehan's (as cited in Douglas, 2000, pg. 242) is adopted: Tasks have five main characteristics: 1) In tasks meaning is primary. 2) There is a communication problem to solve. 3) The activities should be comparable to real-world problems. 4) Completing a task is a priority. 5) The assessment of the task is in terms of outcome. It is also known that there are five types of task: open-ended, structured, teacher-fronted, small group, and pair work.

In accordance with Larsen & Anderson (2011), a syllabus made from the perspective of the Task-Based Approach does not have a grammar instruction and it is analytic, which means that it is organized in terms of purposes for which students are learning the language they want to perform. Besides, the syllabus is composed by tasks, not by a sequence of linguistic items.

The principles of the task-based approach are: the task is a clear outcome; students seek to complete the task; there is a problem-solving negotiation between the students' previous knowledge and the new knowledge; students receive comprehensive input; language is acquired through use and the grammar is taught inductively by input enhancement (using a specific expression in boldface), or input flooding (using a particular vocabulary items or structure with great frequency) (Larsen and Anderson, 2011).

In terms of the task types, Willis & Willis (2007) propound tasks involving listing, ordering and sorting, matching, comparing, sharing personal experience, projects and creative task and problem solving. The task types that are used in this pedagogical intervention are mentioned below.

Listing: brainstorming, games (quizzes, memory challenge and guessing games).

Ordering and sorting: sequencing (arranging a series of jumbled pictures to make a story).

Visual support: charts and tables, timelines and storylines (these help students organise information in a more structured way).

Matching: listening and matching, reading and matching words and phrases to pictures.

Problem-solving tasks (students offer advice and recommendations on problems).

Sharing personal experiences: storytelling, anecdotes and reminiscences.

Finally, in terms of assessment, it is said that “A good task not only generates interest and creates an acceptable degree of challenge but also generates opportunities for learners to experience and activate as much language as possible” (Willis & Willis, 2007, p.70). For this reason, “the teacher constantly evaluates students in light of task outcomes and the language they use” (Larsen & Anderson, 2011, p. 201).

General Description of the Pedagogical Proposal *Let the Words Fly*

The proposal *Let the Words Fly* is a series of contextualised material to work on writing skills in EFL through the creation of short fictional stories with adult women students who are victims of the Colombian armed conflict. This proposal takes into consideration the students’ contexts and their English level which, in this case, is a basic level, as described in Chapter I.

Let the Words Fly is a slogan to stimulate the creativity and imagination of students and to encourage them to express themselves through the foreign language. The logo created for this proposal has the slogan on it and an open book from which arises different colourful butterflies. It represents the growth of creativity and ideas that emerge from the written language.

Figure 3

Logo of the Pedagogical Proposal Let the Words Fly



The material development of this proposal is made up of, on the one hand, thirteen lesson plans (material for the teacher) and, on the other hand, eleven workshops and seven cardstocks (material for the students). The lesson plans describe the stages of the class and the additional activities that are not specified in the workshops. Thus, the workshops and the cardstocks are only used for the writing activities and the production of the short story. The complete material is attached at the end of the present research as annexes (from Annex 6 to Annex 18).

Intervention Stages

Figure 4

Intervention Stages of the proposal Let the Words Fly

LET THE WORDS FLY		
TASK	GENERAL OBJECTIVE	# SESSIONS
Task 1: <i>Creation of the characters.</i>	To create three fictional characters by different means.	Three sessions
Task 2: <i>Creation of the setting.</i>	To create the setting of the story that show when and where is developed the story.	Two sessions
Task 3: <i>Creation of the plot.</i>	To create the plot of the story through a coherent sequence of events.	Two sessions

Task 4: <i>Creation of the story.</i>	To create the final story using the previous creations and divided into beginning, middle (climax) and ending.	Four sessions
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As the outcome that emerges from the different tasks of the present proposal is a short story, the activities aim to integrate the elements of a narrative: characters, setting and plot (McCarthy, 1998). That is way this pedagogical proposal is divided into four main tasks that are put together to obtain the outcome.

The first task is the creation of three characters of the fictional story. This task takes three sessions (from session 1 to session 3). In this stage, students describe three characters by answering the question who? The characters are described with fictional and real features using different kinds of adjectives. For this, students do different activities like describing themselves, asking their classmates for information and describing characters from pictures. In the three sessions students have to write and rewrite the descriptions of the characters and draw them.

The second task is the creation of the setting of the fictional story. This stage takes two sessions (from session 4 to session 5). Students describe the setting of their story by answering the questions when and where? For this, students identify the times of the day and the names of different common places in English in order to use this vocabulary in their stories. Among the activities, students match images with the names of the places, identify times of the day and do teamwork activities to find information. In addition, students choose a place where their story takes place, describe it, rewrite the description and draw it.

The third task seeks to create the plot of the fictional story. This task takes two sessions (from session 7 to session 8). The main objective is to create the plot of the fictional story by answering the question how is the sequence of events? For this, students do different activities,

for instance, they identify the characters, the setting and the plot (beginning, middle and ending) of different stories listened and read. Students also relate some images to different situations that help them have an idea of the topics they can write about. This is how students write the potential plot of their story bearing in mind the beginning, the middle and the ending of their story.

The fourth and final stage is the creation of the story divided into beginning, middle and ending. This has to do with the final task/outcome that takes four sessions to be developed (from session 9 to session 12) and it implies the joining together of the four tasks. To obtain the final story, students go back to the plot created in the previous stage, then, they enlarge, describe in detail and rewrite the beginning, the middle and the ending. For this, students learn some adverbs of sequence and verbs that can be used in their writings. Additionally, they do different activities like performing random situations, matching images that show a cause and effect, among others, in order to learn more vocabulary and obtain different references and models to write their story.

Chronogram of Activities

Figure 5

Chronogram of Activities of the Proposal Let the Words Fly

TASK	SESSION	LEARNING OBJECTIVES	MAIN ACTIVITY
Task 1: Creation of characters.	Session 1: Lesson Plan 1 – Workshop 1 (see Annex 6)	To describe themselves physically and mentally with real and fictional features.	Writing a description of themselves based on the example shown.
	Session 2: Lesson Plan 2 – Workshop 2 (see Annex 7)	To make a character with random information and features.	Making a character with random features that are described by writing and drawing.
	Session 3: Lesson Plan 3 – Workshop 3	To create a character with fictional characteristics as	Creating a character with fictional characteristics and superpowers that

	(see Annex 8)	superpowers by means of different pictures.	is described by writing and drawing.
Task 2: <i>Creations of the setting.</i>	Session 4: Lesson Plan 4 – Workshop 4 (see Annex 9)	To identify the different dates and times of the day when the story takes place.	Choosing and describing the time when the story takes place.
	Session 5: Lesson Plan 5 – Workshop 5 (see Annex 10)	To describe the place where the story takes place.	Describing and identifying different places where a story takes place.
Task: socialisation	Session 6: Lesson Plan 6 – No Workshop (see Annex 11)	To share students' creations (characters and settings) with other classmates.	Reading aloud the description of my characters and setting and listening to the description of other students' creations.
Task 3: <i>Creation of the plot.</i>	Session 7: Lesson Plan 7 – Workshop 6 (see Annex 12)	To identify the characters, the setting, the main idea and the plot of a story.	Listening and reading different stories in order to identify the characters, the setting, the main idea and the plot of the story.
	Session 8: Lesson Plan 8 – Workshop 7 (see Annex 13)	To write the plot of the story taking into consideration the beginning, the middle (climax) and the ending.	Identifying and creating a situation (main idea of a story) and organising it into beginning, middle and ending.
Task 4: <i>Creation of the story.</i>	Session 9: Lesson Plan 9 – Workshop 8 (see Annex 14)	To rewrite the plot of the story but dividing it into sequence of events.	Recognising and using the sequence adverbs to rewrite the plot of the story.
	Session 10: Lesson Plan 10 – Workshop 9 (see Annex 15)	To go back to the beginning of the story and describe it in detail.	Recognising the beginning of some stories and rewriting with a depth description the beginning of my story.
	Session 11: Lesson Plan 11 – Workshop 10 (see Annex 16)	To rewrite the middle (climax) of the story adding a detailed description of the situation.	Performing different situations and rewriting in detail the situation (middle) of my story.
	Session 12: Lesson Plan 12 – Workshop 11	To edit the ending of the story previously written in the plot of the story.	Inventing possible endings of a story and editing the ending of my story.

	(see Annex 17)		
Task: socialisation	Session 13: Lesson Plan 13 – No Workshop (see Annex 18)	To socialise students’ short fictional stories with other classmates.	Presenting the final short fictional story through the cardstocks in which students wrote and drew the story.

Planning Model

The material development of the proposal *Let the Words Fly* is planned and structured with the help of three different resources: lesson plans, workshops and cardstocks.

Lesson Plans

The format used in the thirteen lesson plans is called Lesson Plan # (see Annexes from 6 to 18). As stated by Brown, (2001) the term “lesson” is considered a unified set of activities that covers a period of classroom time that is significant for the teachers because it represents the preparation and steps of the class along a curriculum. “Those lessons, from the point of view of your own and students’ time management, are practical, tangible units of effort that serve to provide a rhythm to a course of study” (Brown, 2001, p. 149).

Each lesson plan is divided into general information, the lesson outline of the session and the key vocabulary. The chart of general information includes the name of the school, the grade, the topic, the teacher’s name and the time. Besides, it has the prescribed learning outcomes and the key linguistic structures used. The lesson outline is split into four columns: stages/estimated time, specific objectives, description/procedures and resources/materials. The rows that form the stages are divided into opening of the class, warm-up, practice activity, production and closing activity. Finally, in the box of key vocabulary can be found the vocabulary mainly used in that session. Moreover, after each format, the extra material that is not specified in the workshops is attached, including images and flash cards if necessary.

Figure 6

Example of a Lesson Plan: Lesson Plan 10

Lesson Plan 10			
School: Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño			
Grade: Cycle 3.1, women			
Topic: Task 4: Creation of the story, part 1.			
Teacher's name: Johana Gutiérrez Lol			
Time: 90 minutes			
Keys	SW: Students will SWBAT: Students will be able to Ss: Students T: Teacher		
Prescribed learning outcomes	SW go back to the beginning of their story and describe it in detail. SW read different beginnings of stories		
Key linguistic structures	Present simple Present continuous		
Lesson Outline			
Stages and estimated time	Specific objectives	Description/ procedures	Resources/ materials
Opening of the class 15 minutes	* To identify the cause and the consequence of some situations through images.	- Ss have to gather in a circle. T places some images on the floor. Ss have to play the game <i>Find the pairs</i> (cause and consequence)	Images of cause and consequence. (Annex 1)
Warm-up 15 minutes	*To read a story and identify its parts.	Ss have to read the story <i>My dad</i> and match the events to the pictures.	Workshop – Part 1
Practice Activity 20 minutes	* To identify the beginning of different stories.	- Ss have to read the beginnings of different stories and match them with the images below. After that, they have to transcribe what was read in front of the correct picture.	- Workshop – Part 1
Production 35 minutes	* To rewrite the beginning of the story in detail.	- Ss have to describe in detail the beginning of their story written in a previous session. (Description of the characters, their relations, the setting and the general situation).	Workshop part 2 Cardstock

		- Ss have to rewrite the beginning of their story in a cardstock and draw an image.	
Closing 5 minutes	* To socialise the beginnings of the stories.	- Some Ss share the beginnings. Ss have to hand their cardstocks over to the teacher.	Workshop part 2

Key vocabulary	Vocabulary of description of the beginning of a story (it varies).
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Annex 1 Images of cause and consequence for the game *Find the pairs*. The images were taken from Pinterest. Cano, J. Causa y Efecto. Pinterest.



The story *My Dad* was taken and modified from: Ashmore, K. (2017). *My dad*. The United Kingdom: British Council. Animation by Cambridge English Online

Note. The *Lesson Plan 10* is part of the material of the Session 10 in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 1 (beginning of the story)

Workshops

For this research a workshop “refers to interactive, usually one-off, intensive, face-to-face, educational initiatives that require input from all present and result in benefits for both participants and facilitators” (Scoufis, 2008, p.2). The eleven workshops that are presented in the proposal are focused on working on the writing skill in EFL through the creation of a short story (see Annex 6, Annex 7, Annex 8, Annex 9, Annex 10, Annex 12, Annex 13, Annex 14, Annex 15, Annex 16 and Annex 17). In the workshops there are not grammar instructions, those are given by the teacher whenever it is needed. Additionally, most of the workshops are divided into Part 1 and Part 2; the former is a series of activities related to storytelling and writing, and the latter is related to the production of the short fictional story. Besides, the workshops specify the name of the school, the cycle and the information of the teacher and they have two blank spaces to write down the name of the student and the date.

Figure 7

Example of a Workshop: Workshop 9



IED LICEO FEMENINO MERCEDES NARIÑO
 Días y Noches de Paz y Amor por Siempre – Ciclo 3.1
 Teacher Johana Gutiérrez Lol - Universidad Pedagógica Nacional

STUDENT NAME: _____
 DATE: _____

Workshop 9 – Part 1

Task: Match the images with the adapted text *My dad*. Write the number in the picture.

1. "Hello, I'm Lottie. I'm ten years old. I live with my dad and my sister in England. I'm going to tell you about my dad".

2. "This is my dad. His name is Paul. He's 46 years old. His hair is black and grey. He's got green eyes".

3. "He makes our breakfast, and sometimes he takes me to school. **My dad is making** my breakfast in this picture".

4. "Sometimes I help him cook our tea. In this picture, **I am helping** to make a pasta sauce".

5. "After tea my dad sometimes helps me with my homework. **He is helping** me with maths here".

6. "Sometimes we go to the library. **I am choosing** some books here"



Text adapted from: Ashmore, K. (2017). *My dad*. The United Kingdom: British Council. Animation by Cambridge English Online

Task: Read part of the **beginnings** of three different stories below.

They are flying around the trees to look for sticks and straws in order to make their nest bigger.

She is always eating candies; in the morning, she eats bonbons; in the afternoon, she eats chocolates; at night, she eats lollipops.

I am cooking something special for my friends **who are coming** today.

Task: Complete the beginning of the stories with the previous information read.



She is **Mariela**. She is 7 years old. She lives in Pasto with her family. She is short and her hair is black. She is a very intelligent girl. _____

They are **Paco and Paca**. They live in a nest in Córdoba. They love to eat worms, seeds and fruits. They have a big family and they want to have babies. _____



I am **Sandra**. I am 38 years old. I live in Medellín. I sell fruits and vegetables in a grocery _____

Workshop 9 – Part 2

Task: Rewrite the beginning of your story in detail. Describe the characters, what they do, their relations, the setting and the general situation.

BEGINNING

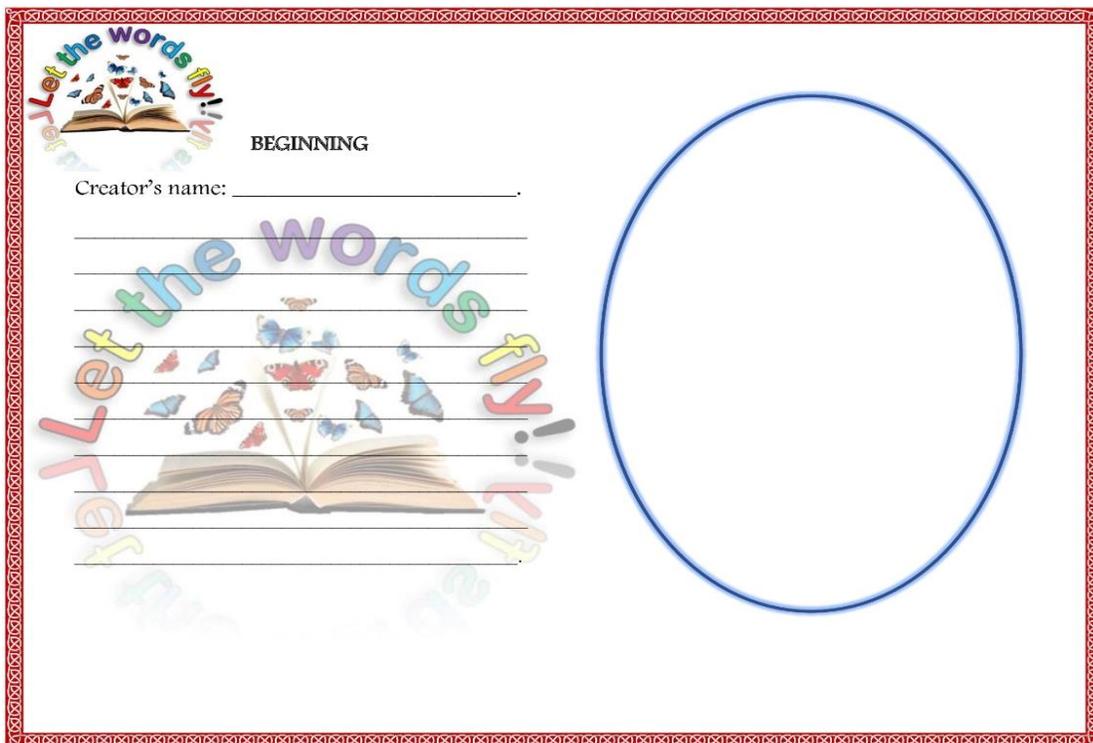
Note. *Workshop 9* is part of the material of the Session 10 in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 1 (beginning of the story)

Cardstocks

The present material has seven cardstocks where students rewrite the final version of the different elements of their stories and represent what they write through a drawing: cardstocks for the characters (see Annex 6, Annex 7 and Annex 8); a cardstock for the setting (see Annex 10); a cardstock for the beginning of the story (see Annex 15); a cardstock for the middle of the story (see Annex 16); and a cardstock for the ending of the story (see Annex 17). They are called cardstocks because the proposed design is printed on a cardstock which is a more hard-wearing material than a sheet of paper. In the last session, students put together the seven cardstocks and obtain their final short fictional story.

Figure 8

Example of a Cardstock: Beginning



Note. The Cardstock *Beginning* is part of the material of the Session 10 in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 1 (beginning of the story)

Development of the proposal *Let the Words Fly*

For the implementation of the proposal *Let the Words Fly*, a previous meeting with the students is suggested in which the teacher-researcher explains the aims of the proposal and the plan for the classes. Furthermore, the teacher-researcher presents three big posters that point out the rules of the class, some phrases of Survival English and a list of verbs in present simple, past simple and past participle. As stated by Tomlinson (2010) in the principles of material development, it is important that the material stimulates positive emotions in the learning environment. In this way, students can check the posters when they do not know a basic word or expression; thus, they are encouraged to participate while the stress of not knowing how to communicate in the foreign language is reduced.

In order to explain the activities developed in the material of the proposal *Let the Words Fly*, the tasks of the stages of the lesson plan (opening of the class, warm-up, practice activity, production and closing.) are being described and related to some theoretical bases.

Tasks of the stage Opening of the class

The Openings of the class of all the sessions (see Annexes 6 to 18) have two main purposes; first, to introduce students to the vocabulary needed for the class; and second, as stated in one principle for material development, to engage students affectively in their language experiences through positive stimuli like art and enjoyable activities (Tomlinson, 2010). For instance, in the opening of session 1 (see Annex 6) students are given a badge that they can wear with different positive stimuli sentences like “I am smart”, “I am beautiful”, among others. In the opening of session 2 (see Annex 7) the teacher shows two figures made of modelling clay and asks students to describe them; then, students have to spot differences as a task to compare both

figures (Willis & Willis, 2007) through basic affirmative and negative sentences in present simple. In the opening of session 7 (see Annex 12) students have to mimic different emotions and wear a mask with different faces. In the opening of session 11 (see Annex 16) students have to play the game Eeny, meeny, miny, moe and perform different situations. In the opening of session 12 (see Annex 17), through the use of puppets and performances, students are presented with some situations. In the opening of session 13 (See Annex 18) students are encouraged to participate through the use of the song *Don't worry, be happy* by Bobby McFerrin that is played in the classroom; they have to sing the chorus of the song and follow the lyrics.

Figure 9

Example of a task of the stage Opening of the class

Lesson Outline

Stages and estimated time	Specific objectives	Description/ procedures	Resources/materials
Opening of the class 15 minutes	*To review the vocabulary of basic adjective emotions (happy, sad, angry, surprised).	- T mimics the emotions. Ss have to repeat " <i>The teacher is sad, the teacher is happy, the teacher is surprised</i> " - T gives students four mask with sad, happy, angry and surprised faces. - Some students will wear the mask and the others have to say, for instance, "Juan is sad" "Sara is happy"	Four masks (happy face, sad face, angry face and surprised face) (Annex 1)

Annex 1: MASKS



Note. This *Opening of the class* activity is part of the material of the Session 7 (see Annex 12) in which is developed the Task 3: Creation of the plot, part 1.

For the tasks of this stage, it is needed extra material that is specified in the lesson plans. The expected results of the activities in the Opening of the class are to encourage students to participate and make them feel comfortable with the foreign language, with the class and with their learning process. For this kind of activities there is a closer interaction between the students and between the teacher-researcher and the students.

Tasks of the stage Warm-up

In the stage of Warm-up (see Annexes 6 to 18), students are presented with the topic for the class through different kinds of task. Most of the tasks introduce the vocabulary and the expressions to be used in the session. In the warm-up stage “instead of a language structure or function to be learned, students are presented with a task they have to perform, or a problem they have to solve” (Piñeiro, 2009, p. 205). For instance, in session 1 (see Annex 7) in the warm-up task students are given the description of the singer Shakira and then they have to do a True/False Statements activity (Fedicheva, 2011) in which, after identifying whether the statements are true or false, they have to correct the false ones by writing down the right information.

Figure 10

Example of a Warm-up task: True/False Statements activity

Task: Say whether the sentence is TRUE or FALSE according to the picture. If it is false, write down the sentence with the correct information.



She has blond hair.

She has blue eyes.

She is angry.

She is fat.

She is short.

She is beautiful.

Note. This *Warm-up activity* is part of the material of the Session 1 (see Annex 6) in which is developed the Task 1: Creation of characters, part 1 (first character)

Another common task presented in the Warm-up of the material development of this proposal is the matching activities that involve reading and matching (Willis & Willis, 2007); for example, in session 4 (see Annex 9) students have to play a game of matching the vocabulary to pictures in order to learn the times of the day; in session 7 (see Annex 12) students have to read some situations and match them to a face to identify how the situation makes them feel (angry, surprised, happy or sad); in session 8 (see Annex 13) students have to match random situations written on cards to pictures that are hung on the classroom's walls; in session 9 (see Annex 14), students have to read a story and match the sequence of events to the pictures presented.

Figure 11

Example of a Warm-up task: Reading and Matching

Task 1: Match the situation with a face.

I win the lottery.

I fail my English exam.

My family loves me.

A thief steals my mobile phone.

Note. This *Warm-up activity* is part of the material of the Session 7 (see Annex 12) in which is developed the Task 3: Creation of the plot, part 1.

There are other kinds of activities in the Warm-up stage related to arts that do not require workshops but another kind of resource or material. For instance, in session 2 (see Annex 7), students have to make a figure of an animal or an object with modelling clay; in session 3 (see Annex 8), students are asked to perform or mimic a verb or superpower; among others.

Figure 12

Example of a Warm-up task: Arts

Stages and estimated time	Specific objectives	Description/ procedures	Resources/materials
Warm-up 20 minutes	* To create a figure with modelling clay based on a description given.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T gives students a sheet of paper with of an object or an animal written on it. - Ss have to read the sheet of paper and take some modelling clay to create the figure. - T sets a table in the middle of the class to collect all the creations. There is a deadline to finish the activity (the students that finish faster get a candy and the workshop). After that, T takes one creation by one and asks “What is this?”. Ss have to answer “This is a blue house”, for example and add more characteristics as possible. 	Pieces of paper with basic descriptions of objects: <i>Red car, Beautiful tree, White house, Pink flower, Brown dog, Grey cat, Blue bird, Brown table, Blue car, Beautiful tree, Yellow house, Purple flower, Black dog, White cat, Green bird, Brown chair, Red rose, Yellow dog, Black car, Green house, White bird, Brown table.</i> Modelling clay Candies

Note. This *Warm-up activity* is part of the material of the Session 2 (see Annex 7) in which is developed the Task 1: Creation of the second character, part 2.

Furthermore, as the material needs to be contextualised in the communicative context of students (Tomlinson, 2010), among the resources needed in the Warm-up task for session 5 (see Annex 10) there are different realia materials that are related to the vocabulary of places as spoons, umbrellas, bread, balls, sausages, etc.

Figure 13

Example of a Warm-up task: Realia

Warm-up 25 minutes	*To describe different places in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ss have to make groups. - Each group is assigned a place and receives some objects related to the place and kraft paper. - Ss have to draw in the craft paper the place that they were assigned and present it to their classmates. PLACES AND OBJECTS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Restaurant: fork, spoon, plate. *Park: ball *Bakery: bread and yogurt. *Street: umbrella, a bag. *Butcher's: sausages. *Church: rosary. *House: pyjama. *School: books and backpacks. *Countryside: oranges. *Hospital: white coat, mask, surgical gloves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Objects: a fork, a spoon, a plate, a ball, some bread, some yogurt, an umbrella, a bag, some sausages, a rosary, a pyjama and some oranges. * Kraft paper. * Markers and colours.
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Note. This *Warm-up activity* is part of the material of the Session 5 (see Annex 10) in which is developed the Task 2: Creation of setting (where) part 2.

Some of the tasks of this stage require the use of workshops and others require extra material specified in the lesson plans. The expected result of the Warm-up activities is to introduce students to the vocabulary and the topic they are working on. In this way, students are given a specific structure that they can use as a model to develop the next activities.

Tasks of the stage Practice Activity

In the stage of Practice Activity, all the activities aim at practising the topic that is being taught. For this reason, students “perform the task and focus on language form as they do the tasks” (Piñeiro, 2009, p. 206). In the practice activities, the resource used is the workshop because all of them imply reading and writing. For instance, as in sessions 1, 2 and 3 the aim is to create the characters of the short fictional story (see Annexes 6, 7 and 8), the practice activities imply controlled writing activities (Douglas, 2001) in which students have to follow the structure of a description given and change some elements to describe their own characters. Moreover, as students are creating fictional stories, their characters have fictional features that combine

imagination with observations of real people (Hynes, 2015). For this reason, the controlled writing task of session 3 (see Annex 8) implies vocabulary related to superpowers that the students use to create their last character.

Figure 14

Example of a Practice Activity: Controlled Writing Activity

NOW... YOUR TURN!

Task: Write your description taking into account the previous description of Shakira.

Draw yourself here

My name is _____.

I am from _____.

I am a _____.

My favourite colour is _____.

I like _____.

I am _____.

I have _____ hair.

I have _____ eyes.

I am _____.

Note. This *Practice Activity* is part of the material of the Session 1 (see Annex 6) in which is developed the Task 1: Creation of characters, part 1.

Besides, in the tasks of practice activity in sessions 2 and 3, apart from doing a controlled writing activity, students are asked to fill out a table that can “help learners process and organise information in a more structure way” (Willis & Willis, 2007, p.78). It is important to highlight that the information to fill out the table of the practice activity in session 2 is obtained through the

interaction between students who randomly ask their classmates some questions. This interaction is essential in the development of material in order to achieve communicative purposes, as suggested in Tomlinson's principles (2010).

Figure 15

Example of a Practice Activity: Filling out a table

Task: Fill the next table asking the questions to random classmates.

PERSON'S NAME	#	QUESTION	ANSWER
	1	How old are you?	
	2	Where are you from?	
	3	What is your favourite colour?	
	4	Are you short or tall?	
	5	Are dogs beautiful or ugly?	
	6	What is your favourite food?	
	7	What do you do in your free time?	
	8	What would you like to be?	

Note. This *Practice Activity* is part of the material of the Session 2 (see Annex 7) in which is developed the Task 1: Creation of the second character, part 2.

The stage Practice Activity of sessions 4 and 5 (see Annexes 9 and 10) aims at practising the vocabulary for creating the setting of the story. For this purpose, both sessions include activities of reading and matching text to pictures (Willis & Willis, 2007). Additionally, in session 5, as it is important that the material used in class is contextualised (Tomlinson, 2010), the photos used for the matching task were taken in the neighbourhood where the school of students of cycle 3.1. is located in order to introduce the vocabulary of places (see Annex 10).

Figure 16

Example of a Practice Activity: Matching words to contextualised pictures

Task: Match the image with the name of the place.

Restaurant

Park

Bakery

Butcher's

House

School

Countryside

Hospital

Note. This *Practice Activity* is part of the material of the Session 5 (see Annex 10) in which is developed the Task 2: Creation of setting (where) part 2.

For the same stage of Practice Activity of sessions 7 to 12 (see Annexes 12 to 17) students have to accomplish different activities to identify and practise the sequence of events of a story

and the storytelling elements of beginning, middle and ending (Haven, 2000). All the activities require the reading of a short story that, most of the times, is an authentic text adapted by the teacher-researcher as *The ugly duckling* by the British Council (2017) in session 7 (see Annex 12), *My Dad* by Ashmore (2017) in session 10 (see Annex 15) and *Amanda's work* by an unknown author in session 12 (see Annex 17). The references of the short stories taken from external sources are placed in the Lesson Plans where they were used.

Figure 17

Example of a Practice Activity: Authentic text adapted to work on a guided writing activity (creating the ending of a story)

Task: Read part of the story *Amanda's work*.

Amanda's work



"Amanda goes to work every day. She works in an office. She works very hard. She starts at 7 o'clock in the morning and finishes at 10 o'clock at night. She likes her work, and she wants to be a good worker, but she has one problem. Her boss is not a very good boss.

He tells her to do one thing, and then he changes his mind. He tells her to do another thing, and then he changes his mind again. He tells her to do something else, and again, changes his mind. Amanda doesn't like this. She says, "This is a waste of time!"



Today Amanda decides to talk with him".

Task: Write a possible ending for the story.

Ending: _____

Note. This *Practice Activity* is part of the material of the Session 12 (see Annex 17) in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 3 (Ending).

Moreover, there are other short stories created by the teacher-researcher in order to relate the students' contexts to the stories read and to highlight the characteristics needed to accomplish the writing activity; for instance, the text *Tolima* in session 5 (see Annex 10), the text *Yo Soy Betty La Fea (I am Betty, the ugly)* in session 7 (see Annex 12), the text *Paco and Paca* in sessions 10 and 11 (see Annex 15 and 16), among others.

Figure 18

Example of a Practice Activity: Text created by the teacher-researcher to work on a guided writing activity for the creation of the middle of the story.

Task: Do you remember **Paco and Paca**? Read the middle (climax) of their story.



Paco and Paca are looking around for sticks for their nest. They are very excited to lay their eggs. Paco **says** to Paca "Dear, I am worried. I do not have any stick for our nest". Paca **answers** "Neither do I". While they are flying around, they realise that humans are building new houses and roads on their land. Paca says to Paco "Honey, humans are chopping down the trees, now, we do not have any place to live".

Task: Answer the following question:

1. What do you think about the climax of the short story *Paco and Paca*?

I think that _____

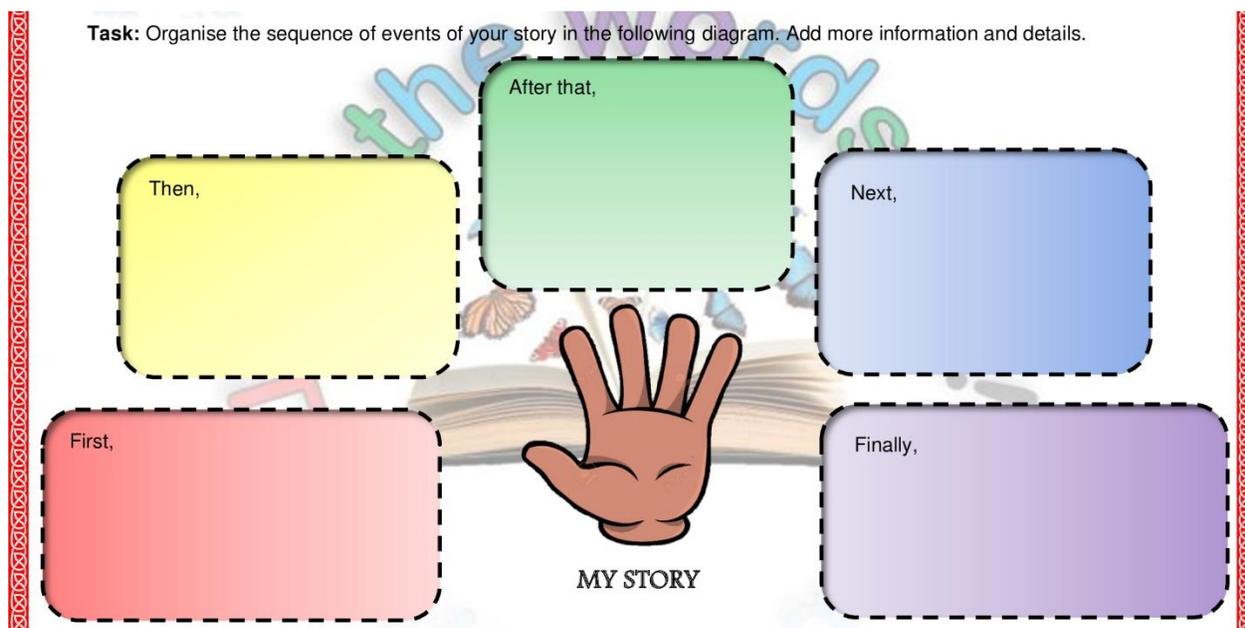
Note. This *Practice Activity* is part of the material of the Session 11 (see Annex 16) in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 2 (Middle of the story)

. Also, all the practice activities from the sessions 7 to 12 lead to a guided writing task in which the teacher-researcher offers a series of stimulators that help the students to write a text. For example, in session 8 (see Annex 13) students are given the elements of a story (beginning, middle and ending) and, after reading some plot models, they have to create the plot of their

stories bearing in mind those elements. Another example of guided writing is shown in session 9 (see Annex 14), in which students have to re-write the plot of their story, but this time adding the adverbs of frequency to define the sequence of events. Moreover, in session 12 (see Annex 17) students have to do a guided writing activity of story-starters (Fedicheva, 2011) in which they are given a story without ending and they are asked to finish it.

Figure 19

Example of a Practice Activity: Guided writing task, rewriting the plot of the story with adverbs of sequence



Note. This *Practice Activity* is part of the material of the Session 9 (see Annex 14) in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 1

The expected results of the stage Practice Activity is that students learn the process to write and create a short fictional story. In this way, the activities lead students in the creation process by giving them a basis of the vocabulary, the characteristics of the parts of the story and the structure that they can follow in their creations.

Tasks of the stage Production

The stage of Production is the consolidation of the previous stages in which the students are asked to use the new language on their own (Piñeiro, 2009). The aim of this stage, for this proposal, is to create a short fictional story with the elements given to students throughout the sessions. In this way, for the production tasks, students accomplish free writing activities (Broughton et al., 2003) in all the workshops in which they have to produce a narrative text, step by step, with the help of their creativity and the previous knowledge obtained.

For the tasks of the stage Production, there are two kinds of materials, the workshops and the cardstocks. As writing is a process that has different steps as prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading, editing and revising (Smith, 2003), the production stage in this proposal is divided into two parts; the first one is a draft that is written in the workshop where the student can proofread, edit and revise with the help of the teacher; the second one is a final version that is written in the cardstock. This means that in the cardstocks are placed the final versions of the elements of the students' short fictional stories: three characters of the story in the sessions 1, 2 and 3 (see Annexes 6, 7 and 8); the setting of the story in the session 5 (see Annex 10); the beginning of the story in session 10 (see Annex 15); the middle of the story in session 11 (see Annex 16); and the ending of the story in session 12 (see Annex 17).

Figure 20

Example of a Production Activity: Workshop, (free writing activity - draft of the ending)



Note. This *Production Activity* is part of the material of the Session 12 (see Annex 17) in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 3 (Ending).

Figure 21

Example of a Production Activity: Cardstock (final version of the ending)

Let the words fly!

ENDING

Creator's name: _____

Let the words fly!

Let the words fly!

Note. This *Production Activity* is part of the material of the Session 12 (see Annex 17) in which is developed the Task 4: Creation of the story, part 3 (Ending).

The expected result of the stage Production is that students create their own fictional stories with the elements presented throughout the sessions. Besides, this stage allows students to conceive writing as a process because they are following different steps to reach the final version of the story. Thereby, students are able to check their writing process to improve their creations.

Socialisation sessions

Having said that, this implementation includes two sessions in which students socialise their progress and their outcome. The first one is in session 6 (see Annex 11) in which students show the characters and the setting they created. The second one is performed in session 13 (see Annex 18) in which students show the final short fictional story that they created (the joining

together of the seven cardstocks created in the previous sessions). The purpose of the socialisation is to create the opportunity to use the language with communicative purposes and interact with their classmates. According to Tomlinson (2010), when using the language in this way, students obtain feedback and a meaningful input of the use of the language while interacting with their interlocutors (their classmates and the teacher) who make them clarify and elaborate their ideas. In addition, in these sessions, as writing is a process that requires revising and proofreading, at the beginning of the session, students have the opportunity to revise and proofread their creations and ask the teacher for help if needed.

Figure 22

Example of the stages of a socialisation session

Stages and estimated time	Specific objectives	Description/ procedures	Resources /materials
Opening of the class 15 minutes	*To make the students feel comfortable.	- T plays the song Don't Worry Be Happy by Bobby McFerrin. Ss have to repeat the sentence Don't worry, be happy and try to sing together.	Small speaker.
Activity 30 minutes	* To add the finishing touches to the beginning, the middle and the ending of the stories. * To name their stories.	- The teacher gives students back their cardstocks with the beginning, the middle and the ending of their stories. - Students have to add the finishing touches, name their stories and re-read their descriptions to make sure that they like their creations.	Students' cardstocks
Activity 35 minutes	* To share their creations with other students. * To read aloud their characters and settings. * To listen to other students' characters and settings.	- Students will share some snacks while socialising their stories. Students have to introduce their presentation: <i>The name of my story is...</i> <i>The characters of my story are...</i> <i>The setting of my story is...</i> (Reading of the story)	Students' cardstocks Snacks
Closing 10 minutes	* To thank students and ask them to clean the classroom.	- Students have to pick the garbage up.	

Note. This *Socialisation Session* is part of the material of the Session 13 (see Annex 18) in which is socialised the students' short fictional stories.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The pedagogical proposal that emerged from the present exploratory action research, called *Let the Words Fly*, achieved the objective of developing contextualised material for the creation of short fictional stories to work on the writing skill in EFL with adult women who are victims of the Colombian armed conflict. Therefore, the objectives of characterising the students' social background, characterising their English performance, defining the main concepts used to create the material and describing the contextualised material were accomplished.

The creation of contextualised material is essential in the teacher's praxis based on the theory and on the findings and understandings of the specific students' contexts in order to improve the practice in the class. Furthermore, this allows to reflect on the purposes of teaching English as a foreign language in Colombia. According to Hurie (2018), the discourse that incorporates teaching English for the post-conflict in Colombia keeps the neoliberal rationality built around domination, colonisation, capitalist exploitation, racism and competition.

In this way, creating contextualised material based on students' interests and experiences, English level and social background allows to teach English understood as a language that is not only colonising and that can be visualised as part of the daily students' context that does not reproduce the traditional discourse. In addition, teaching English in this way is seen as a right that engages students in a critical consciousness of their world while understanding their local and non-local networks (Kruger, 2012). This is how creating short stories through different tasks that include students' experiences and narratives is developed in the pedagogical proposal that emerged from this research.

Finally, another conclusion that come to light in this research is the necessity to support the education of vulnerable populations. As it was shown in this research, the vulnerable population studied did not have the tools and resources to continue the regular classes in the coronavirus lockdown, that is why the implementation of the proposal was impossible to carry out, even by virtual media. This allows to reflect on the gaps and the challenges that the Colombian educational system needs to deal with.

Recommendations

To start, the following recommendations are addressed to teachers, researchers or teacher-researchers who would like to implement the pedagogical proposal *Let the Words Fly*. The development of the material was design for students with a basic English level. Nevertheless, it is subject to changes in order to be implemented in a similar population with a different English level. As the workshops are designed to work on present simple and present continuous, an advanced exercise proposed, stated by Fedicheva (2011) in the examples of writing activities, is that the teacher can ask students to change the present tenses to the past tenses of the story created. The grammar instruction is given during the class as the teacher considers it necessary, but it is not explicit in the workshops or the other materials.

Additionally, as this is a contextualised material development that is addressed to students in cycle 3.1. in Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño, there are some tasks that are related to this specific population. If this proposal is implemented in a similar population but located in another context, some of the tasks can be adapted; for instance, the pictures taken in the students' neighbourhood can be replaced.

On the other hand, as a recommendation for the Language Department in the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, it is important to discuss and reform the practicum and the options of research that students have. The COVID pandemic, that took the entire world by surprise, is an opportunity to reflect on the education alternatives that we need to create and implement as teachers who think about all kinds of populations, especially, vulnerable populations who have been the most affected in this pandemic, who, most of the times, do not have access to technological tools and, sometimes, are not even part of formal education around the country, not only in the capital. With more diverse options, the research that emerge from the Department would allow a broader vision of the educational issues and challenges that the country has, concerning the teaching of languages.

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Annex

Annex 1 (Sample of a survey for the students)

ENCUESTA PARA LAS ESTUDIANTES DEL CICLO 3-1 / 3-2

La siguiente encuesta se ha realizado con el objetivo de caracterizar la población para estructurar las futuras clases de inglés. La encuesta tiene un carácter anónimo. Agradezco tu honestidad, tu participación y tu tiempo.

- ¿Cuántos años tienes? 23
- ¿De dónde eres? Bogotá
- ¿De dónde son tus padres?
Madre Antioquia
Padre Tolima
- ¿En dónde vives?
LOCALIDAD Ciudad Bolívar
BARRIO Divino niño
- ¿Pertenece a alguna de las siguientes poblaciones?
 Indígena
 Afrocolombiana
 Mestiza
 Ninguna
 Otra: _____
- ¿Has sido víctima del conflicto armado en Colombia de alguna manera?
Sí No _____
- Marca cuál de las siguientes actividades haces en tu tiempo libre:
 Jugar baloncesto
 Jugar fútbol
 Ver televisión
 Jugar videojuegos
 Bailar
 Leer
 Escribir
 Montar bicicleta
 Cantar
 Otras: _____
- ¿Trabajas? Sí _____ No
Si sí, ¿En qué trabajas?

- ¿Con quién vives?
 Madre
 Padre
 Hermanos
 Hijos
 Tíos
 Abuelos
- ¿Con cuáles de los siguientes elementos cuentas?
 Televisor
 Celular
 Internet
 Casa propia
 Nevera
 Computador
- ¿En qué lugares has estado diferentes a Bogotá?
Antioquia y Tolima
- ¿Cuál es tu música favorita?
 Popular
 Hip hop /rap
 Salsa
 Reggaetón
 Rock
 Balada
 Otra: _____
- ¿Cuál es tu materia favorita?
Tecnología
- ¿Cuál de las siguientes artes te llama más la atención?
 Música
 Canto
 Teatro
 Baile
 Pintura
 Dibujo
 Otra: _____
- ¿Te gusta trabajar en equipo?
Sí No _____
- ¿Alguna vez has estudiado inglés antes?
Sí _____ No
- ¿Te gusta el inglés? Sí No _____
- ¿Quieres aprender inglés?
Sí No _____
- ¿Conoces alguna canción o película en inglés?
Sí No _____
- ¿Crees que el inglés es importante para tí?
Sí No _____

Annex 2 (Interview for the head English teacher)

This interview was made in English. Nevertheless, the head teacher answered in Spanish by writing.

HEAD TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

The following interview was made for the head English teacher Ismael in order to characterize the population belonging to Ciclo 3 in the school Liceo Femenino on the Saturday's program.

General aspect

1. Can you describe this Project? (Education program for young and adult people who are survivors of the Colombian armed conflict, Días y Noches de Paz y de Amor Siempre)

Cognitive aspects

1. How would you describe the attendance of the students in the English class? Do they frequently attend the class? Have you always had the same population?
2. How do you describe the attitude of the students in the English class?
3. Based on your experience, what are the most effective methods of teaching that you have incorporated in class in order to teach English?
4. How would you describe the learning process of the students?

Socio-affective aspects

1. How would you describe the environment where the students come from? (in general)
2. How would you describe the environment in which the students are immersed?
3. How would you describe the attitude of the students towards the other students and towards you?
4. What are the main student roles you have found in class?
5. How would you describe the family background of the students?
6. What you consider is the value students need to strengthen the most and which one is the most strengthened?

Cultural aspects

1. What have you noticed the students are interested in?

Linguistic aspects

1. What is the previous knowledge students had of the English language? In which level do you think they are?
2. How would you describe the English vocabulary background of the students?
3. What is the English grammar background of the students?

Entrevista maestro

Descripción el proyecto: Programa Educativo para Jóvenes y Adultos Sobrevivientes del Conflicto Armado en Colombia. Está diseñado por campos de pensamiento como son: español e inglés, lógico Matemático, Operaciones mentales, Funciones cognitivas y Valores; desarrollo del pensamiento.

Modalidad semi presencial, la cual se adelanta a través de una serie de materiales pedagógicos “sentir y pensar para vivir/convivir, dirigida a las personas que han retomado su proceso de formación en el contexto educacional de jóvenes, adultos prematuros y adultos.

La estructura de cada uno de los materiales de mediación pedagógica comprende un lema y un tema, un pretexto gráfico pictórico, simbólico en donde se motiva a la actividad académica de los estudiantes para facilitar la consecución de los objetivos propuestos desde la metodología de comunidades de indagación que conlleve al desarrollo de operaciones mentales específicas para cada uno de los (CLEI)

Contenido:

Pensamiento y Comunicabilidad, Vida cotidiana, Sociales, Lógico matemático, ciencias y química .Ambiental(ciencias-Química)

1-Aspectos Cognitivos:

Su atención más que todo en población joven es diversa, pese a sus edades de cada ciclo es variada; están entre los 14 y 58 años, hombres y mujeres; la memoria de algunos les hace malas pasadas a veces y se les dificulta memorizar conceptos, nuevo vocabulario, etc. Son inteligentes, manejan un bajo el cual depende de su zona de procedencia, la cual es de distintas regiones del país.

Su asistencia es bastante variada, pues algunos tienen que laborar y vienen cada quince días, unos justifican con estas asignaciones de trabaja y otros no argumental el por qué de sus ausencias.

2-Para los grupos de grados superiores (ciclos 5 y 6) están más interesados en aprender y conocer más del idioma.

Los métodos de enseñanza más efectivos que he incorporado a la enseñanza del inglés y principalmente para este tipo de población son:

Método directo: producción escrita haciendo uso de la gramática, que se usa en clase por medio de acciones o imágenes.

Un enfoque natural, en el cual se hace énfasis con ejercicios orales de pronunciación para que esta comunicación sea clara.

La dramatización que representan acciones, generalmente de su vida cotidiana,

Dictados de frases cortas, escritas para para practicar algunas estructuras gramaticales.

Ejercicios escritos, juegos los cuales crean un ambiente positivo en el salón de clase; estos reflejan el carácter y el interés de los estudiantes.

Trabajo en equipo: por lo general es el mejor, una acción colaborativa donde la discusión no es el objetivo, si no el medio, de tal manera aprender unos de otros, es decir que el que más sabe ayuda o le colabora al que menos rinde.

Recursos didácticos: empleo loterías, concursos nuevas tecnologías, videos, etc. 4-Es un proceso lento, pues la mayoría por su edad y tiempo de haber dejado sus estudios se les dificulta un poco, toca con paciencia llevar este proceso y ser lo más didáctico posible para que no se cansen y deserten del programa. Su nivel es muy bajo, diría que un 80% A- y el otro 20% A+.

3. Muy escaso ya que provienen la mayoría de provincia, lugares con bastante conflicto armado y desplazamiento.

3.1 El historial como antes lo menciono es muy ausente, poco vocabulario y desconocen estructuras básicas gramaticales.

Ellos se desarrollan en un medio donde las entidades públicas les han brindado “víctimas del conflicto” en algunos lugares de paso y otros viven en habitaciones o casas alquiladas o en algunos casos con un familiar, que les brinda sustento y vivienda. Algunos son vendedores ambulantes, recicladores, independientes, trabajan en confecciones y en mensajería.

3.2 El entorno en que los estudiantes están inmersos es muy diverso, por ejemplo; mucha violencia, desprotegidos, con muchos problemas de drogas, poco afecto en los hogares etc.

3.3 La actitud de los estudiantes hacia sus congéneres es de mucho respeto, principalmente de mayor edad, pues los más jóvenes en ocasiones se agreden verbalmente.

Para con el docente es de mucho respeto, buen comportamiento, bastante camaradería, más que todo con los de más edad.

3.4 Los roles que he encontrado entre mis estudiantes en clase son de liderazgo, trabajo en equipo, capaces de autoevaluarse, tienen la habilidad de autoaprendizaje, resuelven problemas, muy pocos son creativos y algunos muy responsables.

3.5 Según lo que ellos narran, sus antecedentes familiares han sido duros, carecieron de afecto, tuvieron necesidades económicas, no tuvieron asistencia médica en sí de bajos recursos, sus padres sin estudio, inclusive sus progenitores vienen de familias disfuncionales, producto del conflicto armado que ha sido por generaciones.

3.6 Necesitan fortalecer más la autonomía, les cuesta más hacer ciertas por ellos mismos, son tolerantes, tienen respeto con las personas con quien conviven en clase. Hay compañeros de diferentes culturas, religiones, partidos políticos etc.

El valor más fortalecido es el entusiasmo, que los impulsa a actuar a salir adelante, a culminar sus estudios y ser alguien que pueda aportar a la sociedad con una buena calidad de vida.

ASPECTOS CULTURALES

Están bastante interesados en este proceso que les brinda dicha corporación y el Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. Tienen muchas expectativas cuando culminen este proceso que para ellos es la oportunidad de ser bachilleres y tener un proyecto de vida.

Annex 3 (Sample of a field notes)**FIELD NOTE 1**

Date: 07/09/19

Population: Students of cycle 3, new women, at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño

General description of the class:

This class was focused on learning prepositions in the English language. Students had to learn what a preposition is and the main prepositions in English like (on, in, in front of, behind. Between, in the middle of, above, among others). The class was directed by the head teacher and mainly by the researcher-student-teacher.

The class was divided into two main parts. The first one was the theoretical review of what a preposition is, the prepositions in English and their use. The second part was a game related to prepositions in which students had to match some sentences written in a piece of paper with some images that were handed out around the classroom.

GUIDING QUESTION	DESCRIPTIVE LEVEL	INTERPRETATION REFLEXIVE LEVEL	CATEGORY OF ANALYSIS	PROBLEM SOLVING LEVEL
What do students prefer to do to learn English?	Students showed the necessity of writing everything on their notebooks. They asked for more time to write down all information that was on the whiteboard. On the contrary, they showed a difficulty in speaking.	For them, it is easier to learn English with writing or, at least, they seem to feel more comfortable with writing. Probably their kind of memory is visual. Probably they think they have to write mandatorily.	Styles of learning. Learning process. Skills.	Profit their writing process to create stories using this skill they are accustomed to use.
Did students show interest in learning English?	Students, during the class, asked questions, asked for more explanation and examples. Besides, students gave their own examples.	They were very excited about learning something that is completely new for them. They were very curious because there was a new teacher who only tries to speak in English. They tried to connect the new knowledge to	Realia. Previous knowledge. Own experience. Curiosity.	Bring more activities related to their real life or their lifestyle. Keep on letting them participate.

		their experiences and their previous knowledge.		
What is the English level of students?	<p>Students repeat basic sentences and try to create their own sentences according to their real experience. For example: “<i>how many pencils are there in your bag?</i>” “<i>What objects are there on your table?</i>” Among others.</p> <p>Students know basic vocabulary as their family members, the colours, the classroom parts and try to use it. Besides, they know how to use the verb to be very well.</p>	<p>Students do not handle very well the topics they should already know at this level but they try to use all they have already learnt.</p> <p>Most of them, specifically the eldest woman show a difficulty to learn a new language and to use what they already know.</p> <p>It seems that they only retain the information that they consider important.</p> <p>Their English level is very low compared to the English level of other students in cycle</p>	<p>Real experience.</p> <p>Education for adults.</p> <p>Nemotenic strategies for adults.</p> <p>Meaningful learning.</p> <p>Slow pace learning.</p> <p>Drill (repetition)</p>	<p>Implement strategies to teach EFL in adults.</p> <p>Work on their own experience.</p> <p>Reinforce what students already know and introduce more complex topics related to their level.</p>

Annex 4 (Sample of an English diagnostic test)

This diagnostic exam has been made in order to analyze the English level that students in Cycle 3 have. Each part evaluates a different skill related to the syllabus of this cycle. Students should be able to introduce themselves, describe where they live and what they do. In terms of grammar, students should know how to use the verb *to be* and should be able to express themselves in present simple and in present continuous.

GRAMMAR PART 0,4

Fill the blanks with verbs in the box.

play like work want want say have come go go meet live

Hi Jackie,

How are you? I'm very well. I like to tell you something about the person who come with me here in my apartment.

His name is Mike and he work from Canada. He is 27 and he want in a big hotel near the center of the city. He really play his job and he live it because he have a lot of new people every day from many different countries.

On the weekend, he go swimming and sometimes we meet tennis or meet windsurfing together. He say a very pretty girlfriend called Janet and they go to get married next year!

OK, that's enough for now. Write soon.

Sara.

VOCABULARY PART 5

Match the pictures with the sentences



a) She is painting. ✓

b) He is sleeping. ✓

c) She is washing up. ✓

d) He is having a shower. ✗

e) She is doing a puzzle. ✗

f) He is cleaning his teeth. ✗

g) He is having a bath. ✓

h) He is washing his hands. ✗

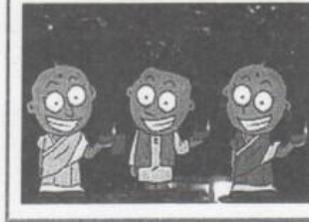
READING PART

4,92

My favourite day - Diwali

Short story

Diwali means the festival of light. It's my favourite time of year.



Each year, Hindus around the world celebrate for five days during November and October.

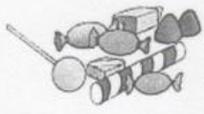
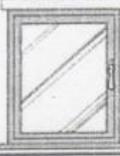
During Diwali we play card games and dress up in special clothes. We give boxes of colourful coconut sweets called barfi to our family and friends.

We light decorated candles and clay lamps called diyas. People put them in their windows and even on their roofs.

You can see beautiful fireworks too!

1. What's the word?

Write the word under the pictures.

play cards	clothes	coconut	sweets	candle
diya	window	roof	fireworks	family
				
coco nut	play cards	Family	X	Window
				
sweets	candle	clothes	fireworks	X

2. Fill it in!

Watch the story. Write the missing words in the sentences.

- a. Diwali means the festival of light
- b. Hindus celebrate for _____ days during November and October. X
- c. During Diwali we play games and dress up in special clothes. 0,3 X
- d. We give boxes of colourful coconut sweets called barfi to our family and friends. ✓
- e. We light decorated candles and clay lamps called diyas. ✓
- f. People put them in their windows and even on their roofs. ✓
- g. You can see beautiful FireWORKS too! ✓

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WRITING PART 0,8

Write a story with the following sequence of images.



2. SPEAKING ANSWERS

Title: _____

1. First, sleeping. _____

2. Then, no se _____

3. Next, no se _____

4. After that, no se _____

5. Later, no se _____

6. Finally, no se. _____

LISTENING PART: 0

The teacher will read a story divided into 4 main parts. Then the teacher will show them 4 images. The students have to select the image that corresponds to what the teacher has just read.

Write down what image corresponds to what the teacher has just read.

1. P _____ X

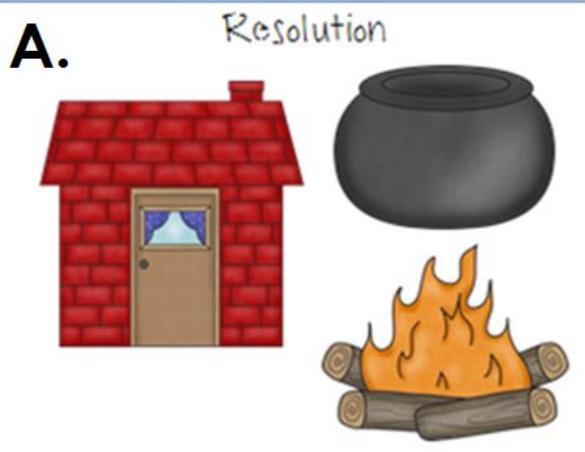
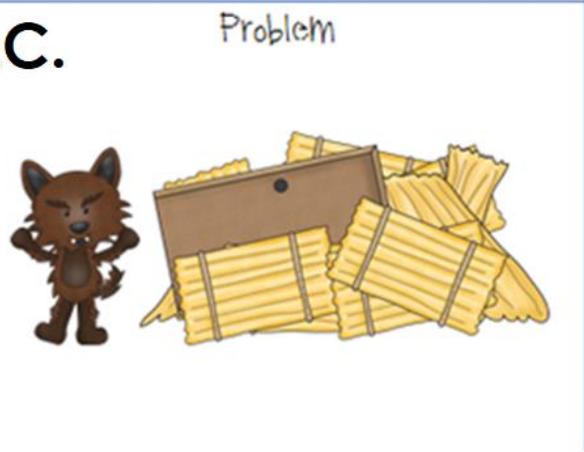
2. C _____ X

3. D _____ X

4. D _____ X

Annex 5 Text and Images for The Listening Part and Speaking part.

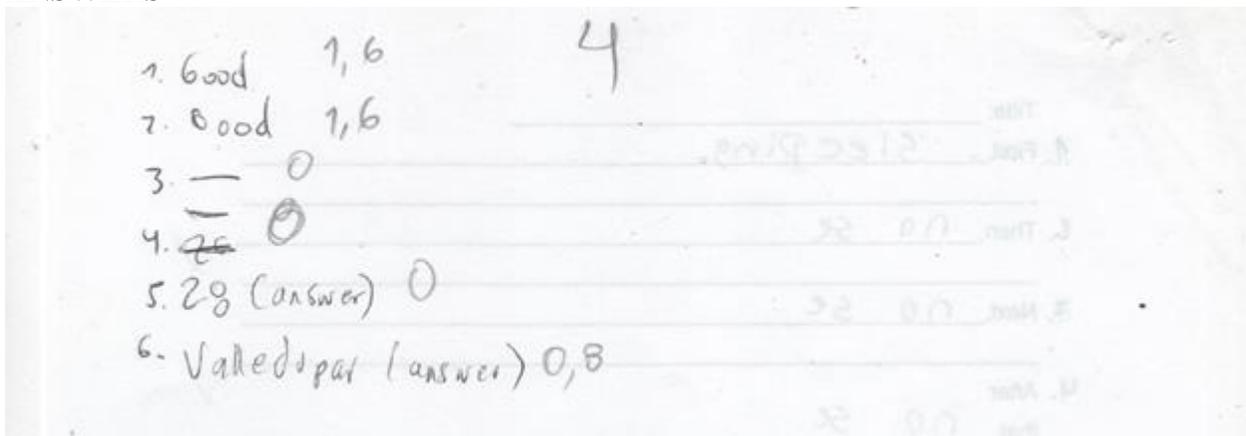
1. Once upon a time there was three little pigs and her pig mom. The three little pigs were very happy with their mom but one day they decided to go out and build their own houses. In the same village a savage wolf lived.
2. The first pig built his house of yellow straw. The second pigs built his house of brown sticks. The third pig took his time and built his house of red bricks.
3. The wolf was hungry for pig, he knocked on the straw house. Then he blew the house down. The first pig ran to his brother's house. The wolf went to the stick house. He knocked on the stick house. Then he blew the house down and they ran to their brother's house.
4. The wolf tried to blow the third pig's house down but the house was strong. The wolf climbed down the chimney. The wolf fell into a pot of hot water. "Ow, Ow!" He screamed. The wolf flew back up the chimney and ran into the woods.



Speaking Part

1. What is your name?
2. What is your last name?
3. How old are you?
4. Where are you from?
5. What do you do?
6. Where do you live?

ANSWERS



Annex 6 to Annex 18 Pedagogical proposal *Let the Words Fly*

To access to the whole pedagogical proposal *Let the Words Fly*, it means from **Annex 6** to **Annex 18**, click on the following link: https://pedagogicaedu-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/del_jgutierrezl435_pedagogica_edu_co/Ek3uP4pKPNFDg0wTxVzdITsBbg2_OoM3AM211ddt-EosA?e=PonAI3