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TEMA: COOPERATIVE LEARNING ACTIVITIES TO ENRICH DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS IN A1-LEVEL ENGLISH LEARNERS

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AGRADECIMIENTO

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DEDICATORIA

This research study is dedicated to the memory of my late sister, who instilled in me a love of learning and a curiosity for the world around us. She always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and to never give up in the face of challenges. I know that she would have been proud of this achievement and I hope that this research can contribute to making the world a better place, in honor of his legacy. I would also like to dedicate this research to my spouse and children, who provided unwavering support and understanding during the long hours of research and writing. Their love and patience have been a constant source of inspiration and motivation. Finally, I would like to dedicate this research to all the individuals who participated in the study, sharing their time and insights with me. Your contributions have been invaluable, and I hope that this research can contribute to improving the lives of others in the future.

José Luis Rivera Pérez

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DIRECTOR: *Doctora Gloria Isabel Escudero Orozco Magister*
FECHA: *Nueve de marzo de dos mil veinte y tres*

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

The present study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of cooperative learning activities in enhancing the descriptive writing skills of eighth-grade English Language learners. The researcher set specific objectives to provide a theoretical basis for cooperative learning, identify the main drawbacks of the writing process of A1 students, and propose an alternative strategy for developing descriptive texts in English as a Foreign Language. A literature review was conducted to provide a theoretical basis for cooperative learning. Additionally, a diagnostic test was administered to identify the main drawbacks of the writing process of A1 students. The study involved a quantitative approach and a quasi-experimental design, where 29 eighth-grade students from Unidad Educativa "San Alfonso" participated in the study. The experimental group (15 students) received the intervention of cooperative learning activities, while the control group (14 students) used traditional methodology. Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to both groups. The results showed that the experimental group significantly improved in writing skills compared to the control group, indicating the effectiveness of cooperative learning activities.

The study's theoretical framework was based on reliable bibliographic sources, providing a strong foundation for the research. The field modality was used since the

researcher was located at the research site, which facilitated the data collection process. The study's research hypothesis was positive, indicating the applicability of collaborative learning activities in enhancing the descriptive writing skills of English Language learners. The study's findings have significant implications for teaching methods, particularly in language learning. Cooperative learning activities can be used as an alternative strategy to enhance descriptive writing skills, which can be applied in various learning settings. The study recommends further research on the effectiveness of cooperative learning activities in enhancing other writing skills and in different educational levels. Overall, the study contributes to the existing literature on language teaching methodologies and provides insights into effective teaching strategies for enhancing writing skills in English Language learners.

DESCRIPTORES: *ACTIVITIES, COOPERATIVE LEARNING, EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN, DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS, WRITING PROCESS.*

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM OF INVESTIGATION

1.1. Introduction

There is an incessant driving force that impels the teachers every day, the desire to be better, looking for new active methodologies that facilitate student learning. Their constant challenges motivate them to seek new and better teaching horizons to forge a more productive society through education. There is also the inescapable fact that being a teacher means being willing to solve all kinds of learning problems; for this reason, teachers are called upon to reproduce that immense capacity to visualize in problems, strengths that will serve future generations to build their own safe, solidary, prosperous and successful future.

This work aims to reach students through an active methodology that allows them to co-learn, share and be an active part of the learning process. For a long time, learning English has been a continuous challenge at all levels of education. This fact produced the interest to motivate students to create and adapt a different systematic process of this active methodology as it is relatively new in foreign languages. The descriptive texts are closer to the literature area than any other known science.

The classroom has been conceived as a place of spontaneous, free learning, where mistakes are admitted as part of the teaching-learning process (Jimenez, 2019). Another reason that motivated this project is that to achieve a level of proficiency in written English according to the Common European Framework students must be able to write simple and well-linked texts on familiar topics or of personal interest. Alternatively, write personal letters describing experiences and impressions, Common European Framework (2020).

The problem of low English writing skills among eighth-grade students in Educación General Básica at Unidad Educativa can be attributed to several factors, including limited access to quality teaching materials and of course, limited exposure to English-language media, that may devalue or discourage English language learning. It is necessary to understand that writing is a skill to be developed progressively and continuously from the beginning of the study of English, until concluding in higher education.

The research began with the bibliographic, documentary, and internet study to argue the theoretical framework, according to the guidelines of foreign language learning in our country, mentions, among other aspects, that English as a foreign language several decades ago has become the language of communication, science, business, technology, and globalization. Therefore, learning is of great importance in any field (Dasilva, et al., 2019).

According to these premises, students become builders of their own knowledge, develop skills and abilities that allow them to achieve meaningful learning, contributing to society with the formation of human beings who, the more knowledge they have of their environment and their reality, the further they can go and the more respect they will show for real knowledge. This study entitles: Cooperative Learning Activities to Enrich Descriptive Texts In A1-Level
ENGLISH LEARNERS and follows the order

stated above. **CHAPTER I**, in which the

research problem itself is developed.

CHAPTER II, describes the newest articles published related to the theme of this project as well as the way in which they provide scientific support.

CHAPTER III details the research methodology, design, modality,

type of research, legal framework, and population and sample data.

CHAPTER IV is related to the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of the results of the data obtained in the tests (pre-test and post-test) applied to the students who make up the experimental group and to the students who make up the control group.

CHAPTER V contains the conclusions and recommendations derived from the study.

Finally, **CHAPTER VI** reflects the proposal, through which the intervention project will replicate its final and effective results.

1.2 Justification

This project was carried out because learning a foreign language has become vital in various fields providing social, economic, and employment opportunities. English language instruction is known for its worldwide socio-economic context, a fundamental basis of global communication, as English has become the primary language for international communication. As a result of complex economic, cultural and social forces, there have been several very positive criteria in favor of the importance of English (Alvarado, A. 2015).

It is important because it responds to the communicative standards planned by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages at level A1 outlining a pedagogical proposal particularly to develop the use of the foreign language brought to its praxis and, consequently, to improve the written skill. Vinueza, (2017) states that "it is important to consider that written communication is how all kinds of information are transmitted, whether it is concepts, knowledge, ideas or thoughts" (p.22).

Its impact lies on students' ability to keep an effective communication in a written way since it provides solutions by restructuring the methodology and using new ways of teaching the ability to write in a second language. Cooperative learning has proven its validity in the teaching process. It is characterized as a constructivist approach which promotes learning linked to social interaction, where each of the participants contributes their knowledge and are part of a learning process different from the usual, encouraging the students a motivational effect of active participation which leads to practice the second language in class development (Alvarado, 2015) Equally important with the activities carried out in this method, values are also contributed by working in equality with their peers, thus promoting respect, responsibility, cooperation,

communication, and empathy.

This project is new and original because it has a projective character, carried out with pertinence parameters and sustainability, and having comprehensive information on cooperative learning in vast areas of education. However, in relation to the teaching of English, there are investigations with profitable results, but concerning the written production of English, there is a scarce methodological, didactic and

pedagogical study in students of level 1; likewise, there are no alternative proposals that give any solution, although the authorities and the teaching staff are still willing to do so (Alvarado, 2015)

The main beneficiaries of this research were the students under the intervention who are now prepared to solve the problem in the written production at A1 level. They belong to the "Unidad Educativa San Alfonso". Additionally, it contributes to the personal development of teachers and students due to its characteristic of work based on sustained interaction. Furthermore, the guidelines provide viability in accordance with the standards of the Common European Framework of Reference and the curriculum of the Educational Unit.

1.3. Objectives

1.3.1. General

Determine the effectiveness of cooperative learning activities to enrich descriptive texts in eighth-grade English Language learners.

1.3.2. Specific

- ✓ To provide theoretical basis about cooperative learning to write descriptive texts using literature review.
- ✓ To discover the main drawbacks of the writing process of eighth-grade students by conducting a diagnostic test.
- ✓ To propose an alternative strategy for developing descriptive texts in English as a Foreign Language.

CHAPT

ER II

THEORETICAL

FRAMEWORK

2.1. Investigative background

In order to know the results obtained from other research and gather information on the topic "Cooperative Learning Activities to Enrich Descriptive Texts in eighth-grade English Learners" at Unidad Educativa San Alfonso, various physical and digital sources related to the topic were investigated.

Several researchers considered that Cooperative Learning has positively affected the teaching of foreign languages since it is a method in which the teacher coordinates and guides the students to improve learning. It should be noted that this method is not recent, which emerged in the United States in the early 1980s Edel, R. (2003); however, it has taken on considerable dimensions in the teaching-learning process of foreign languages. Some of the main authors are stated above:

Lobato (2018) states, "Cooperative learning certainly constitutes an approach and a methodology that pose quite a challenge to creativity and innovation in the educational system" (p.75). Therefore, its use leads to a remarkable change in student learning because it makes teaching a dynamic and motivating process.

Cooperative learning is a teaching approach in which students

work in small groups to achieve a common goal or complete a task, while at the same time helping and supporting each other in the learning process. This approach emphasizes interdependence among group members and the development of social skills such as communication, leadership, and conflict resolution. Cooperative learning has been shown to improve academic achievement, enhance critical thinking skills, and increase student motivation and engagement (Johnson & Johnson, 2014)

Based on the author, Cooperative learning activities are teaching methods that involve students working in small groups to complete a task or achieve a common goal. In these activities, students are encouraged to interact with each other, share their knowledge and expertise, and support one another in the learning process. Cooperative learning activities emphasize the development of social skills such as communication, leadership, and conflict resolution, while at the same time enhancing academic achievement, critical thinking skills, and student motivation and engagement. These activities have been shown to be effective in a wide range of educational settings and for students of different ages and abilities.

Fujiwara & Sato (2017), in their research entitled "Effects of Cooperative Learning on Writing Activity of English for Special Purposes in Japanese University Students," concluded that based on the results acquired from the 57 Science students, cooperative learning can play a positive and influential role in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) students and generally in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), i.e., in learning a foreign language. Moreover, through this method, students increase their confidence in doing a piece of writing, which allows their papers to communicate better.

Al- Yaseen (2014), in his research entitled "Cooperative Learning in EFL Classroom," conducted in Vienna, states that cooperative learning is effective in teaching a foreign language, as it enables the learner to use authentic language within their working group, improve their communication skills and their motivation to learn. The author concludes that both teachers and learners of English can apply this teaching method as a foreign language.

In the research work conducted in Thailand by Nude, Chatupote & Teo (2014) entitled "Cooperative Learning and Writing Ability Improvement," it was confirmed that students improve their

writing ability with the application of cooperative learning. Statistical analyses reflect that students' writing ability is higher when Cooperative Learning is used; therefore, the author mentions including this method in English language instruction.

Martinez (2015), in his postgraduate report conducted at the University of Riojas, Mexico, called "The Effects of Cooperative Learning in Enhancing L2 Writing of Secondary students in terms of lexical production," considers that cooperative learning helps in teaching a foreign language, especially in written production because most students feel confident and relaxed when writing together with their peers, even though for sure students it is not to their liking to work in groups.

On the other hand, Macías, Toala, and Vivero (2018), in research of the Universidad Técnica de Manabi entitle Cooperative learning in the teaching-learning process of writing English as a foreign language," which was applied to 90 students, the authors mention that with the execution of this method, the students during the activity presented some inconveniences when working with their classmates. It was evidenced that they lacked companionship; each one worked individually, and the teacher did not give follow-up or support to the work teams, causing the delivery of incomplete texts.

Likewise, Portero (2018), in his graduate research entitled "Cooperative Learning Strategy in the Written Production of Paragraphs in English of the Students at third-year of Bachillerato General Unificado at Unidad Educativa Santiago de Guayaquil in the School Year 2016 - 2017" states that cooperative learning contributes to the development of written production of the English language. However, in this educational institution, it was observed that with the application of the method, students needed to develop productive skills since before the experiment students wrote basic sentences with incorrect structures, the vocabulary was limited, and there was no difference between main and secondary ideas.

Concerning research in Guatemala on cooperative work and academic performance, Alvarado (2015) Obtained results that the

pretest reached an arithmetic mean of 33 and the posttest 62. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted: "There is a significant statistical difference when comparing the student's spelling before and after applying cooperative learning." It was concluded that teaching using cooperative learning and spelling is a functional method applied by the teacher in the classroom process and stimulates participation through applying appropriate

techniques to improve learning. The results of this research are closely related to those obtained in the present study since, in both studies, cooperative learning strategies were applied, and a notable improvement was observed in the performance of the experimental group in the posttest. Therefore, it is determined that cooperative learning strategies benefit learning.

IBarrios (2015) conducted research that had results: the perception of students regarding cooperative work is positive since they consider that it consists of learning by supporting each other, where the essential components are permanent and systematic communication. The results of that research are related to the results of this study beyond a similar theme since we can conclude that students consider it a positive experience to work supporting their peers; this makes them more motivated and aware of their learning process, which results in an improvement in academic performance.

For his part, Gómez (2015) research results show a statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05. Hence, applying different cooperative learning strategies facilitates the teaching of vectors, as these allow the student to develop in a group and contribute ideas. At the same time, their performance is favored with successful results. In the present study, cooperative learning strategies were also applied during one bimester, improving the student's performance in the Communication and Language course. Since the strategies facilitated learning the contents studied, a statistically significant difference was also observed at the 0.05 level. Once again, it is concluded that cooperative learning strategies effectively improve academic performance.

Ordoñez (2014) conducted a study to establish the attitude that sixth-grade students of the primary level of the Loyola School in Guatemala City have towards cooperative work. The researcher used a Likert scale designed himself with a randomly selected sample of 97

students. Through this study, the researcher concluded that the students evaluated have a positive attitude towards cooperative work and understand their role in teamwork. The results obtained by Ordoñez are similar to those of this research since students improved their performance and showed greater interest in the course when cooperative learning strategies were involved.

González (2015) carried out a study that determined that the age of the students in the experimental group did influence the final results, contrary to what happened with the gender factor, which did not make a difference. The previous results are compared with those obtained in this research since cooperative learning strategies were applied to the experimental group. This also presented a considerable improvement compared to the control group. The difference lies in the fact that in this study, neither gender nor age influenced the performance of the experimental group and that both the control and the experimental group presented a higher mean in academic performance due to the interference of some variables that were not controlled at the time of carrying out the study. It is concluded then that cooperative learning strategies are applicable at all levels and in all subjects, improving the student's academic performance.

The antecedents show that Cooperative Learning contributes to developing written production in the English language because this method allows students to strengthen their social relationships through interaction, collaboration, and companionship in work teams. Likewise, with cooperative learning, the development of writing skills becomes more productive, allowing for better-written production results. Therefore, English teachers can obtain satisfactory results in written work by using this teaching method.

Given the above, the present research is relevant and different from the previously mentioned research because it addresses the specific strategies of the cooperative method for developing written production. Applying those strategies by the teacher constitutes a methodological alternative that allows the student to improve their productive ability in the English language.

2.2 Origin of Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning has roots in the work of educational theorists and researchers such as John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Lev Vygotsky. However, the modern form of cooperative learning was developed by Elliot Aronson and his colleagues in the 1970s, based on research in social psychology (Aronson, 1971).

Aronson and his colleagues developed the jigsaw technique, in which students work in small, diverse groups to master a particular topic and then teach it to their peers. This technique has been widely used and studied, and has been shown to improve academic achievement, increase positive attitudes toward school and learning, and reduce prejudice and stereotypes.

One of the seminal works on cooperative learning is Elliot Aronson's book, "The Theory of Cooperative Learning" (1971), which outlines the basic principles and techniques of the approach. Another important work is Robert Slavin's "Cooperative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice" (2019), which provides a comprehensive review of the research on cooperative learning and its applications in classrooms.

Between the '80s and '90s, language teachers participated in research called "method" the main objective was to create a methodology that responds to the learning styles ensuring the improvement of all the skills of a language. In other words, a method that contributes to efficient language teaching (Brown, 2007). Over time, various language teaching methods can be evidenced, each with its particularity, such as the Grammar-translation method, Direct method, Audio-lingual method, Total physical response, Task-based learning, Integrated learning of content and foreign language, etc.

Among the methods mentioned above is Cooperative Learning, which emerged in the United States in the early nineteenth century to solve socio-educational problems because students from different social classes, educational levels, and origins attended schools (Casanova, M., Álvarez, I. and Gómez, I., 2019). In this sense, several researchers searched for appropriate methods in the learning of heterogeneous groups, among which was the American pedagogue John Dewey, who is credited with the implementation of the cooperative learning method, which consists of group work and

the achievement of common goals (Casas, J. and Ceñal F., 2015).

On the other hand, it is essential to mention that David Johnson and his brother Roger Johnson perfected this methodology because they observed that through cooperation among the members of the group, knowledge among them is intensified because they share ideas, opinions, and experiences that lead to the development of

competencies and skills which are important elements in the educational field (Lobato, 2017).

2.2.1 Conceptualization of cooperative learning

Cooperative learning encompasses several definitions, and in this research project, some of them have been taken into consideration by several authors in order to establish a clear and precise conceptualization of this method. Alvarado, A. (2015) mention that "cooperative learning is the didactic use of small groups in which students work together to maximize their own learning and that of others" (p.3).

Likewise, students acquire new knowledge and share what they have learned with the members of the group; in this way, effective learning takes place, generating superior performance that benefits each student because they acquire significant learning, which indicates that better results are obtained in cooperative conditions than in individual ones. In this regard, Johnson and Johnson point out that cooperative learning achieves positive attitudes because it avoids selfishness and competitiveness. Additionally, this method promotes cooperation and altruism, and thus students' academic performance is higher (Cited in Vinueza, 2020).

Cooperative learning refers to the support in a given group and develops socio- affective and intellectual skills. In addition, this method allows the teacher to visualize whether knowledge is acquired and reproduced adequately (DaSilva, Jacobs & McCafferty, 2019).

Chaux, Lleras, and Velásquez (2021) point out that cooperative learning is a pedagogical strategy focused on fostering group work, optimizing learning, and improving the development of students' social relationships. Specifically, the essence of this method

is cooperative work, where students consolidate their own learning by providing help to those who need support.

This type of learning promotes essential values such as respect, solidarity, responsibility, honesty, and discipline, which should be considered in the

classroom. Also, it shows that diversity is an important resource and not a problem as other methods catalog it. In short, the teaching-learning process becomes dynamic and participatory because, within the group, trust is fostered so that each member contributes to the designated activity. Díaz-Barriga, F (2018**)** state:

Cooperative learning refers, in the first place, to a form of the social organization of teaching and learning situations in which students establish a positive interdependence. They perceive that they can learn and achieve their objectives if their peers do so. (p.2).

Therefore, students participate directly and actively in group work because they have the same objective, and each member interacts and shares information evaluated by all. Based on these conceptions, cooperative learning is considered a method based on the joint construction of knowledge. Likewise, it favors the development of intellectual, social, and personal skills, so this method focuses on students improving their own learning and that of their peers.

2.2.2 Objectives of the Cooperative Method

The cooperative learning method is based on the construction of shared knowledge through the interaction of a heterogeneous group. The members perform activities together and learn from each other; in other words, it organizes and induces a commitment to learning, contributing to the cognitive and intellectual development of the students. This method encompasses the following objectives:

The first objective of this method is to promote positive relationships among all the students. There is necessary cohesion in the group and a high degree of communicative exchange so that each

member can make their ideas known without creating discussions or conflicts among them. Otero (2021) mentions, "dialogue, discussion, and mutual explanations lead to the cognitive processing of contents and an increase in comprehension" (p.9). In this sense, through interaction, performance is increased, and better results are obtained.

Likewise, this method aims to make students autonomous in their learning; group work fosters the autonomy and independence of students and implies greater responsibility and commitment to their learning. The third objective is to attend to student diversity; this method considers diversity one of the most influential factors in the learning process. Therefore, students, regardless of their ethnicity, or social or cultural group, develop their potential in cooperative work. Finally, the fourth objective of cooperative learning is focused on developing positive attitudes and increasing intrinsic motivation and interest to achieve academic success.

2.2.3 Pedagogical and social approach

Cooperative learning has been researched and applied in recent years for its effectiveness in the teaching-learning process; since it covers the needs, interests, styles, and rhythms of the student. "Pedagogical approaches are systematic guides loaded with ideology, which orient teaching practices, determine their purposes, ideas, and activities, establishing generalizations and guidelines that are considered optimal for their good development" (García, 2018). Based on this premise, the pedagogical approach of this method lies in group cooperation work that enables the participation of learners to be responsible for both their own learning and that of others. With respect to the social approach, the student achieves his personal goals through group success since cooperation among the members tends to improve social and cognitive competencies since different experiences and points of view are provided during a given activity.

2.2.4 Cooperative Learning as a Methodology

Cooperative learning approaches a didactic model focused on cooperation as a teaching element, where students work together to achieve common objectives guided by the teacher. The cooperative

learning methodology is based on constructivism; so that contents are assimilated and improved based on previous knowledge and new learning experiences (Gómez, 2019). Likewise, this methodology's educational scenario includes diversity, considered a teaching resource. In summary, cooperative learning is a methodology used within the curricular design that is used in a specific

academic competence and in different areas of knowledge, for example, in mathematical, natural, social, cultural, and educational sciences such as language teaching-learning.

2.2.5 Cooperative learning in language teaching and learning

Cooperative learning has proved efficient in language teaching because it has a distinctive form of group work that promotes in students a better development of receptive and productive language skills (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista 2019). Each member shares knowledge and participates in the dynamics of the work. In this way, the student develops both oral and written production skills. Regarding oral production (speaking), the student improves this skill because he/she interacts with his/her peers and exposes his/her points of view so that each member not only performs an activity but also practices the language.

Regarding writing, the contributions of each student are reflected in a written document, which considers several elements that this productive skill requires. In addition, members review the activity before it is delivered to evaluate their learning and identify which aspects need to be reinforced. Consequently, this process increases students' language skills development (Jiménez & López-Zafra 2019).

Concerning reading comprehension, students improve this skill since the cooperative group is heterogeneous (López, 2017). As there are students with a higher level than others, reading comprehension is facilitated since they have a wide vocabulary. Thus, cooperation and mutual help to understand the text easily. Listening comprehension is another skill the student improves through the cooperative learning method; it goes hand in hand with the productive skill since the student identifies the communicative situation and

provides arguments after interpreting and contextualizing the information. In short, this methodology helps students develop the four essential skills in language learning.

For the execution of this methodology, it is essential to consider some elements and phases to carry out authentic cooperative learning.

2.2.6 Elements of Cooperative Learning

In order to successfully implement the method, the Johnson brothers propose taking into account five essential elements which are detailed below.

Figure 1

Elements of Cooperative Learning
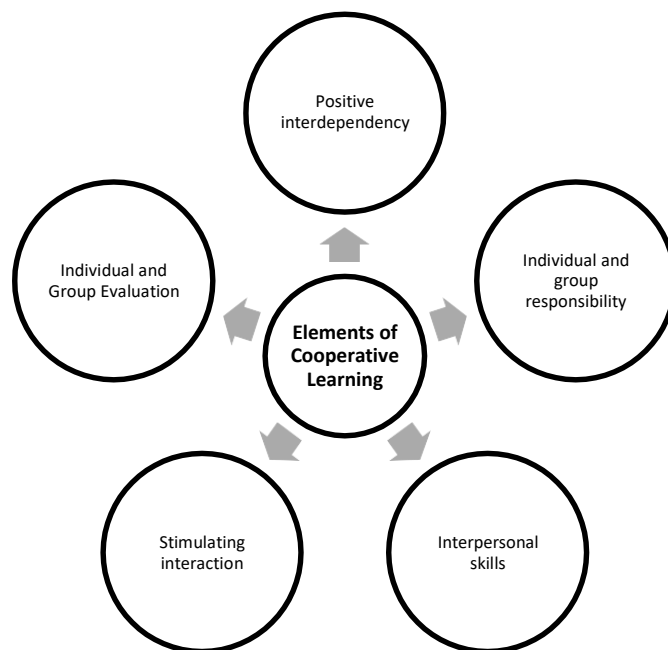
Note: this figure represents the elements of Cooperative learning

Positive interdependency

Positive interdependence is one of the basic elements of cooperative learning since it fosters a bond among group members. Ordoñez (2018) expresses, "Positive interdependence is the heart of cooperative learning. Without it, there is no cooperation" (p.51). Based on this premise, it is assumed that this element is the core of the cooperative learning method; therefore, it should be implemented in the classroom.

Similarly, the same authors' Ruiz (2020) state that when

positive interdependence is appropriately structured, it is observed that students get together to do the work, talk about the topic of study, do a general review of what they have

learned, present their points of view, share materials and, above all, motivate each other. On the contrary, since this element needs to be better structured, there tends to be little interest and individualism on the part of the students. Besides, they deal with different topics and not the ones assigned. In itself, each one does his own work leaving aside his group mates, and they do not share ideas or material.

Specifically, positive interdependence refers to each team member's contribution and the commitment to personal and group improvement; everyone strives to achieve a common goal and promote learning, both their own and that of the other team members. Consequently, the activity's success is achieved only if everyone contributes to its development. In short, positive interdependence is the only element that ensures that students cooperate, hence the importance of this element in the cooperative learning method.

Individual and Group Responsibility

Individual and group responsibility is the second key element of cooperative learning. It refers to the commitment and compliance of each team member in the assigned task. Salmerón (2019) explains:

> At the individual level, each member must assume responsibility for the task, his or her share of contribution to the group, and help or advice to the rest. At the group level, each team must take responsibility for fully completing the tasks and that all team members manage to complete them. (p.14)

Individual and collective responsibility and performance define the effectiveness of the overall work. On the other hand, the teacher observes that the members effectively comply with the part of the work that corresponds to them and that they assume their roles with responsibility. "To guarantee individual responsibility,

individual evaluation, a random selection of the spokesperson or personal work reports can be used" (Serrano, 2018, p.17). In this sense, not only the student's contribution is evidenced, but also it is detected who needs reinforcement or help in some aspect.

Apart from knowing the degree of individual and group responsibility of the students, at the same time, the results are evaluated. In such case, if any inconvenience arises, the teacher seeks a solution, and the other group members provide their support to meet the objectives set. Some measures help to promote this fundamental element of the cooperative learning method.

Among the most common actions that teachers can take to ensure individual responsibility (Vásquez, 2019) are the following:

- ✓ Form small groups; since there is greater individual responsibility when the group is made up of three or four members.
- ✓ Evaluate group members individually.
- ✓ Randomly choose a student to present the final work.
- ✓ Assign roles to each group member.
- ✓ Instruct students to teach someone else what they learned.

As indicated above, there are measures to be considered to ensure individual and group responsibility. This second element of the method is indispensable because it guarantees every team member's contribution. In this sense, cooperative groups assume responsibilities and know that personal effort is reinforced by group effort.

Interpersonal Skills

This third element of cooperative learning, also known as social skills, focuses on the capacity that works teams must have to relate and interact with others to achieve common objectives. Apart from learning the curricular contents, the groups must also learn to develop teamwork skills, in view of the fact that these are directly related to the productivity of the task. Johnson & Johnson (2017) state that to achieve group effectiveness. Students must develop social

skills. It is suggested that besides teaching academic skills, the teacher also teaches social skills such as respect, trust, empathy, leadership, decision-making, and conflict resolution, among others.

Considering what was previously pointed out by the Johnson brothers, it can be inferred that achievement can be more outstanding as long as students are socially skilled and can develop within a cooperative context. In other words, group members

must create a climate where there is trust so that everyone can contribute their ideas and, above all, be able to resolve conflicts by making appropriate decisions.

Stimulating Interaction

Stimulating interaction, also called face-to-face or simultaneous interaction, refers to effective and efficient support, exchange of resources such as information and materials, motivation, and encouragement to obtain benefits at the group level. This fourth element of cooperative learning goes hand in hand with positive interdependence. For stimulating interaction to take place within the group, this first key element of the method must also be included, where students, through mutual efforts, contribute to the accomplishment of the task.

Likewise, simultaneous interaction occurs when students cooperate in developing the activity by motivating each other. Vineza (2017) indicates, "this element consists of helping, encouraging, favoring or praising the classmate for the effort he or she makes to learn in order to contribute to the progress of the group" (p.185). Based on the above, it can be concluded that students carry out a task by sharing existing resources and providing support to each other.

Likewise, to obtain meaningful face-to-face interaction, the number of team members should be between 3 to 4 students; it is not advisable to form large groups since all students should have the opportunity to intervene, contribute, and ask questions and doubts. In this context, every student must feel at ease and motivated by the task (Salmerón, 2019). From this perspective, as the group is small, interaction is strengthened, and participation is egalitarian, which helps to obtain multiple perspectives that contribute to the task.

Individual and Group Evaluation

The fifth element of cooperative learning is based on the assessment and discussion of the entire process, including progress at the individual and collective levels. Ordoñez (2018) mentions that individual assessment involves gathering information about the quality or quantity of change experienced by a student, while

group assessment gathers information about the quality or quantity of change experienced by a group (p.186).

Concerning individual evaluation, the student self-evaluates to know if he/she contributes efficiently to achieve the common objectives. With group evaluation, the team members have to identify to what extent the goals set at the beginning of the work have been achieved, in addition to evaluating whether the attitudes towards their peers were appropriate or not, and if not, together, they seek a solution to the problem by determining which aspects need to be reinforced (Salmerón, 2019). Therefore, each group analyzes how much they have achieved, what social skills they have developed, and what they need to improve.

Taking into account the postulates, it is concluded that individual and group evaluation consists of an in-depth analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the group members, the objective of which is to improve or continue with the same rhythm of work that has been carried out. In addition, this element of the method helps to maximize one's own learning and that of others because the problem is identified, and appropriate action is taken. The teacher's expertise in implementing the cooperative learning method is commensurate with the ability to incorporate the five essential elements in cooperative activities.

2.2.7 Phases of cooperative learning

In the cooperative learning method, the teacher must perform five phases, described below.

Grouping

The first phase to be developed is the grouping phase, in which the teacher determines the size of the workgroup based on the class objectives to be achieved and according to the type and time

available for the activity. It is suggested to form small teams of three and a maximum of six members. Four students are the most balanced since it allows each team member's active participation and performance.

Also, another aspect being considered is heterogeneity in the groups. Ruiz (2016) states, "Ideally, groupings should be heterogeneous. The contributions of each one from diversity and individuality is an opportunity and an enrichment for the whole group" (s. p). The difference between some students and others within the team stimulates learning, given that the teams are made up of individuals with different capacities, abilities, performances, interests, etc.

Heterogeneity allows students to have access to diverse perspectives; it is appropriate for teams to be heterogeneous rather than homogeneous. The groups are initially established by the teachers and later by the students according to the degree of affinity between them.

Organization

The second phase of cooperative learning is organization. This phase consists of creating contexts where cooperation is present throughout the process. To this end, rules are established, and roles are distributed, which allow the work to be practical and consolidate the group and the activity. Curricular areas also organize the work. In this phase, the activity, materials, and resources to be used are defined (Gómez, 2017).

On the other hand, groups can be organized in three ways: basic teams, sporadic teams, and expert teams. Sporadic teams need to be more stable. They can remain for a few sessions and are homogeneous or heterogeneous, while expert teams work together for several sessions and are composed of one member of each basic team. As mentioned above, team members need to be diverse in order to complement each other.

Design

The third phase corresponds to the design. Once the groups are formed, they are distributed in the classroom; the students must be together to encourage dialogue and the exchange of resources. The students' disposition is fundamental, both in the teams and the classroom. Considering that the work team is heterogeneous, there may be high, medium, and low-performing students. Therefore, there should be one medium-level student for each high and low-level student (Figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2:

Student disposition in cooperative groups

Performance Level

Low

Average

High
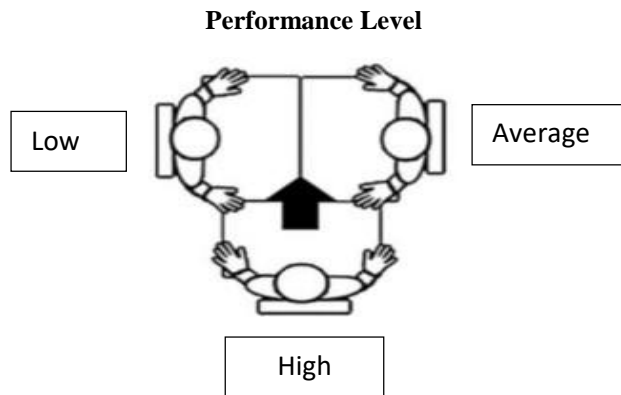
Note: This figure represents the student disposition in cooperative groups

Figure 3:

Student disposition in cooperative groups

Performance Level

Average

Low

High

Average
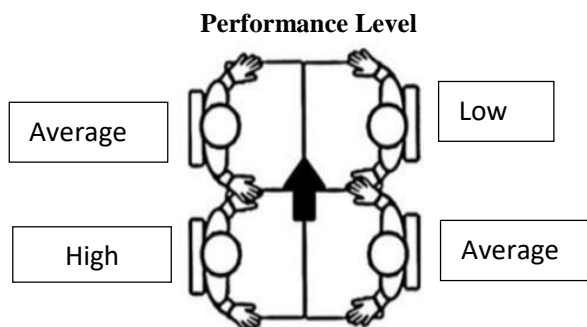
Note: this figure represents the student disposition in cooperative groups

Figures 2 and 3 show how students should be placed in groups so that everyone can contribute to the success and progress of their learning, learning the content better and, at the same time, developing the social skills of teamwork.

The distribution of students in the classroom is also essential, since it facilitates the teacher to visualize and monitor the groups better. Considering that the groups are made up of three or four students, they are distributed as follows (Figures 4 and 5).

Figure 4:

Distribution of the cooperative groups in the classroom (Groups of 3 students)
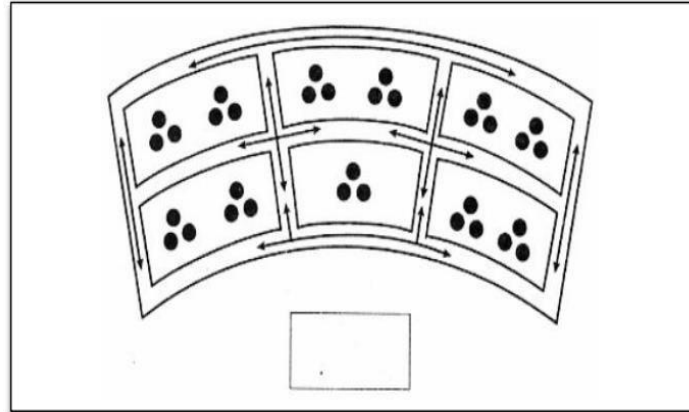
Note: This figure represents the distribution of the cooperative groups in the classroom

Figure 5:

Distribution of the cooperative groups in the classroom (Groups of 4 students)
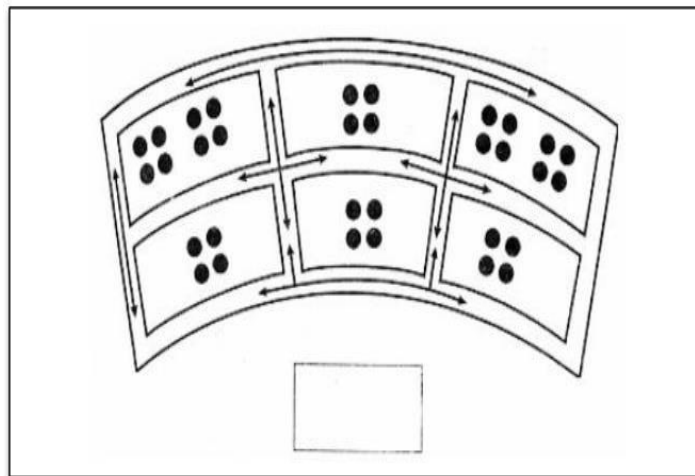
Note: this figure represents the distribution of the cooperative groups in the classroom

How the teacher places the cooperative groups influences the students' performance; shy students often prefer to be at the back of the classroom, which means that their intervention is limited. In addition, proper distribution can avoid or increase disciplinary problems within the study area. Because of this, the teacher must pay attention to the respective distribution.

Programming

The fourth phase is programming, which focuses on the content to be taught and the factors determining the correct functioning of the cooperative learning method. Ruiz (2016) proposes eight basic processes to ensure student learning: task orientation, motivation, activation of prior knowledge, presentation of content, processing of new information, recapitulation, transfer, and metacognition.

Regarding the first process, the task and what must be done are presented. The second corresponds to motivation; the teacher must awaken the students' interest in the content. The third process is the activation of previous knowledge. It is about making known what is known to relate it to the new. That is, a presentation of the contents is made. Then, we proceed to review the topics to be covered; this process involves processing new information. Likewise, a recapitulation of the task performed is made. The seventh process comprises the transfer. Here everything learned is related to other knowledge and previous experiences. Finally, the last process is metacognition, which consists of reflecting on the achievements reached and the level of learning acquired. Although each of the cooperative groups is organized internally, the teacher is the one who carries out the method considering the elements and processes indicated above.

Evaluation

In this last phase of the method, students are evaluated at the individual and group level. The individual evaluation is made of each working group member based on the essential cooperative elements. This evaluation can be done employing a checklist, assessment scale, or rubric. Subsequently, the teacher carries out a group evaluation to know the learning level and capabilities of the students using

questionnaires or random questions.

2.2.8 Cooperative learning strategies

According to research in several countries, cooperative learning proves to be a very effective method. However, teachers' different strategies define different results (Vineza, 2017). From this perspective, the teacher must use strategies to develop student skills and abilities.

More specifically, "it is the teacher's responsibility to choose the resources, activities, and methodology, which is the channel of learning, the vehicle of the subject matter and a basic tool to meet the needs of some students" (Gillies,. et. Al. 2018). Indeed, the teacher is responsible for emphasizing the use of the content, acquiring knowledge, and developing skills within a cooperative framework.

Some cooperative method strategies allow students to work cooperatively and, in turn, develop productive English language skills. These are Cooperative Integrated Reading and Writing, The Word Game, Cooperative Writing and Editing Pairs, and Cooperative Writing Pairs.

Cooperative Integrated Reading and Writing.

This strategy, developed by Slavin (2018), is focused on teaching writing and reading. The teacher establishes the objectives and presents the content. First, students in groups made up of two people read the material that the teacher delivered. They analyze it, make predictions about the story, answer the questions, and edit and revise the work before its delivery.

The integrated cooperative reading and writing strategy contribute to teaching a foreign language because it fosters the development of receptive and productive skills. Students carry out a cognitive, comprehensive, and expressive activity through this strategy, generating ideas, interpreting and writing information, and acquiring vocabulary. Likewise, a pre-assessment is made within each group to ensure that the content has been understood and to verify if they are prepared to be evaluated. Primarily, this strategy helps English language learners develop reading and writing skills.

Word game

Strategy adapted by Pujolàs from Spencer Kagan, students

work in small groups, and the teacher writes on the board some keywords about a topic being addressed. Within the teams, the members elaborate on a sentence with the words on the board. These can be the same or different for each group. Each sentence the students elaborated on represents a general synthesis of the topic (Otero, 2019). The

word game is a strategy that allows students to explore knowledge and develop language and concepts. This strategy is based on guiding the contents and practicing writing actively and dynamically.

Cooperative writing and editing pairs

Cooperative writing and editing pairs, a strategy created by David and Roger Johnson, aims to write several texts, encourage research and develop creativity in students, writing about topics that may interest their peers. In the first instance, the teacher forms heterogeneous pairs where one student writes and the other revises, after which the roles are reversed.

The pair writes the first paragraph, and then they do it individually. Once they have finished the composition, they revise it together to deliver it to a group. This group reads, follows the established criteria, and, if necessary, makes suggestions. Based on the suggestions, students review their work and make the respective corrections. In summary, students write, read and revise the compositions of their peers and a signature is added as proof that the whole process has been followed (Varas & Zariquiey, 2020). This cooperative strategy is focused on promoting the writing of diverse text types; consequently, it maximizes the developing of productive English language skills.

Cooperative writing pairs

This is a strategy developed by David and Roger Johnson, where students, in pairs, write a summary of previously reviewed content. The pair together makes a list of the main ideas, then one student dictates the first paragraph based on the first main idea, and the other student makes the necessary corrections. To elaborate on the second paragraph, the roles are reversed. Once the summary is finished, it is revised and signed for delivery (Portero 2018). This strategy involves writing summaries, recapitulating, and synthesizing

what has been learned.

It is important that the suggested topics are of interest to the students and that the criteria for reviewing the summary are established. *Cooperative writing pairs* are

a strategy that can be used in foreign language teaching, particularly when the teacher seeks to develop writing as one of the fundamental productive skills of a language.

Slavin (2018) also proposed the following strategies that can be included when teachers applied cooperative learning activities in class:

Jigsaw: students are divided into groups and each group is assigned a part of a larger task or project to work on. Afterwards, each group shares their information with the other groups to complete the overall task.

Round Robin: a group of students take turns sharing information, ideas, or opinions with each other.

Think-Pair-Share: students are given time to think about a problem or question individually, then they discuss their thoughts with a partner.

Three-Step Interview: students interview each other in pairs, then each pair joins another pair to form a group of four, and they repeat the process.

Team Quest: students work together to complete a task or solve a problem, using each other's strengths and skills.

Gallery Walk: students are given posters or displays to create on a specific topic, and then they walk around to view each other's work and provide feedback.

Fishbowl: a small group of students engage in a discussion while the rest of the class observes. Then, the roles are swapped so that everyone has a chance to participate.

Numbered Heads Together: students work in teams and

each member is assigned a number. When a question is asked, all members of the team work together to come up with the answer, and then one member with a designated number provides the answer.

2.3 Descriptive Texts

The descriptive text is a weaving of coherent ideas. In this sense, Alsagoff, et al. (2011) states that a text "is the superior unit of communication that contains and relies on three characteristics: coherence, cohesion, and adequacy" (P.18). On the other hand, abukhatalla (2012) proposes that "the descriptive text aims to arouse in the reader's imagination an impression similar to the sensitive impression that the things described could provoke" (p. 220). Thus, the central focus of this research has been to use descriptive text to strengthen the communicative competence of English language learners. Portero (2018) stated the following:

> Descriptive texts present with clarity and rigor the characteristic features of people, animals, objects, places, phenomena, or situations. A good description requires observing or thinking carefully about what is to be described, selecting the most characteristic features of this reality (shape, constituent elements, color, size, taste, smell...), ordering the selected elements (from top to bottom, from left to right, from front to back...) and writing the description taking into account the intended purpose: objectivity/subjectivity, expressiveness (p. 61).

In addition, Portero (2018) assert that descriptive text: Resorts to the senses to convey the impressions and sensations of the perceived reality. We reflect colors, shapes, sizes, noises, movements, and emotions through the description. With sight, we observe the object and situate them in space; with hearing, we capture sounds, voice tones, noises, and music; with smell, odors; with touch, we perceive texture, shape, and temperature; with taste, flavors. In this research, we resorted to descriptive text so the English language learner can describe through his senses and

become communicatively competent.

A linguistically competent and idealized speaker should be able to express him/herself fluently in the textual variety that corresponds to the communicative richness of the target language. However, it is well known that individual speakers can only sometimes express themselves with the same fluency and expressiveness in different textual types, nor is there a fair balance in the exposure to different text types

or in the quality of the input to which learners are subjected. Although the Common Framework of Reference for Languages itself (Council of Europe, 2018: 95) points out the importance of the use of text, stating that "...there can be no act of communication employing language without a text", this is not always the case in the classroom. Much has recently been published on the inestimable didactic value of text used for linguistic and sociocultural reasons (Slavin 2018). However, this still is a pending subject in elaborating numerous didactic materials.

The case of descriptive text is that it needs to be given the necessary importance or space in English didactic materials despite its relevance. Some of the causes are its apparent simplicity, difficult typological classification, and the neglect of this type of discourse in materials for more advanced levels. However, many justifications give the description a central position since, as Varas & Zariquiey (2020). point out, description constitutes one of the basic and intrinsic needs of all human beings, given that it is one of the oldest and most recurrent types of discourse. There is rarely a speech act in which there is no description since, as an intermediary, it is the verbal tool for recognizing the world and sharing it with the receiver.

Consequently, the need to teach using description as a textual communicative dimension becomes imperative since, as indicated above, the text is the most complete and complex resource. All this in a double perspective: that of the use of the rich range of linguistic tools offered by the case of description (syntactic constructions, lexical selection, verbal paradigm, collocations, or word combinations), as well as the important role that the concept of genre plays in both the production and reception of texts. In relation to Varas & Zariquiey (2020) classic idea of the superstructure, there is no doubt that one of the leading causes of comprehension and expression difficulties is the lack of command of specific textual structures and the difficulty in

retrieving these schemes in long-term memory.

2.3.2 What is Description?

A *description* is a purely communicative activity that requires significant development in this competence to show the interlocutor the feeling of the vividness of the image intended to be shared because the perception of this image is something

fundamentally visual as opposed to the linearity corresponding to the language. In the process of comprehension and expression of description as a meaningful use of language, linguistic, cognitive, and sociolinguistic skills come into play.

The descriptive text also configures a gnoseological activity of knowledge of the environment surrounding the individual and of becoming aware of it. It is a leap from the image to the word, a view of the outside world, although not always objective, since invariably, as Vineza (2017) points out, it is altered by the intervention of the speaker who selects only the parts of which he or she wishes to speak.

As for studies on the descriptive form as a unitary text, as previously mentioned, the low importance of didactic materials shows that theoretical problems surround descriptive fact. Since the Aristotelian tradition, in Rhetoric and Poetics, it has been defined as a vicarious genre at the service of other textual types. Description, in any of its variants (etopeia, patopeia, prosopography, somatopeia, topotesia, topography, or chronography), is always inserted in texts such as narration, drama, or lyric, which form the main framework in which it is included. The reality of description has traditionally meant that its character has yet to be given special relevance. A good example is Slavin (2018) statement:

> For classical aesthetics, the major defect of description lies in the fact that it involves neither order nor limits and seems, therefore, subject to the whims of the authors: there is no beginning, no middle or end, but monotonous succession and, no matter how skillfully arranged, this succession cannot compose a whole (p. 41)

2.3.3 Steps to create a descriptive text

According to Vasquez (2019), the basic principles of description are as

follows:

1. Observe the object of the description, select the characteristics or peculiarities that identify it, and differentiate it from other objects of the same kind. For example, describing a dog may be expressive to name a spot

on the dog's back, a docile look, or other characteristics that make it different from other dogs.

2. Order the materials obtained, following criteria: from the particular to the general, from the most expressive to the least expressive.3. To write with accuracy and expressiveness, seeking to influence those who listen or do not read (p. 153).

Descriptions are used in most texts that are written. The intention is to provide details and make the reader of descriptive texts be able to imagine what is being talked about, be it objects, animals, or people. In addition, adjectives and figurative elements are used to give details about the appearance of what is being described.

2.3.4 Characteristics of description

Paraphrasing Otero (124–125), the descriptive text is characterized by being objective or scientific-technical, and subjective or literary: a) objective, since it describes things as they appear in reality, making known their parts, their functioning and their purpose (what they are for). The person who describes does not manifest his feelings or emotions. It is used, for example, in scientific documents. Example: "The Magdalena River is the largest and most abundant river in Colombia. Much vegetation surrounds it. There are usually birds and insects".
b) Subjective because it expresses the inner and outer reality of what is to be described, using a language embellished with epithets, metaphors, comparisons, and other literary figures. In the subjective description, feelings and emotions are reflected. It is often used in literary descriptions. Example: "She was as beautiful as a flower. Her eyes were great stars that invaded my being".

2.3.5 How is the descriptive text constructed?

As a structure that configures, according to Vasquez (2019), description responds to a cognitive process that presents an organization that is not linear but hierarchical and of a referential character. According to the author, it also constitutes a sequence of prototypical characters that explains its variability insofar as a specific

descriptive text can be far from the central sequence without implying a break in its value as a textual entity. Consequently, not all descriptions necessarily have to develop the four operations proposed by Adam, but there is the possibility of the absence of some of them, which only indicates the greater distance from the prototypical construction. Thus, in the process of descriptive textual creation, there are, with some exceptions, *Introduction, Planning, Textualization, and Reviewing operations*.

Introduction is the first operation carried out in the textual creative process, which has a profound relationship with the macrostructure or semantic structure and with the textual macro-rules mentioned by Nude, Chatupote & Teo (2020) Through anchoring, access is gained to the relationship between the name, which configures a purely linguistic reality, and the notions that the receiver can take up from the cultural preconstruct. With the union of both factors, cultural memory and strictly linguistic information, the individual is able to produce different variants in comprehension and expression. This variability is crucial in the field of didactics since it is another of the determining factors in the production of written descriptions by international students from different cultural backgrounds. The textual macro-rules that the receiver applies during the comprehension process (deletion, selection, generalization, and integration) cause this interpretative variation in information processing.

Lobato, B. (2018) takes up the concept of macrostructure from Van Dijk's theories and suggests that its presence, as well as the lexical element derived from it, are unavoidable in any text that intends to configure a specific typological paradigm. However, it seems that the same does not happen with the forms in which the information is organized, the so-called superstructure, since the author assures that it is not a necessary characteristic. It is absent in

the descriptive sequence.

Thus, it is exclusively the lexical component that appears in its fullness in the description. The receiver automatically accesses the elements in the same frame, thanks to the facilitation provided by the motivating context through its sense of completeness. Thus, the meaning of a word is a complex conceptual structure based on prototypical cultural experience, stored knowledge, and the sender's or reader's cognitive abilities. Schemas are thus the conceptual tools that interpret the "visual picture" of the description and thereby reconstruct a meaning.

On the other hand, in the **planning** operation, the parts and properties of the subject are developed. The sender's decision-making on more or less detailed planning of the object described will result in the specific selection of some concrete properties developed in the text. The pragmatic characteristics and this selection operation mean that the same theme or anchor can be radically different depending on the sender, which undoubtedly gives great expressive and didactic possibilities to the descriptive text.

Textualization is the capacity of the descriptive phenomenon to occupy a place in the world and its relations concerning its continuity with other named objects. In parallel with the physical place, there is also a temporal place in which the object will develop through a metonymic process and which, as will be analyzed later, is a problem in the absence of a dynamic point of view in the samples of the learners.

Finally, the **Reviewing** is configured by choice between the development of the whole or a part of the object described. Vasquez (2019) speaks of the theoretically undefined progression that could be produced thanks to the process as mentioned above. Any elements of the description can be thematized or developed into subunits, and the describer himself decides which elements are or are not relevant. The result is a remarkable wealth of expressive and didactic possibilities. A diverse group of informants could describe the same object, and the results would be very different. This is not only due to thematic criteria but also to the point of view, the order of the elements in the discourse, or the degree of objectivity.

2.3.6 Type and Functions of Descriptive Texts

Traditionally, in the process of descriptive creation, there are usually three fundamental phases: observation, selection, and expression (Nude, Chatupote & Teo, 2020). The first stage, in which

the describer observes the object, has the primary purpose of reaching an interpretative agreement between the sender and receiver. For such an agreement to be reached and, as a consequence, for there to be bilateral coherence between the interlocutors, the reflection of the observed object must be attentive. This is followed by data selection or aspectualization, already mentioned by Otero (2018), which is a fundamental element in deciding what is to be transmitted.

This moment represents a structured analysis that the rhetorical tradition has made revolve around the so-called natural order of the constituent parts of the objects of reality. However, as Vasquez (2019) says, it constitutes an anarchic principle since the individual makes his own decisions. Finally, in the presentation of data, the expression, we proceed to verbalize all the information previously contained in short-term memory.

The functions of the descriptive process are another key in using this textual typology in the English classroom and the theoretical reality intrinsic to the text. As can be expected, the bibliography on this subject is also extensive, so the reflections of authors such as Nude, Chatupote & Teo (2020), have been taken up again and again until the present time. Describing a response to the question "what for?" in whose answer the sender manifests a purpose and specific activities. In this line, Serrano (2018) highlights the informative and explanatory capacity of the description, that is, the intermediary of knowledge between the object and the receiver. In turn, an evaluative function is carried out, absent objectivity in some cases and vehicle of beliefs and cultural preconstruction. As well as the regulatory, textualization and reading and writing management functions, produced mainly in the cases in which the descriptive text appears in literature and based fundamentally on its ornamental application.

According to Serrano (2018), the description includes the following classes:

- ✓ Topography. Description of a place or landscape, a real or imaginary physical space.
- ✓ Chronography. Description of a historical epoch, a specific time or moment.
- ✓ Prosopography. Description of the physical features of a person or animal. It focuses on their body shape and

clothing.

- ✓ Etopeia. Description of people's habits, virtues, talents, defects, and moral or psychological qualities.
- ✓ Portrait. The sum of prosopography and ethopoeia. It includes physical, moral, and intellectual qualities.
- ✓ Self-portrait. The author describes himself.

- ✓ Parallelism. It is the consecutive or mixed description to establish a comparison and build similarities and differences.
- ✓ Caricature. It deforms the description with an ironic and humorous intention.

In conclusion, the descriptive text's inescapable reality is its typological variety since there are as many paradigm descriptions as there are groups of objects or animate beings in the world. This is demonstrated by the classic rhetoric's list of seven types comprising topography; chronography; parallel descriptions; tableau; ethopoeia; prosopography; and portrait (Serrano, 2018). To it, we must add the varieties and richness of expressive possibilities in the intention of this last type, the portrait, where once again the issuer selects or grants of greater importance to the features, he believes convenient, in many cases reaching exaggeration. The object described, in this case, the human being, can be seen objectively or subjectively through the mirror of caricature or admiration; one can even reach the portrait of oneself, which is the most intimate vision as well as the most ambitious pretension to remain in this world through words.

CHAPTER

III

METHODOLOGICAL

FRAMEWORK

3.1. Location

This research study was implemented at Unidad Educativa San Alfonso in Ambato. The Institution is located in the province of Tungurahua, in the canton of Ambato, and the parish of Atocha - Ficoa. It is an educational center of Ecuador belonging to Zone 3; geographically, it is an urban educational center. Its modality is Presential in the morning, with a regular education and educational level: EGB and Baccalaureate. It is an educational institution that obtains resources to develop its activities (support) privately. It is in the Sierra school system. The Educational Unit has a total of approximately 17 teachers and 270 students.

3.2 Tools and Techniques

For this investigation, some materials were needed, for example, laptop, desktop materials, internet connection, pen drive. These materials facilitated the investigator to conduct this study.

The techniques used were a pre-test and post-test which included a validated rubric taken from Cambridge (https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/504505-a2- key-handbook-2020.pdf). This validated rubric was used in order to evaluate three aspects, *content, organization and language* due to the purpose of this research study was to apply Cooperative Learning Activities to enhance Descriptive texts. Additionally, the pre-test was

used to help the researcher diagnose students before starting the treatment, (see annex 1). This treatment consisted of ten different Cooperative Learning Activities with the steps proposed by Vasquez (2019) (*Planning, Textualization and Reviewing*). This pre-test was applied both groups (control and experimental). At the end of the treatment, the researcher applied a post-test in order to evaluate students' knowledge on Descriptive texts (see annex 1).

3.3 Type of research

The approach of this proposal is **Quantitative** since, from the quantitative point of view, there is a relationship between variables, which can be measured statistically. For it to be qualitative, it must study the variables within situational contexts. For this reason, this work seeks arguments that support the applicability of cooperative learning activities that, in turn, allow the production of descriptive texts according to student's needs in the development of writing in English.

It is quantitative because the information collected using a numerical range was subjected to statistical analysis and explained according to the Theoretical Framework elaborated in Chapter II. Through this interpretation, the hypothesis was tested to establish behavior patterns in the population. This research was carried out with students of Educación Básica in eighth-grade, where a pre-test and a post-test were applied.

In view of the fact that it is a **correlational** study because it establishes a relationship between the dependent variable, the production of descriptive texts, and the independent variable, Cooperative Learning Activities, which is added to this the design of the pre-test and post-test. The group of students who participated in this study was 29 eighth graders, becoming the study population.

It is of an **exploratory level** since its study responds to a little-known problem. With an innovative perspective, it tends to apply a different and promising method in the Unidad Educativa San Alfonso, with the expectation that it will be accepted as a suggestion for the development of the production of descriptive texts, which will contribute to change and will allow correcting the problem investigated in the environment in which it was developed, with all

its characteristics, strengths, and deficiencies.

The research is a **quasi-experimental design**, of comparison of equivalent groups because it will be carried out with an experimental group and a control group within the same class, which is assumed to be a great advantage. According to García

(2018), "A quasi-experimental design is a type of research design in which the researcher does not randomly assign participants to different conditions or groups" (p. 103). Which means that the researcher did not assigned participants randomly, all have shared similar previous knowledge, equivalent in number, of similar ages, which are governed under the same curricular design according to what is established in Unidad Educativa "San Alfonso".

The study also corresponds to **field research** since it has been possible to access the required information from where the facts are manifested (Unidad Educativa San Alfonso), which is a vital premise for obtaining accurate data. In addition, it is a **documentary** due to the analysis of the written information of the subject of study and sectional or transversal because it was carried out with a series of unique data obtained in four weeks from Monday, January 9th to Friday, February 3rd, 2023.

3.4 Hypothesis testing

The Cooperative Learning Activities contribute to the strengthening of Descriptive Texts in eighth-grade English Learners at Unidad Educativa San Alfonso.
To verify the hypothesis, it was necessary to apply a pre-test and post-test where the instrument was a knowledge test that contains the four steps proposed by Vasquez (2019).

3.4.1. Statement of the Hypothesis

Ho: The Cooperative Learning Activities do not contribute to strengthening Descriptive Texts in eighth-grade English Learners at Unidad Educativa San Alfonso.
Hi: The Cooperative Learning Activities contribute to strengthening

Descriptive Texts in eighth-grade English Learners at Unidad Educativa San Alfonso.

3.4.2. Selection of the level of significance.

The level $\alpha = 0.05$ was used.

3.5 Population and Sample

This study was conducted at Unidad Educativa "San Alfonso". 29 participants were part of this investigation. They were students of eight level.

Table 1.

Population

Group	Population	Total
	Eight A	
Control	14	14
Experimental	15	15
Total		**29**

Note: The table shows the distribution of the population under study in the research.

3.6 Data Collection

In this research, a pretest and post-test were used. The pretest was developed by this study's researcher and validated by experts in the topics to be investigated. The pretest was applied to the entire participant population. This test was a diagnostic test to know how the students started before applying collaborative learning activities to enrich the descriptive texts. The contents were the most significant for the students. The test modality was multiple choice and open questions. This test was composed of 9 questions distributed in three steps: Planning, Textualization and Reviewing. After obtaining the results of the pretest, the researcher proceeded to apply the proposal on cooperative learning activities in descriptive texts in order to demonstrate that through this technique, students were able to make comparisons of various topics, creatively exercising writing and representing the reality of a topic through the use of language. This

proposal was only applied to the experimental group to proceed with the data comparison. It is important to mention that both, the pre-test and post-test were elaborated based on the steps proposed by Vasquez (2019) (*Planning, Textualization and Reviewing*). A validated rubric, taken from

https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/504505-a2-key-handbook-2020.pdf, was included with the purpose to measure three aspects: *content, organization and language.* Two Cooperative Learning activities were applied each week being 5 weeks of treatment in total. At the end of this treatment, a post-test was applied in order to know if Cooperative Learning Activities really enhance Descriptive text in the English language.

CHAP

TER IV

RESULTS

AND

DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

This chapter presents the results obtained from the pretest and posttest when applying the "Cooperative learning activities to enrich descriptive texts" in Unidad Educativa San Alfonso with eighth-grade students of Educación General Básica. Based on these data, statistical calculations were made, which offer the necessary criteria to analyze the hypothesis and thus be able to write conclusions and recommendations for this research. The statistical results obtained are shown below:

Table 2.

Results of the pre-test in the control group

Participants	Content	Organization	Language	Overall mean
Student 1	1	1	1	
Student 2	0	1	0	
Student 3	0	1	0	
Student 4	1	0	1	
Student 5	2	1	0	
Student 6	0	0	0	
Student 7	0	0	0	
Student 8	1	0	0	
Student 9	1	0	0	

Student 10	1	1	0	
Student 11	0	1	0	
Student 12	1	1	1	
Student 13	1	0	1	
Student 14	1	0	1	
total	10	7	5	**22,00**
Mean	1,4	1,0	0,7	**3,1**

Note: This table shows the results of the pre-test from the control group

Table 2 shows the results obtained in the pre-test applied to the control group. It is important to mention that three categories were selected taking into account the Writing Cambridge Rubric. In Content the media obtained was 1,4 over 5 points, in Organization the mean was 1,0 over 5 points and in Language the mean was 0,7 over 5 points. The overall mean is 3,1 over 5 points.

Table 3.

Results of the Pre-test in the Experimental Group

Participants	Content	Organization	Language	overall mean
Student 1	0	0	1	
Student 2	0	0	1	
Student 3	1	0	0	
Student 4	1	1	1	
Student 5	0	0	1	
Student 6	0	0	1	
Student 7	1	0	0	
Student 8	1	1	1	
Student 9	0	1	0	
Student 10	1	0	0	
Student 11	1	1	0	
Student 12	0	0	1	
Student 13	0	0	0	
Student 14	1	1	0	
Student 15	1	1	0	
Total	**7**	**6**	**7**	**20**
Mean	1,00	0,86	1,00	**2,86**

Note: This table shows the results of the pre-test in the experimental group

Table 3 shows the results obtained in the experimental group's pre-test before applying the treatment. In content, the mean is 1,0 over 15; in

Organization 0,86 over 5 points, and the mean is 1,0 over 5 points in Language. The overall mean is 2,86 over 15.

Table 4.

Results of the Post-test in the Control Group

Participants	Content	Organization	Language	Overall mean
Student 1	1	0	1	
Student 2	1	1	0	
Student 3	1	1	0	
Student 4	1	0	1	
Student 5	1	1	0	
Student 6	1	1	1	
Student 7	0	1	1	
Student 8	1	0	0	
Student 9	0	1	1	
Student 10	1	0	0	
Student 11	0	1	1	
Student 12	1	1	0	
Student 13	1	0	1	
Student 14	1	0	0	
total	**11**	**8**	**7**	**26**
Mean	**1,6**	**1,1**	**1,0**	**3,7**

Note: this table shows the results of the post-test in the Control Group

Table 4 shows the results of the post-test in the control group. In content the mean is 1,6 over 5; Organization 1,1 over 5 and Language 1,0 over 5. The overall mean is 3,7 over 15 points. It is necessary to mention that based on the rubric that was used, each criteria was over 5 points. In the post-test, students improved but

didn't obtained a grade over 1 point.

Table 5.

Results of the Post-test in the Experimental Group

Participants	Content	Organization	Language	overall mean
Student 1	1	1	1	
Student 2	1	1	1	
Student 3	0	1	1	
Student 4	1	1	1	
Student 5	0	1	0	
Student 6	1	0	1	
Student 7	1	1	1	
Student 8	1	1	1	
Student 9	1	1	1	
Student 10	1	0	1	
Student 11	1	1	1	
Student 12	1	1	1	
Student 13	1	1	1	
Student 14	1	1	1	
Student 15	1	0	1	
Total	13	12	14	**39**
Mean	1,86	1,71	2,00	**5,57**

Note: This table shows the results of the post-test in the Experimental group

Table 5 shows the results obtained after the treatment applied to the Experimental group. In content the mean was 1,86 over 5; in organization 1,71 over 5; in language 2,0 over 5. The overall mean was 5,57 over 15 points.

Table 6.

Descriptive statistics of the pretest between the control and experimental Group

	Pretest Experimental group	**Pretest Control group**
Mean	2,86	3,1
Variance	245.0	100.34
Observations	15	14
Statistic t	-0.35	
P(T<=t) two tails	0.46	
Critical value of t (two tails)	2.0	

Note: this table shows the descriptive statistics of the pretest between the control and experimental group.

Source: data generated in Excel

The means indicated in this table shows that the experimental group showed a lower average in the pretest compared to the control group. However, the difference is not statistically significant since the value calculated in the t-statistic (-0.35) is less than the critical value of t (2.0)

Table 7.

Descriptive statistics of the post-test between control and experimental group

	Post-test Experimental group	**Post-test Control group**
Mean	5,57	3,7
Variance	89.57	101.23
Observations	15	14
Statistic t	2.87	

P(T<=t) two tails	0.05
Critical value of t (two tails)	3,50

Note: this table shows the descriptive statistics of the post-test between control and experimental group

Source: data generated in Excel

After analyzing the above results, the alternative hypothesis is accepted: "Cooperative Learning Activities enrich the descriptive texts of the students of the eighth year of General Basic Education of the San Alfonso Educational Unit." The Null hypothesis is rejected: "Cooperative Learning Activities do not enrich the descriptive texts of the students of the eighth year of General Basic Education of the San Alfonso Educational Unit."

The arithmetic mean of the experimental group in the pretest was 61.56, and that of the control group was 62.35, so the Alternative Hypothesis Hi1 is accepted: "The Cooperative Learning Activities enrich the descriptive texts of the students of the eighth year of General Basic Education of the San Alfonso Educational Unit." And the null hypothesis Ho1 is rejected: "Cooperative Learning Activities do not enrich the descriptive texts of the students of the eighth year of Educación General Básica at Unidad Educativa "San Alfonso."

It is observed that the pretest of the experimental group reaches an arithmetic mean of 61.56 and the posttest 89.31; therefore, there is a significant statistical difference. Since the t statistic = -7.030 is lower than the critical value of t (two-tailed)
= 3,50.

It is observed that the experimental group's arithmetic mean obtained in the posttest was 89.57, and that of the control group was 101.23. The statistic t=2.87 is greater than the critical value of t (two-tailed) =3,5, so there is a statistically significant difference.

Table 10. *General Results*

	Content	Organization	Language
1. Pre-test Control Group	1,4	1,0	0,7
2. Post-test Control Group	1,6	1,1	1,0
3. Pre-test Experimental Group	1,0	0,86	1,0

4. Post-test			
Experimental Group	1,8	1,7	2,0

Note: this table shows the results obtained in the pre-test and post-test of control and experimental group.

Figure 6.

General Result of Pre-test and Post-test of Control and Experimental Group
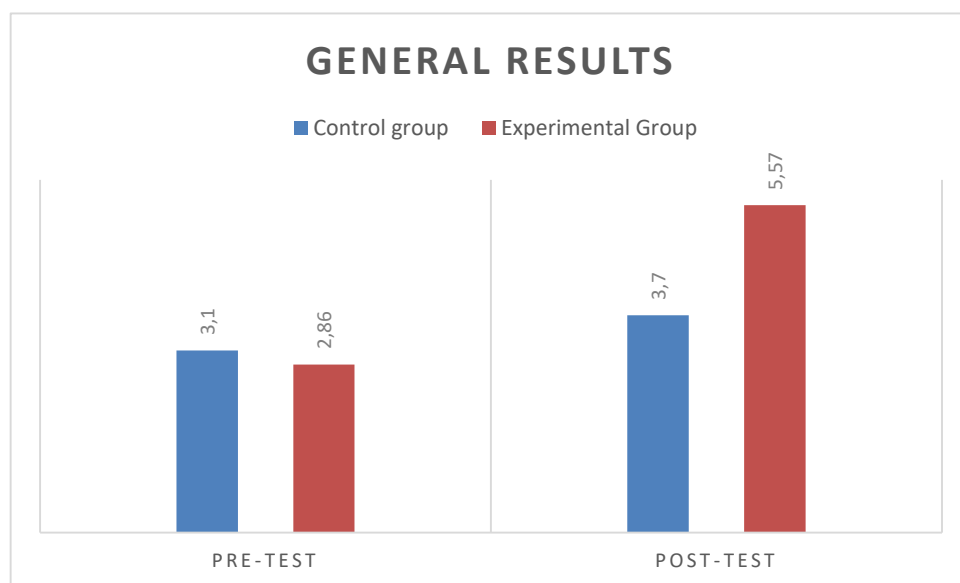
Note: this figure shows the results obtained in the application of the pre-test and post-test of Control and Experimental Group.

Figure 6 shows the general results participants obtained in the pre-test and post- test where three categories were evaluated according to the standardized writing rubric retrieve from https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/504505-a2-key-handbook- 2020.pdf. Content, organization and language were considered for this research. These

tests as well as the rubric were important instruments that help the researcher obtained data in order to confirm that Cooperative Learning Activities enhance Descriptive text in A1-level English Learners.

Number one (pre-test) and two (post-test) correspond to the control group. Figure 6 shows that in *Content* (blue) there is a difference of 0,2 which is not a big difference in the final result. In *Organization (red)* the difference obtained between the pre-test and post-test is 0,4. Meanwhile, in *Language (green)* the difference was 0,7. These results were obtained with the application of the traditional methodology without making any change. As the results show, there was not too much difference in terms of content, organization and language in both tests pre-test and post-test.

On the other hand, number three (pre-test) and four (post-test) correspond to the experimental group. For this group the researcher applied a treatment based on three steps (*Planning, textualization, and reviewing).* As well as the control group, it was needed the rubric with three categories *Content, Organization and Language.* Comparing **content** in the pre-test and post-test there is a big difference of 2 points. In **organization** 1,7 and in **language** 2,4. These results clearly confirm that Cooperative Learning Activities do enhance descriptive texts in eighth-grade learners.

4.2 Discussion

This chapter analyzes the results of the research, whose objective was to Determine the effectiveness of cooperative learning activities to enrich descriptive texts in eighth-grade English Language learners. Having the objective clear, we proceeded to search for the information presented in the previous chapter.

The mean in the pretest for the experimental group was 2,4.

For the control group, it was 2,6, indicating that both groups obtained similar results before carrying out the fieldwork with the experimental group. The control group continued working as usual. The mean obtained in the posttest of the experimental group was 4,6, and the control group was 3,1. These results indicate that the experimental group suffered a positive change in their academic performance due to the cooperative learning strategies. It is also observed that the control group improved their performance because they received extrinsic motivation from the researcher. Besides, the posttest

was a quarterly evaluation representing 20% of the final grade, so the students made a great effort to obtain a good result.

The mean of the experimental group in the pretest was 2,4, and in the posttest, it was 4,6, which indicates that the student's performance was good. It indicates that the experimental group improved significantly because they were immersed in an intervention where seven cooperative learning activities were applied, which were quite dynamic and enriching for the students. The mean of the control group in the pretest was 2,6. In the posttest, it was 3,1, which shows enrichment in the writing skill also in this group, which was due to extra activities of reinforcement and review, in addition to the motivation of the students to obtain a good result.

The experience in class when carrying out the fieldwork was quite enjoyable since the first thing done was assigning the workgroups. This was done randomly, which caused discomfort in several students because they wanted to work with their friends, as mediator was the researcher intervening in situations that he thought necessary, promoting attitudes of respect and encouraging positive interdependence by sharing materials, then experiences and finally, their talents to benefit the team. Participation was a challenge because, at first, the students were embarrassed to do the activities. However, they got into the dynamic little by little and looked forward to classing time to perform new activities.

Discipline was not a problem in this work since, from the beginning, it was explained to them how they should work, what they could do, and what they could not do, which regulated the coexistence. In the partial evaluations, outstanding results were obtained since the students helped and explained to each other. Hence, it was not necessary to carry out review activities, obtaining a significant improvement in their academic performance. In conclusion, the classroom experience was entirely satisfactory, and motivation and

engagement increased as shown in the study presented by Johnson & Jonson (2014) in the state of the art of this paper. This made possible to prove that cooperative learning activities are effective to apply to any level and content.

In addition to the experience obtained in this study, it is necessary to compare and contrast the results obtained with other studies conducted nationally and internationally.

Concerning research in Guatemala on cooperative work and academic performance, Alvarado (2015) Obtained results that the pretest reached an arithmetic mean of 33 and the posttest 62. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted: "There is a significant statistical difference when comparing the student's spelling before and after applying cooperative learning." It was concluded that teaching using cooperative learning and spelling is a functional method applied by the teacher in the classroom process and stimulates participation through applying appropriate techniques to improve learning. The results of this research are closely related to those obtained in the present study since, in both studies, cooperative learning strategies were applied, and a notable improvement was observed in the performance of the experimental group in the posttest. Therefore, it is determined that cooperative learning strategies benefit learning.

IBarrios (2015) conducted research that had results: the perception of students regarding cooperative work is positive since they consider that it consists of learning by supporting each other, where the essential components are permanent and systematic communication. The results of that research are related to the results of this study beyond a similar theme since we can conclude that students consider it a positive experience to work supporting their peers; this makes them more motivated and aware of their learning process, which results in an improvement in academic performance.

For his part, Gómez (2015) research results show a statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05. Hence, applying different cooperative learning strategies facilitates the teaching of vectors, as these allow the student to develop in a group

and contribute ideas. At the same time, their performance is favored with successful results. In the present study, cooperative learning strategies were also applied during one bimester, improving the student's performance in the Communication and Language course. Since the strategies facilitated learning the contents studied, a statistically significant difference was also observed at the 0.05

level. Once again, it is concluded that cooperative learning strategies effectively improve academic performance.

Ordoñez (2014) conducted a study to establish the attitude that sixth-grade students of the primary level of the Loyola School in Guatemala City have towards cooperative work. The researcher used a Likert scale designed himself with a randomly selected sample of 97 students. Through this study, the researcher concluded that the students evaluated have a positive attitude towards cooperative work and understand their role in teamwork. The results obtained by Ordoñez are similar to those of this research since students improved their performance and showed greater interest in the course when cooperative learning strategies were involved.

González (2015) carried out a study that determined that the age of the students in the experimental group did influence the final results, contrary to what happened with the gender factor, which did not make a difference. The previous results are compared with those obtained in this research since cooperative learning strategies were applied to the experimental group. This also presented a considerable improvement compared to the control group. The difference lies in the fact that in this study, neither gender nor age influenced the performance of the experimental group and that both the control and the experimental group presented a higher mean in academic performance due to the interference of some variables that were not controlled at the time of carrying out the study. It is concluded then that cooperative learning strategies are applicable at all levels and in all subjects, improving the student's academic performance.

Finally, it was established that the application of cooperative learning activities enriches descriptive texts and helps to improve students' writing skills since they transform them into people who can communicate their ideas in a creative and participatory manner, in addition to promoting values such as unity and solidarity. Each

student also develops cognitive skills and appropriates conceptual and procedural content. Finally, this methodology prepares individuals to live in society as they learn to put their talents to their team's benefit and achieve common goals. It was demonstrated that the cooperative learning implemented within the Course improved writing skills and individual development. Best of all, this method of learning-teaching

can be applied at other levels and in various circumstances, as demonstrated in other studies.

During the development of this research, the use of cooperative learning activities changed the classroom climate since the class became dynamic, fun, and attractive for the students because it involves innovative activities that are easy to implement in the classroom. At the end of the application, the students were very interested since activities were carried out to reinforce the contents; consequently, there was a significant improvement.

The results obtained in this study and those obtained in other investigations provide valuable information to the administration of Colegio San Alfonso. They can serve as a guide when making new decisions to improve the learning-teaching process since cooperative learning strategies are easy to implement.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the research process, which consisted of applying cooperative learning activities to enrich descriptive texts in eighth-grade students at Unidad Educativa San Alfonso. The following conclusions are presented:

- The literature review provided evidence that cooperative learning promotes active learning, critical thinking, social interaction, and teamwork, all of which are important components of effective writing instruction. Additionally, the literature review helped the researcher identify specific cooperative learning strategies (Jigsaw, Round Robin, Think-Pair-Shared, Team Quest, Gallery Walk, Fishbowl, and Numbered Heads Together), which were used in the proposal; those strategies have been shown to be effective for improving descriptive writing skills, so this was demonstrated with the results.

- After conducting the pretest, the researcher identified some of the main drawbacks of the writing process of eighth-grade students being these; limited vocabulary which made it challenging for them to express themselves in writing. They struggled to find the right words to convey their message and relied on simple, repetitive language. Also, students did not have a solid grasp of grammar rules and structures, which leaded to errors in their writing. They struggled with basic sentence structures, verb tenses, and word order. The lack of

writing experience was another drawback that the results showed. Additionally, students had difficulty with spelling and punctuation, which affected the clarity and coherence of their writing. They made spelling mistakes or omitted punctuation, leading to confusion and misunderstanding. Overall, A1 students faced several challenges when it came to writing, but with the application of the treatment (proposal) they could overcome these challenges and developed their writing skills.

- The results obtained after the application of the proposal, which was the treatment in this study, helped the researcher address the specific needs of students who struggled with traditional approaches to writing descriptive texts in English. This proposal provided a new set of guidelines, students were able to understand the process and produce higher-quality writing. It also encouraged students to be more creative and experimental in their writing. This helped students to develop a more personal writing style and express themselves in unique and engaging ways. Overall, proposing an alternative strategy for developing descriptive texts in English had a range of benefits for both teachers and students, including improving writing skills, enhancing the learning experience, and promoting creativity and self-expression.

- The effectiveness of cooperative learning activities to enrich descriptive text in eighth-grade English Language Learners has been established through research and data analysis. The implementation of cooperative learning activities in the classroom promoted the development of descriptive writing skills in English Language Learners. These activities not only allowed students to work collaboratively, but also provided them with opportunities to practice and enhance their descriptive writing skills in a meaningful and engaging way. The research findings indicate that cooperative learning activities had a positive impact on students' writing performance, including improvements in their descriptive language, organization, and overall writing ability. Additionally, cooperative learning activities have been shown to increase students' motivation, engagement, and confidence in their writing skills. The implementation of cooperative learning activities was an effective strategy to enrich descriptive text in eighth-grade English Language Learners.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the results obtained in this research, it is recommended:

- Based on the conclusion that cooperative learning is an effective strategy for improving descriptive writing skills, the recommendation is for educators to incorporate cooperative learning activities into their writing instruction for eighth-grade English Language Learners. Specifically, educators could consider implementing specific cooperative learning strategies such as Jigsaw, Round Robin, Think-Pair-Shared, Team Quest, Gallery Walk, Fishbowl, and Numbered Heads Together to enhance the effectiveness of their instruction. It is recommended that educators carefully plan and structure cooperative learning activities to ensure that they are appropriate for their students' language proficiency level and that they align with the learning objectives of the writing instruction. Additionally, educators should provide clear instructions and expectations for students and ensure that all students have equal opportunities to participate and contribute to the cooperative learning activities.

- Another recommendation is to provide explicit instruction and practice in vocabulary development, grammar rules, and sentence structures. This can be achieved through various instructional methods such as vocabulary games, grammar drills, and sentence structure exercises. Educators can also provide feedback on students' writing to help them identify and correct their errors. Also, it is important to provide opportunities for students to practice writing regularly, such as through journaling, writing

prompts, and collaborative writing activities. This can help students develop their writing skills and gain confidence in their ability to express themselves in writing. Additionally, educators can provide support for students with spelling and punctuation issues by offering individualized instruction and practice activities. This can include activities such as spelling and punctuation games, guided editing exercises, and focused instruction on specific spelling and punctuation rules.

- Educators can consider implementing the alternative strategy proposed in this study, which was found to be effective in addressing the specific needs of students who struggled with traditional approaches to writing descriptive texts in English. The new set of guidelines provided by the proposal helped students understand the process and produce higher-quality writing, while also encouraging creativity and experimentation in their writing. Incorporating this alternative strategy into writing instruction can help improve students' writing skills, enhance the learning experience, and promote creativity and self-expression. Additionally, educators can adapt and modify the alternative strategy to fit the specific needs of their students and instructional context.

- The recommendation implied by the conclusion is that English teachers should implement cooperative learning activities in the classroom to enrich descriptive writing skills. The conclusion states that these activities have been established as effective through research and data analysis, and that they not only promote the development of descriptive writing skills, but also increase students' motivation, engagement, and confidence. Therefore, the recommendation is for teachers to incorporate cooperative learning activities as a strategy to enhance the descriptive text of their students at this level.

CHAPTER VI PROPOSAL

TOPIC: Elaboration of a Guide of Cooperative Learning Activities to enrich Descriptive Texts.

6.1 Informative data

Name of the institution: Unidad Educativa "San Alfonso"

Location: Ambato

Beneficiaries: eighth-grade students

Estimated time for the execution: One month.

Beginning:

January 9th, 2023

Ending:

February 3rd,

2023 **Person in**

charge:

Researcher **Cost:**

$100

6.2 Background of the proposal

Cooperative learning is a teaching method that has been gaining popularity in recent years due to its many benefits in enhancing student learning and development. Research has shown that cooperative learning can lead to increased student motivation, higher academic achievement, and better social skills, among other benefits. The method has been used in a variety of subject areas and educational levels and has been found to be effective in diverse cultural and educational contexts.

Descriptive text, on the other hand, is a form of writing that provides a detailed description of a person, place, object, event, or experience. Descriptive writing is an important aspect of language arts, and it is often taught in English and language arts classes, as well as in other subject areas where writing skills are required. The goal of descriptive writing is to create a vivid picture in the reader's mind, to convey the sensory, emotional, and intellectual experiences associated with the subject being described, and to engage the reader's imagination.

The combination of cooperative learning activities and descriptive text has the potential to provide a rich learning experience for students. By working together in small groups, students can learn from each other as they engage in descriptive writing activities, improving their writing skills, their understanding of descriptive language, and their ability to collaborate and communicate effectively. This background proposal aims to explore the potential benefits of combining these two teaching methods and to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach in enhancing student learning and development.

6.3 Justification

Education aims to prepare students to face life's challenges with equity and educational quality, providing a wealth of knowledge with the necessary tools to meet the new challenges they face in their context. That is why basic-level students need to be prepared in the apprehension of a transversal competence such as the understanding of descriptive texts, with the intention and firm conviction of being able to face, in the

medium term, the world of complexity that the academy has to face not only in the classroom but also in other social institutions, with practices that include learning to work with others, that is, knowing how to work cooperatively. The research proposal generates a challenge that involves leading students to work with others, with their school peers, and learning together, which implies a paradigmatic rupture of the teacher's daily work.

Under this perspective, the methodological demands require new strategies in a classroom; although cooperative learning is currently the most systematically studied approach, as opposed to collaborative and competitive learning, it should be considered an excellent opportunity for the promotion of comprehensive quality education, developing didactics aimed at strengthening learning, and on the other hand, that such learning is the result of the interaction of the teacher with his students and the students with their peers.

Given the above, the research is based on four perspectives that justify it: theoretical, practical, methodological, and social relevance. Descriptive texts can be conceived as a rational process that allows establishing communicative links between the student and the writer of the text, which is only achieved if the teacher facilitates the development of specific cognitive processes such as reasoning, reflection, judgment, and critical capacity of analysis and synthesis to establish relationships between what is read and its reality. It can be said that the way the teacher organizes, guides, and facilitates the process of learning to read will determine the student's academic success because when they have learned to read and write, they have a solid foundation for all future education and instruction.

This research work delves into theoretical and methodological aspects that will favour and make possible the development of thought processes, seeking to improve the levels of written skills and the ability of dissertation and argumentation through cooperative

learning. From a theoretical point of view, this research intends to provide contributions with novel didactic strategies to enrich descriptive texts through cooperative learning, with the firm intention that students can obtain autonomous, creative, and meaningful learning through the reading process in order to promote the enrichment of knowledge, the development of skills and the application in its maximum splendour of communicative competence.

The social relevance of this research points to the formation, through cooperative learning, of skilled citizens who are capable of generating autonomous, creative, and meaningful knowledge by making use of descriptive texts and who know how to use written language to critically interpret their reality, and who can face, through interaction with their peers. These changes occur in the current structure of society. In this framework, cooperative learning and descriptive texts are vital in the success or failure of students' school management, so it is appropriate to strengthen these skills in search of excellent academic performance.

6.4 Objectives

6.4.1 General

To elaborate a manual with Cooperative Learning Activities to enrich Descriptive Texts.

6.4.2 Specific objectives

- To choose the cooperative learning activities that will be part of the guide

- To explain how each Cooperative Learning Activity will be used

- To socialize the proposal to the teachers of the English area.

6.5 Feasibility analysis

This proposal is feasible to carry out because the researcher has the support of the authorities of the institution, as well as the authorization of the parents and students. Additionally, this proposal is feasible because the researcher assumes all the necessary expenses for the implementation of this proposal.

6.6 Theoretical foundation Cooperative Learning

Activities

Cooperative learning is included in what is known as active methodologies. Active methodologies are interactive processes in which the student is responsible for his own learning. The use of these methodologies implies a change in the role of both the teacher and the students. The student ceases to be a passive agent and becomes active since he/she must be involved in the learning process to acquire knowledge. On

the other hand, the teacher acquires other responsibilities within the process and becomes a facilitator of learning.

Active methodologies promote meaningful learning, which is not as quickly forgotten as rote learning since it involves a change in the mental structures of students (Serna & Díaz, 2013). Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1999) define cooperative learning as "the didactic use of small groups in which students work together to maximize their own learning and that of others" (p.5). If in addition, we look up the definition of cooperate in the Dictionary of the Spanish Language of the Royal Spanish Academy, the first meaning that appears defines cooperate as: "To work together with another or others to achieve a common goal." From the two previous definitions and following Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec (1999) and Pujolàs and Lago (2011), It can be identified the leading singularities that characterize cooperative learning.

Cooperative learning is not only a resource, or a methodology applied in the classroom to improve student's academic results, but it is another content that appears in the school curriculum. For this reason, teachers must design activities to teach students to work in teams in the same organized way as other content is taught (Pujolàs, 2003).

In summary, Cooperative learning activities are educational activities where students work together in small groups to achieve a common goal. These activities help students to develop social skills, learn to work in teams, and improve their communication skills. Some common cooperative learning activities include group problem-solving, jigsaw activities, think-pair-share, and group projects. The focus of these activities is on learning together rather than competition, and students are encouraged to support each other in their learning process.

Descriptive texts

A descriptive text is a type of writing that aims to provide a vivid and sensory description of a person, place, object, experience, or emotion. It uses figurative language, sensory detail, and word choice to create a picture in the reader's mind. Descriptive text is often used in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction, but it can also be found in other types of writing such as product descriptions or travel writing.

According to the Vasquez (2019), "A descriptive essay should create a vivid picture of the topic in the reader's mind" (P.123). You may need to write a descriptive essay for a class assignment or decide to write one as a fun writing challenge. Start by brainstorming ideas for the essay. Then, outline and write the essay using sensory detail and strong description.

Planning: Planning in descriptive writing is an important step in the writing process, as it helps to ensure the text is organized, effective, and engaging for the reader. A descriptive text should have a clear purpose and structure, using language to bring the subject to life. According to writing experts, when planning a descriptive text, writers should consider the following steps, a) Determine the purpose and goals of the text; b) Organize information and ideas into a logical structure, c) Decide on the tone and style that best suits the intended audience; d) Identify the key points to be covered; e) Create an outline to guide the writing process; f) Consider the use of sensory details and figurative language to enhance the description; g) Revise for clarity and effectiveness. By following these steps, writers can effectively plan and create descriptive texts that engage and captivate their readers.

Textualization: Textualization is the process of converting an experience, event, or description into written text. In descriptive writing, textualization refers to the way in which the writer transforms sensory information, emotions, and observations into written words that create a vivid and sensory picture in the reader's mind. This process involves choosing the right words, using figurative language, and organizing the information in a way that enhances the description and creates a clear and vivid picture. The goal of textualization in descriptive writing is to make the reader feel as though they are experiencing the scene, person, or object being described, rather than just reading about it.

Textualization can be seen as the critical step in descriptive writing that transforms sensory information and experiences into a written work that can be shared and understood by others. It is a crucial component of descriptive writing that requires careful attention to language and detail to be effective.

Reviewing: Reviewing in descriptive writing is the process of evaluating and refining the text to ensure it meets its goals and effectively communicates the intended

message. According to writing experts, when reviewing a descriptive text, writers should consider the following steps:

a) Evaluate the text's purpose and goals: Ensure that the text is focused and that the purpose is clear.
b) Check the structure and organization: Make sure the text is well-organized and that the information is presented in a logical sequence.
c) Consider the tone and style: Ensure that the tone and style are appropriate for the intended audience.
d) Review the use of language: Check for accuracy, clarity, and the effective use of sensory details and figurative language.
e) Check for grammar and mechanics: Ensure that the text is free of errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

These steps can help writers to effectively review their descriptive texts and ensure that they are of the highest quality. According to The Norton Field Guide to Writing (Third Edition, 2008) by Richard Bullock and Maureen Daly Goggin, "revision is the key to successful writing." (p.23) Revising and reviewing the text allows writers to make improvements and refine their work, leading to a more effective and engaging piece of writing.

Guide of Cooperative Learning Activities to enrich Descriptive Texts
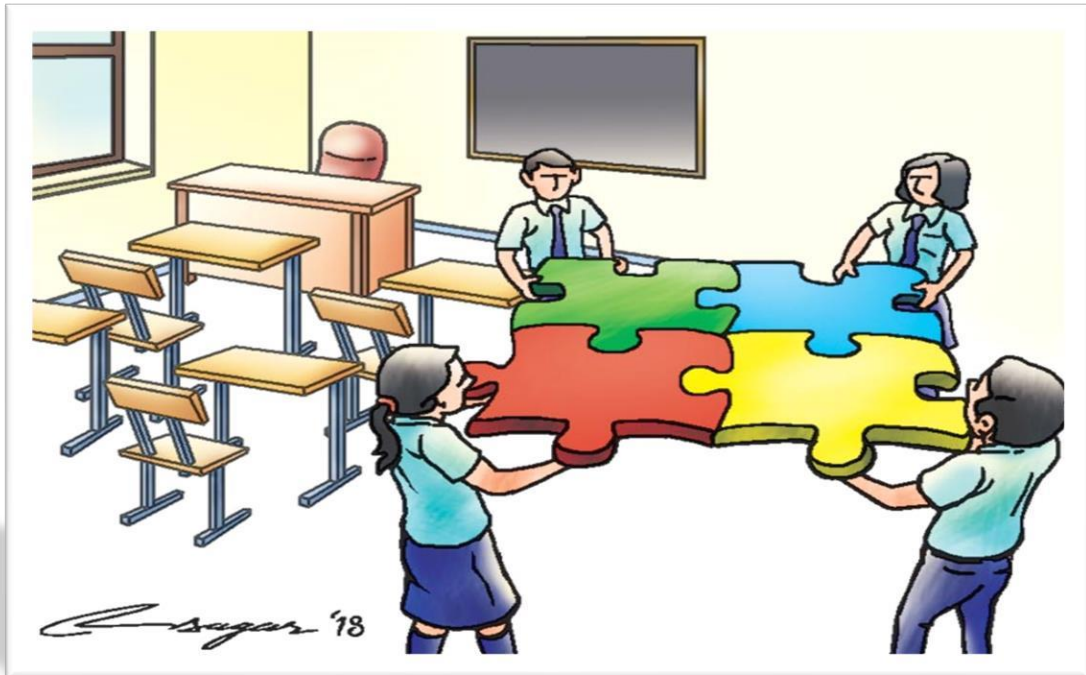
> "*You can teach a student a lesson for a day; but if you can teach him to learn by creating curiosity, he will continue the learning process as long as he lives.*"
>
> **-Clay P. Bedford**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to help learner to enrich descriptive texts by encouraging them to work in groups and share their ideas, perspectives, and knowledge. This proposal can lead to a deeper understanding of the topic being described and can also foster a sense of community and collaboration in the classroom. Additionally, the activities that this proposal introduce can help students develop their communication and interpersonal skills, which are important for success both in and outside of the classroom.

Lic. José Luis Rivera
Pérez

INDEX

ACTIVITY ONE

Cooperative learning activity: Jigsaw

Descriptive text Topic: Aigüestortes National Park

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: To enhance students' learning experiences, encourage active participation and increase motivation by giving each student a unique role and responsibility in the learning process.

Instructions:

- Divide the class into small groups, ideally 4 to 6 students each.
- Provide each group with a different portion of information or task to complete.
- Have the groups work together to put their pieces (or "jigsaw puzzle") together to form a complete picture or solution.
- Encourage interdependence among group members by having each member responsible for sharing their information with the other members.
- Monitor and facilitate the process but avoid interfering too much in the group's problem-solving process.
- After the groups have completed their tasks, have a whole-class discussion to review and reinforce the information or solutions.
- Evaluate the group's work and give individual feedback to each student to help them improve in future tasks.

- Repeat the process with different topics or tasks to provide opportunities for repeated practice and mastery.

Step 1: Planning:

a) Divide the text into parts and explain the content of each part.

Aigüestortes National Park

The unspoiled mountain landscape of Catalonia's only national park is among the most spectacular in the Pyrenees mountain range. Created in 1955, the park covers 10,230 hectares.

Source: https://n9.cl/roerw

Its full name is "Parc Nacional d'Aigüestortes i Estany de Sant Maurici," named after the Sant Maurici lake (estany) in the east and the Aigüestortes area (literally "tortuous waters") in the west. The main town is Espot, in the mountains at the eastern end. The park is dotted with waterfalls and the limpid waters of some 150 lakes and lagoons that reach up to 50 m deep due to their glacial origin.

The most beautiful spots surround Lake Sant Maurici, lying between the twin peaks of the Sierra dels Encantats. From here, several trails start, such as those that border the string of lakes that lead north to the towering peaks of Agulles d'Amitges. To the south is the spectacular Estany Negre, the highest and deepest lake in the park.

In early summer, the lower valleys are covered with red and pink rhododendrons, and later in the year, the lilies bloom in the spruce and beech forests. The park is also home to very diverse fauna. Chamois live in meadows and rocky areas, and beavers and otters can be seen on the shores of the lakes. Golden eagles' nest on the mountain landings, and the forests are home to capercaillie (Guide to Spain).

Step 2: Textualization

   a) Indicate the verb tense (present, past, or future) that predominates in the text.

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…………………………………………………………………………………

   b) Underline the expressions that place the elements described in the text in space.

   c) Write the nouns, adjective and verbs the text has.

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   d) Choose two nouns and two adjectives from the text and write two sentences.

1) …………………………………………………………………………..

2) …………………………………………………………………………

Step 3: Reviewing

   e) Write a paragraph about any national park in your country.

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ACTIVITY TWO

Cooperative learning activity: Round Robin

Descriptive text topic: Description of a square

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: To give equal participation and speaking opportunities to all members of a group. It helps to ensure that everyone has a chance to share their ideas, opinions, and perspectives in a collaborative setting.

Instructions:

- Form small, heterogeneous groups of 4-6 students each.
- Explain the task or activity to the entire class and provide each group with the necessary materials.
- Have each student in the group take turns completing the task or activity.
- After each student has completed the task, have them share their work with the rest of the group and receive feedback.
- Repeat the process for each task or activity.
- Encourage students to provide constructive criticism and support each other throughout the process.

Step 1: Planning

a) Ask students to read the text firstly individually and then in group

Description of a square

At the back of the square stood the Town Hall, a whitewashed building with a long balcony on the second floor and barred windows on the first floor. Next to the stone doorway, in golden letters, one could read the inscription CASA CONSISTORIAL. Closing the square were the whitewashed facades of a dozen two-story houses, with their balconies and windows full of geraniums and carnations. On the illuminated balconies and next to the doors of the houses, there were groups of people of all ages with attentive and excited expressions. The eyes of the whole town were directed towards a stage that had been erected in the center of the square, in front of the Town Hall. On the stage, and in the dim light of the street lamps, the rondalla (brass band) played its music to liven up the hot and humid July night. Sitting on the stage, the children listened in rapt attention. Overhead, the stars were shining.

Step 2: Textualization

a) How many parts does the text have? Justify your answer.

………………………………………………………………………………

b) Adjectives are frequently used in descriptions. Make a list of them and say what sensations they arouse.

………………………………………………………………………………..

c) Indicate the verb tense (present, past, or future) that predominates in the text.

………………………………………………………………………………..

d) Do you dare to "draw" this description? Try to make it different from the image.

Step 3: Reviewing

e) Write a paragraph about a popular place in your city.

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………………………………………………………………………………

ACTIVITY THREE

Cooperative learning activity: Think-Pair-Share

Descriptive Text Topic: A cave

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: To encourage students to engage in active learning by giving them the opportunity to process information, synthesize their thoughts, and share their ideas with their peers.

Instructions:

- Think: Give students time to think individually about a question (What is a cave?), problem, or topic. Encourage them to come up with as many ideas as possible.

- Pair: Have students work in pairs to discuss and share their thoughts. Encourage them to listen to each other and build on each other's ideas.

- Share: Have each pair share their thoughts with the whole group. Encourage students to ask clarifying questions and add to the discussion.

- Conclusion: Summarize the key points discussed and reinforce the importance of cooperative learning and teamwork.

- Remember to give equal time to all students to think and share, and to facilitate the discussion to keep it respectful and on track.

Step 1: Planning

a) Ask students to read the title and think about What is a CAVE? Then in groups they will give their ideas.

Description of a cave

To the left opened the enormous mouth of the cave, through which only shadows could be distinguished. As the pupil became accustomed to it, one could see on the floor, like a black sheet that ran along the entire length of the cave, the stream of hell, "Infernuco-erreca," which throbbed with a mysterious tremor. In the darkness of the cavern shone, far in the background, the light of a torch that someone was shaking as he came and went; a few bats flew around him; from time to time, the flapping of an owl's wings and its harsh, shrill screeching could be heard. (Pío Baroja)

Step 2: Textualization

b) In descriptions we usually find visual elements, but also sound elements. Indicate which ones appear in the text.

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c) Make a list of the nouns in the text and a list of the adjectives. Say which ones predominate and the sensations they produce.

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…………………………………………………………………………………..

Step 3: Reviewing

d) Write a paragraph about a famous cave you know in your country

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ACTIVITY FOUR

Cooperative learning activity: Team Quest

Descriptive Text topic: A sunrise

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: To provide students with an engaging and collaborative learning experience that allows them to develop important teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Instructions:

- Form groups: Divide students into groups of 4-6, ensuring that the groups are heterogeneous and composed of students with different abilities and skills.

- Assign a quest: Provide each group with a task or quest that requires them to work together and use their collective skills to solve a problem or complete a project.

- Establish group norms: Encourage each group to establish rules and norms that will help them work effectively together, such as taking turns speaking, listening to one another, and respecting each other's opinions.

- Monitor progress: As groups work on their quests, monitor their progress to ensure they are on track and provide support as needed.

- Celebrate successes: At the end of each quest, celebrate the successes of each group and encourage them to share their accomplishments with the class.

- Reflect and evaluate: After each quest, provide opportunities for group members to reflect on their experiences and evaluate their performance, both as individuals and as a team.

Step 1: Planning

In groups, discuss what can you observe in the picture, then read the text.

Description of a sunrise

In the distance, a bell tolls slowly, slowly, melancholy. The sky begins to clear hesitantly. The mist spreads in a long white brushstroke over the field. And in a clamorous concert of high-pitched, low-pitched, squeaky, metallic, confused, imperceptible, sonorous voices, all the roosters of the sleeping city crow. Deep down, the town vanishes at the foot of the hill in an uncertain spot. Two, four, and six white fleeces that sprout from the blackness grow, widen, and spread in faint cendales.

The persistent throat-clearing of a cough tears the air; the spaced blows of an esparto mace resound slowly. Gradually the milky clarity of the horizon is tinged with pale green. The motley heap of houses slowly emerges from the darkness. Long whitish streaks, wide, narrow, straight, meandering, crisscross the wide blackish patch. Roosters crow stubbornly; a dog barks with a long, mournful bark.

The countryside -the horizon is already clear- recedes in a broad green savannah, torn with the traces of the shady branches, furrowed by the sinuous lines of the roads. The sky, from inky green, turns to fiery mother-of-pearl hues. The blacksmiths awake with their sonorous clattering; nearby, a child cries; a voice cries out in anger. And over the brown swell of the infinite roofs, walls, copings, chimneys, gables, and corners rises majestically the white mass of the New Church, crowned by a gigantic dome striped in white and blue spirals. The city awakens.

The uneven lines of the facades bordering the East stand out in the sun in vivid whiteness. The voices of the roosters are threatening. Above, in the sanctuary, a bell tolls with dilated vibrations. Below, in the city, the Argentine notes of the bells

fly over the dull murmur of voices, knocking, cries of vendors, barking, songs, braying, tinkling of forges, and thousand noises of the crowd that returns to work. (Azorín)

Step 2: Textualization

a) Justify why the text has four paragraphs.

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b) In this long description, we find some elements that evoke sound, and others, light. Indicate how the author achieves this process.

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c) Read the first sentence of each paragraph and comment on how the author uses it to give the sensation of the passage of time.

Line 1

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Line 2

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……………………………………………………………………………………

Line 3

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……………………………………………………………………………………

Line 4

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Step 3: Reviewing

Write a paragraph about what a sunrise means to you.

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ACTIVITY FIVE
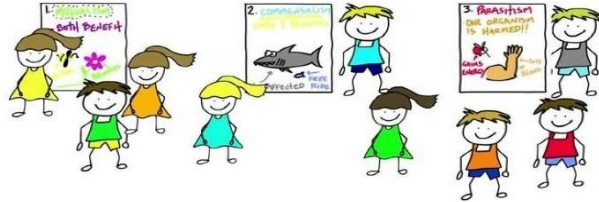
Cooperative learning activity: Gallery Walk

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes a day

Aim: To promote a deep understanding of the material by encouraging students to consider multiple perspectives and engage in constructive dialogue.

Instructions:

- Prepare materials: Create posters or slides with questions or prompts related to the topic being studied.

- Group formation: Divide the class into small groups of 4-6 students.

- Gallery setup: Arrange the posters or slides in a circular pattern around the room, with enough space for students to move from one poster to another.

- Introduction: Explain the purpose of the activity and the instructions for the gallery walk.

- Rotation: Assign each group to start at a designated poster. Set a time limit for students to discuss and record their answers or observations on the poster.

- Movement: When the time is up, signal for students to rotate to the next poster in the circle. Repeat the process until each group has visited all the posters.

- Reflection: After the rotation, have students reconvene in their original groups to share and compare their answers.

- Closure: Debrief the activity by asking students to reflect on their experience and share their insights and observations.

Note: Encourage students to actively listen and engage in discussions, respect each other's ideas, and work together to arrive at a solution.

Step 1: Planning

Ask students to observe the portrait and describe it in groups, then read the text.

The portrait

My father's name was Esteban Duarte Diniz, and he was Portuguese, in his forties when I was a child, and as tall and fat as a mountain. He had a tan color and a great black mustache that drooped downwards. According to the story, they used to pull his guides upwards, but his prestige was ruined since he was in jail, the strength of his mustache was softened, and he had to be carried downwards to the grave. I had great respect for him and no little fear, and whenever I could, I would always try not to bump into him; he was rough and brusque and did not tolerate being contradicted in anything, a mania that I respected for the account I had of him. (Camilo José Cela)

Step 2: Textualization

a) As usual in portraits, Cela describes the physical and psychological features of the character. Make a list of each of them.

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…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………

b) From the list you have made put the words in the correct category: nouns, adjectives and verbs.

Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs

Step 3: Reviewing

Stick a portrait of your favorite person and write about him/her. Use the list of words you have classified in step 2 item b.

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ACTIVITY SIX
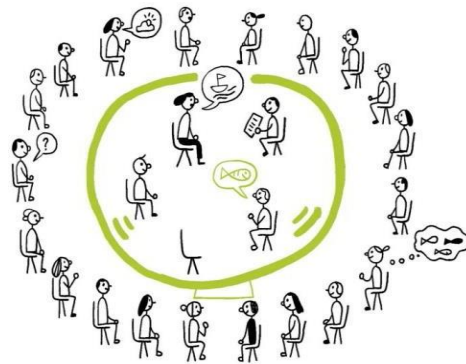
Cooperative learning activity: Fishbowl

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: To promote active and meaningful discussion among a small group of students while allowing the rest of the class to observe and learn from their interaction

Instructions:

- Prepare materials: Gather materials such as paper, markers, and index cards to create a fishbowl setup.

- Divide the class into two groups: One group will be the "inside group," who will participate in the discussion, and the other group will be the "outside group," who will observe and take notes.

- Establish the rules: Clearly explain the rules and expectations for the discussion, such as taking turns speaking and being respectful of others' opinions.

- Choose a topic: Decide on a topic or question to be discussed in the fishbowl. It should be relevant to the course material and generate discussion.

- Start the discussion: The inside group should start the discussion and engage in active listening and respectful dialogue. The outside group should take notes and observe.

- Switch roles: After a set period of time, switch the inside and outside groups, so everyone has an opportunity to participate in the discussion.
- Debrief: After the discussion, have a debrief session where both groups share their observations and reflections on the activity.
- Evaluate the process: Finally, evaluate the process and effectiveness of the fishbowl activity, and make adjustments for future use.

Step 1: Planning

Ask students to sit in front of another student, so that they will have to observe between them and describe each other. Then they will read the text.

Self-portrait

This one you see here, with an aquiline face, brown hair, smooth and unclouded forehead, bright eyes, and a crooked nose, although well proportioned; the silver beards, which were not twenty years ago of gold, the big whiskers, the small mouth, the teeth neither small nor big, because he has only six, and those badly conditioned and worse place, because they have no correspondence with each other; the body between two extremes, neither large nor small, the color alive, rather white than brown; somewhat loaded back, and not very light feet; this I say is the face of the author of La Galatea and Don Quixote de la Mancha, and who made the Voyage of Parnassus, in imitation of Caesar Caporal Perusino, and other works that are out there stray and, perhaps, without the name of its owner.

He is commonly called Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. He was a soldier for many years and five and a half years captive, where he learned patience in adversity. He lost in the naval battle of Lepanto, his left hand from an arquebus, a wound that, although it seems ugly, he considers beautiful, for having received it in the most memorable and high occasion that past centuries have seen, nor hope to see the coming ones, fighting under the victorious flags of the son of the lightning of

war, Carlo Quinto, of happy memory. Miguel de Cervantes, "Prologue" of the Exemplary Novels.

Step 2: Textualization

a) Distinguish prosopography and ethopoeia in this portrait (look up the meaning of these words in the theory if you don't know it).

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

b) Why do we say that this text is a self-portrait?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

c) Indicate whether the author uses the first, second, or third person verb and what effect he achieves with it.

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d) What metaphor does Cervantes use to indicate that he is no longer young?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

e) Look for a trait of humor in the text.

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Step 3: Reviewing

Write a paragraph describing yourself (self-portrait)

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Numbered Head Together

Cooperative learning activity: Numbered Heads Together

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: To increase student engagement, accountability, and understanding through active participation and collaboration

How to apply "Numbered Head Together" activity

- Divide the class into small groups of 4 to 6 students, each group is assigned a number.

- Assign a task or problem to each group and explain the instructions.

- Tell the groups to pick one student to be the "Head" and the others will be "Shoulders".

- The teacher asks a question related to the task and the Head from each group must provide the answer.

- The Shoulders assist the Head in finding the answer and offer suggestions if needed.

- After a specific amount of time, the teacher calls out a number, and the corresponding Head from each group stands up and gives the answer.

- The teacher then provides feedback and continues the process until all questions have been answered or the task has been completed.

- Encourage the students to work together and to support each other throughout the activity.

- Evaluate the performance of each group and provide constructive feedback to improve their performance in future tasks.

Step 1: Planning

In groups, ask students to ask as many questions as they can between each other in two minutes (What's your full name? How old are you? What color is your hair? Etc… then ask them to read the text.

Prosopography

Rosita was perfectly proportioned in the body: neither tall nor short, neither thin nor thick. Her quite a dark complexion was soft and wonderful, and her smooth cheeks showed a bright carmine color. Her lips, a little puffy, seemed to be made of the reddest coral, and when she laughed them away, which often happened, she revealed, in a somewhat large mouth, healthy and clean gums and two rows of white teeth and molars, shiny and equal. Rosita's upper lip was somewhat shadowed by a subtle and, like her hair, very black. Two dark moles, one on the left cheek and the other on the beard, made the effect of two beautiful bamboo bushes in a meadow of flowers. Rosita had a straight and small forehead, like the Venus de Milo, and a nose of great plastic beauty, although relatively strong than sharp. The beautifully drawn eyebrows were neither too light nor thick, and the long eyelashes were bent outward, forming graceful arches. *(Juan Valera)*

Step 2: Textualization

a) Complete the table with the data from the text.

Rosita was	
Skin	
Forehead	
Nose	

134

Chick	
Lips	
Ences	
Teeth and molars	
Hair	
Moles	
Eyebrows	
Eyelashes	

b) Describe, in about 75 words, what you see from your bedroom window.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

c) Make a caricature, in about 60 words, of a well-known public figure, such as a politician, a singer, a movie actor, etc. (Remember that caricature is the exaggerated description of the physical and character traits of a person or an animal for comic purposes). The following example of a caricature may help you:

"My servant has of the table the square and the size within reach. Therefore it is a comfortable piece of furniture; its color is that which indicates the complete absence of that with which it is thought, that is to say, that it is good; the hands would be confused with the feet if it were not for the shoes and because he walks casually on the latter, in imitation of most men; he has ears that are on either side of his head like vases on a console, for ornament, or like figurative balconies, through which nothing enters or leaves; he also .has two eyes in his face; he thinks he sees with them, what a disgust he gets! " *Mariano José de Larra, La Nochebuena de 1836.*

Step 3: Reviewing

c) Make your self-portrait. You can be inspired by Cervantes

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Cooperative learning activity: Round Robin

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: To build communication and collaboration skills, as well as promote respect for diverse opinions and perspectives

How to apply "Round Robin" activity

- Divide the class into groups of 3-5 students.

- Provide the students with a topic or question to discuss. This could be a reading passage, a problem to solve, or a question to brainstorm.

- Instruct the students to take turns sharing their ideas or thoughts on the topic or question. Each student should have an equal opportunity to speak and be heard.

- To ensure that everyone has a turn, establish a specific order for students to share their ideas. For example, you can ask students to take turns in alphabetical order by their first name.

- Encourage students to listen actively to their peers' ideas and respond thoughtfully.

- Provide feedback and guidance as needed to facilitate the discussion and ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute.

Step 1: Planning

In groups, ask students to ask as many questions as they can between each other in two minutes (What can you see in the picture? What is it about? What are the possible main characters? Etc… then ask them to read the text.

The Neverending Story
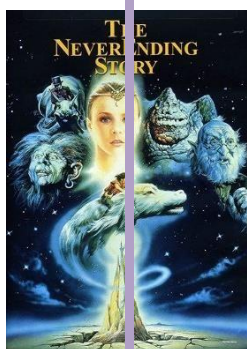
Lucky dragons are among the rarest animals in Fantasia. They are nothing like ordinary dragons or the celebrated ones that, like giant, foul serpents, live in the deep bowels of the earth, stink and guard some real or imagined treasure. These spawns of chaos are almost always perverse or sullen and have wings similar to those of bats, with which they can soar noisily and heavily in the air and spit fire and smoke. Lucky Dragons, conversely, are creatures of the air and good weather, unbridled joy, and, despite their colossal size, as light as a summer cloud. That is why they do not need wings to fly. They swim through the air in the sky like fish in the water. From the ground, they look like slow lightning. Moreover, the most beautiful thing about them is their song. Their voice is like the ringing of a great bell, and when they speak softly, it is as if the sound of that bell can be heard in the distance. Whoever hears their song once never forgets it and continues to speak of it to their grandchildren.

The Neverending Story, Michael Ende. Alfaguara, 1984

Step 2: Textualization

a) The adjectives in this description are missing and cannot find their nouns. Read the text again and find the missing adjective to complete the sentence.

.Lucky Dragons, conversely, are creatures of the air and ……….. weather, ……….. ……….., and, despite their .... size, as light as a summer cloud. That is why they do not need wings to fly.

b) Use the same adjectives in activity a to write your own sentences.

1…………………………………………………………………………

2……………………………………………………………………….

3. …………………………………………………………………….....

4……………………………………………………………………………………
…

c) Read the story one more time and represent it in a drawing.

Step 3: Reviewing

Based on the story you read choose two characters, five
adjectives, eight nouns and write your own story using the words
you chose.

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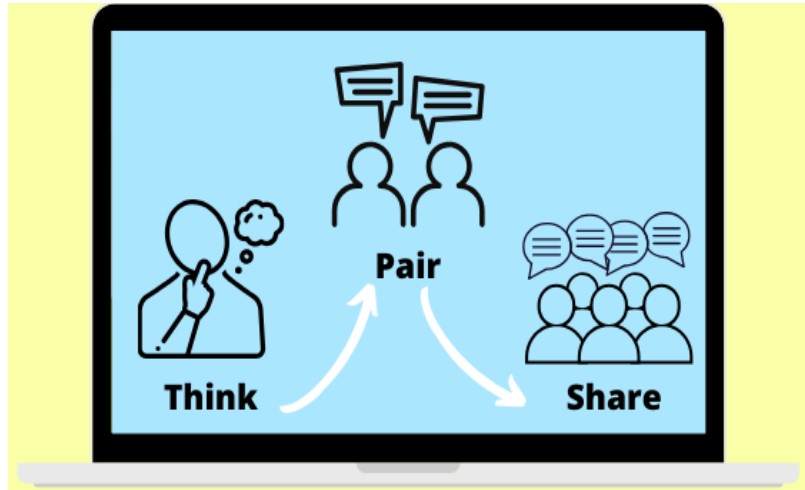
Cooperative learning activity: Think-pair shared.

Students' level: eighth grade

Length of lesson: 60 minutes

Aim: to promote active engagement and critical thinking among students

How to apply "Think-pair shared" activity

- Pose a question or problem to the class that requires critical thinking or analysis. This could be a question related to a reading passage, a current event, or a real-world problem.

- Instruct students to think quietly and independently for a few minutes to come up with their own ideas or solutions to the question or problem.

- Once students have had time to think, ask them to pair up with a partner and share their ideas. Encourage students to listen actively and respectfully to their partner's ideas and to ask clarifying questions if needed.

- After students have had a chance to share with their partner, bring the class back together and ask a few pairs to share their ideas with the whole class. This can be done randomly, or you can ask for volunteers.

- Encourage students to discuss and analyze the different ideas shared by their peers. Ask follow-up questions to prompt deeper thinking and discussion.

Step 1: Planning

In groups, answer the following questions: Is uncle Lucas an ugly man?.

Uncle Lucas
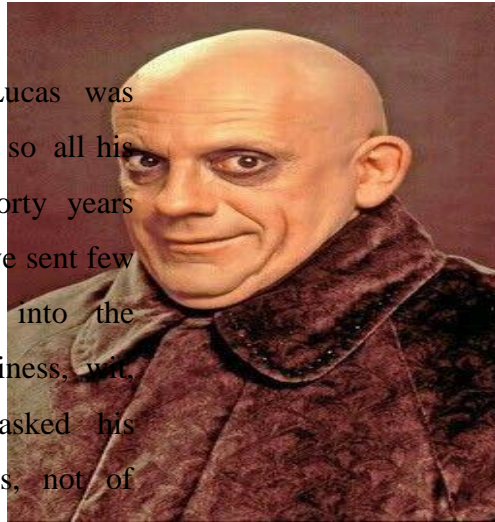
Uncle Lucas was uglier than Picio. He had been so all his life and was now nearly forty years old. However, God must have sent few men so nice and pleasant into the world. Captivated by his liveliness, wit, and grace, the late bishop asked his parents, who were shepherds, not of souls, but of real sheep, for him. [...]

Lucas was at that time, and still was at the date we are referring to, of small stature (at least concerning his wife), a little heavy-set, very dark, bearded, beardless, big-nosed, eared, and pockmarked - on the other hand, his mouth was regular, and his teeth were unbeatable. It was said that only the bark of that man was coarse and ugly, that as soon as one began to penetrate inside him, his perfections appeared, and these perfections began in his teeth. Then came the voice, vibrant, elastic, attractive; manly and severe at times, sweet and honeyed when he asked for something, and always challenging to resist. Furthermore, finally, in the soul of Uncle Lucas, there was courage, loyalty, honesty, common sense, desire to know and instinctive or empirical knowledge of many things, deep disdain for fools, whatever their social category, and a singular spirit of irony, mockery, and sarcasm, which made him pass, in the eyes of the Academician, for a D. Francisco de Quevedo in the raw. Such was Uncle Lucas inside and out.

The Three-cornered Hat, Pedro Antonio de Alarcón

Step 2: Textualization

a) Look for these tenses (present, past, or future) that predominates in the text.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

b) Underline the expressions that place the elements described in the text in space.

c) Write the nouns, adjective and verbs the text has.

……………………………………………………………………………………

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……………………………………………………………………………………

d) Choose two nouns and two adjectives from the text and write two sentences.

3) ……………………………………………………………………..

4) ……………………………………………………………………

Step 3: Reviewing

e) Write a paragraph describing when people have made you feel ugly and what were the things you did to overcome that situation.

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ACTIVITY TEN

Cooperative learning activity: Gallery Walk

Students' level: eighth

Length of lesson: 60 minutes a day

Aim: To promote active engagement and collaboration among students.

Instructions:

- Divide the class into small groups of 3-5 students and provide each group with a large sheet of paper or poster board.

- Assign each group a specific topic or question to explore. This could be a concept from a lesson or a problem to solve.

- Instruct each group to brainstorm ideas, write key concepts, or draw images related to their assigned topic on their sheet of paper or poster board.

- After a set amount of time (5-10 minutes), instruct each group to rotate to another group's poster board.

- Once at a new poster board, instruct students to review the ideas, concepts, and images on the poster board and add their own ideas or comments. Encourage students to write their comments or ideas using a different color pen or marker than the original group.

- Repeat steps 4-5 until each group has had the opportunity to review and add comments to each poster board.

- Bring the class back together and allow each group to share their poster board and the ideas and comments that were added by other groups.

Note: Encourage students to actively listen and engage in discussions, respect each other's ideas, and work together to arrive at a solution.

Step 1: Planning

Ask students to observe the portrait and describe it in groups, then read the text.

A young pretty lady

She was young, pretty, slender, of an almost unbelievable whiteness of pure alabastrine; the cheeks without color, the black eyes more remarkable for their lively and luminous than for their size; the incredible eyebrows, as if they had been arched with the tip of an excellent brush; small and red the little mouth, with somewhat thick lips, round, bursting with blood, as if they contained all that was missing in the face; the teeth, tiny, bits of curdled crystal; brown hair and not very copious, shiny as silk twines and gathered with a funny mess on the crown of the head. Nevertheless, what was most characteristic in such a singular creature was that she looked like a pure ermine and had the spirit of neatness, for even when she stooped to the coarsest domestic chores, she did not stain herself. Her hands, of a perfect form - what hands! - had mysterious virtue, like her body and clothes, to say to the lower layers of the physical world: la vostra miseria non mi tange. He gave his whole person the impression of intrinsic, elemental cleanliness, superior and prior to any contact with anything untidy or impure. From rag, fox in hand, the dust and the garbage respected her; and when she was preened and put on her purple robe with white rosettes, the chignon above, pierced with hairpins of golden head, she was a faithful image of a Japanese lady of high standing. Nevertheless, what else, if all of her seemed to be made of paper, of that plastic, warm and lively paper in which those inspired

Orientals represent the divine and the human, the comical and the serious, and the serious that makes one laugh? Her white matte face was made of paper; her dress was made of paper; her very fine, turned, incomparable hands were made of paper.

Step 2: Textualization

a) As usual in portraits, the author describes the physical and psychological features of the character. Make a list of each of them.

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………

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………

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b) From the list you have made put the words in the correct category: nouns, adjectives and verbs.

Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	

Step 3: Reviewing

Stick a portrait of your favorite person and write about him/her. Use the list of words you have classified in step 2 item b.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Pre-test and Post-test

NAME: ....

I.   PLANNING

1. **Read the following descriptive text**

Descriptive text

My lovely stray cat

I have a stray cat as my pet. He is really playful, He loves to play with me and with the new things he finds. He has orange and white fur. His fur is so soft. I like to rub it. He has a long tail. He likes to play with it. He always tries to catch his tail. I like to hold him in my arms.

2. **According to the text, which are nouns**
    a)   Cat, pet, things, fur, tail
    b)   Have, is, loves, finds, has, like, tries
    c)   Stray, playful, new, Orange, White, soft, long
3. **According to the text, which are verbs**
    a)   Cat, pet, things, fur, tail
    b)   Have, is, loves, finds, has, like, tries
    c)   Stray, playful, new, Orange, White, soft, long

4. **According to the text, what is the structure of the following sentence:**
                              He is really playful.
    a)   S + V + C
    b)   S+ C + V
    c)   V + C + S
    d)   C + S + V

II.   TEXTUALIZATION
        Write Sentences

5. Use a NOUN and a VERB from the text and write an affirmative sentence in present simple

   ....

6. Use a NOUN and a VERB from the text and write a negative sentence in present simple

III.   REVIEWING
7. Put in order the following words.

   He/ catch/ to/ tries/ his/ tail/ always

   _____

8. Fill in the blanks according to the text you read.
   a) I have a ……….. cat as my ………...
   b) He is really ……………..
   c) He has ……….. and ………. fur.
   d) His …….... is so ………..

9. Write a paragraph describing your favorite pet.

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   ....
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   ....
   ....

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Assessment of Writing scale

Band	Content	Organisation	Language
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices.	Uses everyday vocabulary generally appropriately, while occasionally overusing certain lexis. Uses simple grammatical forms with a good degree of control. While errors are noticeable, meaning can still be determined.
4	*Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.*		
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Text is connected using basic, high-frequency linking words.	Uses basic vocabulary reasonably appropriately. Uses simple grammatical forms with some degree of control. Errors may impede meaning at times.
2	*Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.*		
1	Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed.	Production unlikely to be connected, though punctuation and simple connectors (i.e. 'and') may on occasion be used.	Produces basic vocabulary of isolated words and phrases. Produces few simple grammatical forms with only limited control.
0	Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed.	*Performance below Band 1.*	

Taken from: https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/504505-a2-key-handbook- 2020.pdf

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Annex 2

Validated instrument.

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE AMBATO
CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE POSGRADO
MAESTRÍA ACADÉMICA (MA) CON TRAYECTORIA
PROFESIONAL (TP) EN ENSEÑANZA DE INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA
COHORTE 2021
Avda. Los Chasquis y Rio Payamin, Ambato - Ecuador

FORMATO PARA LA VALIDACIÓN DE CONTENIDO DEL INSTRUMENTO "PRE-TEST Y POST-TEST" PERTENECIENTE A LA INVESTIGACIÓN:

TÍTULO DEL TRABAJO

"Cooperative Learning Activities to Enrich Descriptive Texts in A1-level English Learners"

AUTOR: Licenciado José Luis Rivera Pérez

Señale mediante un √, según la validación para cada pregunta:

1D- DEFICIENTE   2R- REGULAR   3B- BUENO   4O- ÓPTIMO

PARÁMETROS / PREGUNTAS	Pertinencia de las preguntas del instrumento con los objetivos				Pertinencia de las preguntas del instrumento con las variables y enunciados				Calidad técnica y representatividad				Redacción y lenguaje de las preguntas			
	1D	2R	3B	4O	1D	2R	3B	4O	1D	2R	3B	4O	1D	2R	3B	4O
Part 1: Planning				√				√				√				√
Part 2: Textualization				√				√				√				√
Part 3: Reviewing				√				√				√				√

Observaciones:

Firmado electrónicamente por:
CRISTINA DEL ROCIO
JORDAN BUENAÑO

Validado por: Mg. Cristina Jordán Buenaño

CI: 1804010500

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Annex 3 Photos