EVALUATING THE PROGRESSION OF A GROUP OF EFL INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE STUDENTS AFTER A GENRE-BASED APPLICATION: A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

An Action Research Study

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to assess the progression of a group of high-school EFL International Baccalaureate, henceforth IB, Spanish speaking students, towards the attainment of higher levels of proficiency regarding the control of generic patterns and lexicogrammatical choices in writing expository texts. This study analyzed the expository genre realized in two text types: an argumentative essay and a discussion. Each version was taught through a previously planned cycle which was designed following the stages proposed by a genre pedagogy, particularly the teaching-learning cycle (TLC) based on Rothery's work in 1994. After the application of each cycle, the products of the participants were analyzed through a Systemic Functional perspective which considered students' written discourse, realized in ideational, interpersonal and textual resources. The three metafunctions were studied and analyzed in terms of complexity and accuracy. After the analysis, the results were reported following a qualitative methodology which is sustained by a semiotic paradigm. This study considered not only the participant's products as its main source of data collection but also included a focus group carried out to understand beyond quantitative data and include participants actively and collaboratively within the study. This instrument gathered evidence of students' perception about their learning process, the method applied during the cycles, and how this could contribute to a gradual gain of confidence and control when writing in English in academic contexts. The results of the analysis evidenced gradual improvement in the attainment of patterns present in expository texts; the metafunctions realized in field, tenor, and written mode, were displayed in more precise and complex lexico-grammatical choices; complex ideational and interpersonal resources were perceived to act simultaneously and systematically not distinctly or independently in texts. The main findings in regards to students' perception, revealed that most participants acknowledged the exposure of visible textual resources as of explicit teaching that helped them improve and understand writing and its social purpose through a visible model. Most participants recognized the contribution to their
improvement and an eventual gain of confidence when attempting to write academic genres for the International Baccalaureate demands.

Keywords: genre-based pedagogy, systemic functional linguistics, metafunctions, linguistic resources
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

This study explores the development of writing in an IB classroom. It seeks to understand how this develops as a result of a thorough application approach to teaching and learning. It describes the gradual process of a group of participants to attain the features of the expository genre to reach the demands of the course entitled English B. It expects to contribute to studies related to writing instruction in the field of second language acquisition (henceforth SLA) by describing the betterment of the writing skills of the participants are studied.

The emergence of writing as a distinctive area of scholarship in the 1980s developed an array of theories and pedagogies to understand writing and learning in EFL/ESL fields (Hyland, 2008). Three main approaches to teaching and researching writing, although, complementary and overlapping perspectives, have served as potentially compatible means to understand the complex process of development of writing skills. The first perspective concentrates on texts as the products of writing, the second focuses on the writer and the processes used to create texts, and the third approach directs learners to the role that readers play in writing and how they need to think about an audience when creating texts (Hyland, 2008). This study pays special attention to the processes and the choices learners made to attain the social purpose of a specific genre.

The theoretical basis for this investigation is on two approaches to teaching and researching academic literacies in second language contexts, namely the genre-based pedagogy and the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Both, focus on the writing and the processes used to create texts, as well as emphasizing the importance of producing and understanding texts in a context related to the social purpose it serves. In this regard, by assuming that school-based texts accomplish a particular purpose in school and "recognizing how different linguistic choices are functional for construing experience, presenting ones' perspective, and constructing specific kinds of text, we keep the focus on the role of language as a social force" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p 6).
Writing instruction is part of every second language acquisition (SLA) education, however, how writing is taught and perceived will vary depending upon the context in where students are learning, and the curriculum demands that students need to attain. When the production of written genres occupies a relevant position in the curriculum and students have already reached a certain level of proficiency, there is a need to explore writing with guidance and explicit instruction, because "as children develop new knowledge, they also need support in using language in new ways" (Schleppegrell, 2012, p 409).

This study adheres to the work of Schleppegrell, Rose, and Martin, among others theorists and practitioners, who assert that writing instruction should be organized along a logical sequence of genres that aim to gradually prepare learners to control more sophisticated ways of building up meanings in the second language. As Schleppegrell (2012) states, "language expectations at school differ from the language of the home and community for many children" (p 410), for this reason, even when some learners might have more exposure to texts in their home environment, academic writing skills are mostly gained at school by thorough exposure and explicit teaching. Likewise, this study acknowledges the difficulty to reach higher levels of proficiency in writing, since it is estimated that some language learners struggle in the transition from a pre-intermediate/intermediate level of competence to an advanced one. The participants in this study own a pre-intermediate and intermediate level of English, the one that has been certified by approving the ESOL examinations Preliminary English Test and the First Certificate in English.

In this regards, this study expects to answer how does the application of a genre-based pedagogy help the attainment of higher levels of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices in writing expository texts. To answer this question, this study analyzes and compares a diagnostic opinion essay and the products obtained through the application of two action research cycles. Moreover, this study considers and include the participants' appreciations to asses to what extent does the application of
a genre-based pedagogy in the IB curriculum develop students' autonomy to use academic language within their pieces of writing.

As flagged above, this study aims to evaluate the progression of a group of EFL IB students towards the attainment of higher levels of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices in writing expository texts. Qualitative action research (henceforth AR) is applied following the principles of a practical AR attached to a semiotic paradigm to reach this aim.

This study is organized as follows: Chapter 1 provides a general introduction to give a comprehensive insight of the study, it also includes the study's aim and objectives, research questions, contextualization, problem and significance of the study in the EFL field. Chapter 2 consists of a literature review necessary to support this intervention; it goes in depth on the genre-based pedagogy and relevant areas of a Systemic Functional perspective. Chapter 3 includes a description of the methodology, a detailed explanation of the type of study, the participants and the design of the cycles. Chapter 4 will elaborate on the analysis and results. Chapter 5 elaborates on the conclusions of the research and further implications.

2. Context of the Study

A socio-semiotic paradigm informs this study since it describes the system of relationships between text and meaning to understand the nature of language. This research tradition is called the semiotic paradigm, and the father of the semiotic paradigm to the study of language is Ferdinand de Saussure (Shaumyan, n.d). The socio semiotic paradigm lies at the center of the theoretical formulation of the Systemic Functional Linguistics and respects its explanatory nature, both in terms of organization of language, and the description of discourse. The word paradigm concerns primarily with the organization of language and speech, and as a system of representation of knowledge (Fossalli, 2017). In this regards, language is seen as a semiotic resource, and the study is focused on describing the language progression and the attainment of more advanced levels of proficiency under an SLF perspective. It has been decided that the
socio-semiotic paradigm suits this study since it is conducted on the theoretical basis of a genre-based pedagogy and an SFL standpoint, which are described by a qualitative approach that draws from research procedures based on action research methods.

In regards to the methodology of the study, which is further explained in Chapter 3, the action research is a phenomenon relatively new in the field of English language teaching which started to gain more recognition and practitioners since late 1980 (Burns, 2016). The major approaches to action research are the Technical AR, the Practical AR and the Critical AR (Burns, 2016). The three approaches to action research differ in nature and purpose. Table 1 shows the main differences prevalent between action research models.

Table 1. Major characteristics of approaches to action research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TECHNICAL AR</th>
<th>PRACTICAL AR</th>
<th>CRITICAL AR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHILOSOPHICAL BASE</td>
<td>Natural sciences</td>
<td>Hermeneutics</td>
<td>Critical theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATURE OF REALITY</td>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Multiple, holistic, constructed</td>
<td>Inter-related with social and political power structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATURE OF PROBLEM</td>
<td>Predefined (problem-posing)</td>
<td>Defined in context (problem-solving)</td>
<td>Defined in context in relation to emerging values (problematising)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATUS OF KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td>Separate, deductive</td>
<td>Inductive, theory producing</td>
<td>Inductive, theory producing, emancipatory participatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATURE OF UNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>Events explained in terms of real causes and simultaneous effects</td>
<td>Events described in terms of interaction between the external context and individual thinking</td>
<td>Events understood in terms of political, social and economic constraints to improved conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE OF RESEARCH</td>
<td>Discover ‘laws’ of underlying reality</td>
<td>Discover the meanings people make of actions</td>
<td>Understand what impedes more democratic and equal practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANGE OUTCOMES</td>
<td>Change is value-free and short-lived</td>
<td>Change is value-bound and dependent on individuals involved</td>
<td>Change is value-relative and leads to ongoing emancipation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Burns, 2016

The present study follows the characteristics of practical action research. It obeys to the nature of the problem which is defined by the context where the study occurs and looks for a solution to it. The events are described in terms of the interaction between the external context and individual thinking (Burns, 2016), the thinking of the researcher in this case. The purpose of the practical action research is to discover the meanings people make of actions; therefore, this study will discover how English learners convey
meaning in textual realizations and how these realizations become more complex and accurate. Notwithstanding, this study adheres partially to aspects of the Critical AR, since the purpose of research also addresses change in its outcomes, looking for improvement and developing confidence among participants within the writing system. Also, the critical researcher enacts her ideals "in a principled endeavor to transform the culture of his/her classroom community through, for example, critical action research. Critical AR involves evaluating the impact of one's transformative teaching on student learning and, ideally, leads to the teacher-researchers evolving praxis" (Taylor, 2013 p7). According to Taylor, the critical and interpretive paradigms are congruent in the shared idea that critique alone is not enough and it is important "to develop a vision of a better way of teaching and learning, and research practices" (Taylor, 2013, p7).

The socio semiotic paradigm has been chosen to inform this study since it is acknowledged that the methodology applied to improve writing among participants, the genre-based pedagogy, is sustained on a critical paradigm that looks mainly to democratize the classrooms (Rose, 2005). However, the aim of this study attempts to evaluate and describe, instead of changing power relations or improving conditions in regards to economic constraints. This AR does not try to emancipate students in political or social terms, and it cannot be informed entirely by a Critical paradigm. Furthermore, considering the privileged position of the participants in regards to their socio-economic status, the problem is highly situational, not emancipatory and tries to reduce language gaps and improve confidence only within the reduced sample.

3. Problem and Significance

Low writing performance among participants and the pressure to adjust teacher instructional methods to meet the needs of the writing expectations of the International Baccalaureate (2010) are the issues that the teacher-researcher addressed in her IB writing classroom through this action research study.

The issue explored here emerged during the revision of the writing section in a diagnostic test that the participants took at the beginning of the school year in March
2018. The students were asked to choose one idea from a list of four and write a persuasive essay. This evaluation mostly showed; poor development of ideas, therefore, unclear and/or unconvincing arguments, due to unclear and or absence of the phases of the genre as well as paragraph structure, ineffective elaboration of lexicogrammatical realizations, and unsuccessful realization of the academic register, limiting the social purpose of the persuasive essay. This problem exists and persist even though subjects have studied English for an average of 10 years in EFL settings; most participants evidenced still being far from producing more elaborated and intricate writing pieces that fit the demands of academic contexts, however, all participants need to attain a higher level of proficiency to pass English B in the IB program. The teacher as a researcher has decided to tackle writing by using an approach that differs from others used with other generations of IB students; based on three years of experience teaching the IB program, academic writing is regarded as an intricate process to attain in the English B subject.

This study involves the exploration, description, and reflection of how a genre-based pedagogy works on the weakest students of the group. The group investigated is not homogenous. Students have certified their English in levels that range from B1+ to C1 as per the parameters of the common European framework of reference. The scaffolding feature in the teaching-learning cycle, the explicit instruction of stages and linguistic relations and the analysis done under systemic functional linguistics (SFL) perspective, are expected to shed light on how the current problem is solved by drawing conclusions on how below-band students develop advanced writing skills and reassure their confidence when writing.

This investigation will contribute to the EFL field, mainly because it attempts to add to the literature available on applications of a genre-based pedagogy and a systemic functional analysis in an IB EFL Chilean classroom. The participants have all from the same socio-economic background and have been brought up in privileged families, a context that differs from the origins of this pedagogy, firstly applied in Australia to reduce the literacy disparity between native Australian peoples and mainstream students.
(Rose, 2009). However, in this Chilean specific context, not every student has the same level of control of the language. Below band students present the need to be guided and helped to reach the levels of attainment of the most advanced participants. This plan can contribute to demonstrating that approaches such as the genre-based pedagogy applied in IB classrooms could not only reduce the gap between learners having a pre-intermediate and intermediate level of English, but it could also demonstrate that it is a useful methodology for learners to gain the necessary confidence in writing. Moreover, it stands suitable to empower students in the use of the English language at academic levels.

In the current practice, many ELT (English Language Teaching) textbooks if not all, include writing tasks, although, in these books writing is a section in the book's unit in where students are asked to apply the grammar and content of the unit. However, the social purpose or genre of the text is never taught, and not much exposure to them is added. It is relevant to mention here that, the teacher-researcher of this study knows the ELT books that were used with the participants the years before, and the ones that are in current use in the school. The teacher-researcher participated in the selection of them as the Coordinator of the English Department. Furthermore is part of her role to visit national plan English classes and see how teachers make use of that resource. Going back to the ELT books, the units are staged in sequential activities that tackle different skills, being the writing task, most of the time, the last activity in the unit. The writing task would require the learner to apply the vocabulary and the grammar structures present in the unit. Most textbooks include grammar items, listening and reading assignments to build the field, although the writing section hardly ever includes teaching tips that aid the writing process of specific genres, especially in elementary levels. These sections enquire students to write realities in styles that have not been explicitly taught in the EFL class. Therefore, students remain unaware of their social purpose and organization phases. The assumption is that EFL students do not know how to write these genres correctly, do not make connections with the genres taught or revised in the L1 class and most EFL teachers rely on the idea that high school students should know
this beforehand. This study acknowledges the fact that students need to learn how to write different genres in the EFL class and EFL teachers should include the teaching of genres in the practice of developing writing.

As flagged above, this study is significant to the EFL field because it provides evidence on how the practice of a genre-based pedagogy improves writing skills within Spanish speaker students learning an international curriculum.

4. Main Objective and Specific Objective

This study is guided by a general objective, which is to help students attain a higher level of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices in expository texts by applying a genre-based pedagogy and evaluating the progression through an SFL analysis.

The specific objectives relate to the progress expected on students and are as follows:

- To foster awareness of the expository genre and its social purpose among students.
- To improve the complexity of students' lexicogrammatical relations realized in ideational, interpersonal and textual resources.
- To contribute to the development of students' autonomy and confidence to use the language of academic contexts in more complex ways.

5. Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to help students attain written linguistic mastery and contribute to the linguistic field by applying linguistic theories into the teaching of the IB curriculum. Furthermore, it seeks to investigate the impact of the teacher-researcher's instructional method based on the genre-based pedagogy and strategies when addressing student's expository writing instruction. The findings from this action research project may help inform other English B teachers about strategies designed to improve teacher
practice and writing interventions within the International Baccalaureate program. The purpose of this investigation then is to answer the following research questions:

RQ 1. How does the application of a genre-based pedagogy help the attainment of a higher level of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices in writing expository texts?

RQ 2. Does the application of a genre-based pedagogy improve the complexity and accuracy of ideational, interpersonal and textual resources?

RQ 3. To what extent does the application of a genre-based pedagogy develop students' autonomy to use academic language within the writing system?
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. The genre-based pedagogy

How writing instruction in EFL contexts is held depends upon a variety of factors, namely context, learners' age, range of learning styles within the classroom and the conception of language and teaching that the teacher owns (Matthiessen, 2006). This last factor has influenced the teacher-researcher decision to use a genre-based pedagogy in the classroom to solve the problem of this study and reach its purpose. This depends critically upon the conception of language and pedagogy that the researcher acknowledges and considers best for the teaching of English as a foreign language, specifically when dealing with writing. In the upcoming paragraphs, it has been tried to explain the origin, its features, its relevance and how a genre-based pedagogy can be put into practice in the classroom.

The genre-based pedagogy also called the Sydney School (Martin, 2000, 2006; Martin & Rose, 2005) has been explored and applied for around twenty-five years. In its origins, the Sydney School funded a research investigation on the literacy demands of the country's major industrial sectors, and of related secondary school curriculum subjects in a project known as Write It Right (Rose, 2008). This was carried out through a series of large-scale action research projects, the ones which were informed by aspects of functional linguistics, genre and register theories (Martin, 1998; Martin & Rose, 2003), educational sociology (Bernstein, 1996) and Halliday's work on language development (Halliday, 2004). The Sydney school has been described as one of the complete approaches to genre regarding theory and pedagogy (Hyland, 2007). As part of the long-scale research, teachers and discourse linguists established a classification of genres; they included the significant genres in the curriculum, the ones that were classified in narrative texts, expository, evaluative, text responses, reports, and procedural, among others (Martin & Rose, 2008). The genres were mapped and staged to form the basis for designing an explicit pedagogy.
The genre-based pedagogy emerged to tackle the inequality existent in the Australian school system of the time and to solve the problem of low literacy among certain native groups from the root. The disparity was a reality between indigenous and non-indigenous students attending schools in a mainstream context in Australia. Indigenous students in this context, where performing below the average standards of literacy set in the Australian national curriculum and the causes were mainly associated with an individualized methodology, mainly based on progressivist pedagogies, and to the fact that instruction was done in English, which for them, was a second language (Rose, 2005). The notion of an individualized methodology values individual freedom and opportunity, learning is believed to emerge from individuals and the focus is on competences, although, Bernstein (1990) describes this progressivist pedagogy as an invisible one since learners do not receive explicit instruction on textual performances (Rose, 2008). Bernstein (1990), identifies four different pedagogies and adheres the genre-based to the social-psychological pedagogy. The genre-based pedagogy practices of transmission, are considered a social semiotic resource, learning is considered a social process, and textual performance is explicitly taught. In the genre-based pedagogy, the social process of learning by the transmission of skills and knowledge is the main-focus (Bernstein, 1996).

One important feature on this pedagogy is that it provides for teachers specific tools to teach writing, tools that are intended to be applied effectively and independently from the social context, students' previous knowledge, and students' social upbringings. Within these tools, the overt instruction would allow educators to use students' backgrounds as a base for lessons to build experience and reduce the gap among members of a school and society. "In the 1980s the focus was on writing genres in the primary school, and in the 1990s on writing genres in secondary school, in university, and in English as a second language" (Rose, 2008) but now is a common practice in Australian schools and other parts of the world. As recently stated, genre-based pedagogies not only have been applied to improve literacy in L1 contexts but also in ESL and academic literacy programs (Rose, 2008), notwithstanding, it is an innovative
practice in EFL Chilean contexts. The genre-based pedagogies applied into these settings have demonstrated to accelerate literacy development "at twice to over four times expected rates" (Rose, 2008, p1) as well as reducing the gaps between students' level of proficiency. This is one of the reasons why this pedagogy has been chosen by the teacher-researcher; there is a need to move all participants to a higher-level standard, in a two-year program. One way to apply a genre-based pedagogy in the classroom is to build lessons that follow the reading to learn program. The Reading to learn, Learning to Write (R2L) program emerged as a thorough practice to reduce the gap between successful and unsuccessful learners in the middle years of schooling (Rose & Acevedo, 2006), however, this practice is in current use in every year of education. This program has been built on the basis of three principles; namely, the idea that reading is a fundamental mode of learning and explicit teaching of reading should be integrated by all teachers in all subjects, the second principle points out that all students can and should be taught reading texts that have the same level of complexity in order to reduce the gap, level that will be one step higher than the most advanced student (avoiding the use of individualized reading levels). This connects to the third principle which sustains that learning happens when teachers scaffold students to do learning tasks that are beyond their independent abilities (Acevedo & Rose, 2007). These principles and pedagogy acknowledge Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which refers to the area of exploration for which the learner is cognitively prepared but requires help and guidance, as well as social interaction to progress and develop new knowledge, this is achieved by adequately applying the following features: collaborative learning, discourse, modelling, and scaffolding strategies. The reading to learn model, also provides teachers with two sets of skills for accelerating learning and reducing disparity namely, a set of skills for interacting with students around written texts, and the second is a set of skills for selecting texts in the curriculum, and to analyze the language in order to plan the lessons (Rose & Acevedo, 2006).

The genre-based pedagogy, as a semiotic resource, allows teachers to model activities for learners, transmitting meaning and not only contents or concepts. The
teacher contextualizes and orients students by using pedagogic discourse, that is an improved type of language differentiated in tone and meaning which is commonly associated with power relations in the classroom (Rose, 2005). Bernstein states that two types of discourse coexist developing the pedagogic discourse: "the instructional discourse is embedded in the regulative discourse, and the regulative discourse is the dominant discourse" (Bernstein in Rose, 2005). The instructional discourse is the one used when explaining and developing skills, whereas regulative is the one who creates relations and order. In regards to the activities that the teacher should model for learners, Acevedo and Rose (2007) state that reading and writing are complex activities that involve recognizing and using patterns of language at three levels:

a) at the level of text in where students must recognize what a text is about and how it is organized
b) at the level of the sentence, which refers to the arrangement of words or phrases and what each group means
c) at the level of the word, what each word means and how letters are arranged into patterns

At the level of the text; writers must be aware of the phases of the genre and organize them into coherent sequences. At the level of the sentence; words must be selected according to the topics and be arranged in meaningful groups, and at the word level, writers must have a variety of words to choose and spell them right, the complexity of language patterns will vary between types of texts and subjects (Acevedo & Rose, 2007).

In order to teach writing, the teacher needs to plan and select texts that could be broken down for students to learn step by step. The R2L approach includes all the components of the tasks systematically and these components or steps, have been based on Rothery's teaching-learning cycle (1994). Rothery's cycle comprises three significant steps, deconstruction, joint construction and independent construction. However, it also includes an additional level that it is aimed to be considered in all the three stages
aforementioned, this stage is related to setting context and building field. Figure 1, shows Rothery's cycle 1994.

![Diagram of Sydney School Teaching Learning Cycle](image)

Figure 1 The Sydney School Teaching Learning Cycle. Rothery, 1994

The R2L cycle has adapted Rothery's cycle to a six-stage teaching cycle shown in Figure 2. which includes the following stages: 1) preparing for a reading, 2) detailed reading, 3) preparing for writing, 4) joint rewriting, 5) individual rewriting, and 6) independent writing.
The cycles within the genre pedagogies, serve to scaffold students' construction of knowledge and create an atmosphere of cooperative learning and equity. Students build knowledge in cooperation, a feature that differs from progressivist theories that are centered on individual processes, and aspects such as background and social relations are not considered, relying responsibility to the fact that if a student does not obtain the grades that are expected it is due to their own lack of effort, biological reasons, or misfortune (Rose, 2008). Equity is achieved then, when all the stages are carried out, and proper interaction in the classroom is applied, alongside the teaching tools and the teacher instructional discourse. This provides a model of scaffolding that allows students with less advanced literacy skills to build the necessary knowledge to participate, follow, and engage with the class, as well as to understand a context and text, and become part of their own learning process. Unlike the progressivist pedagogy, which is focused on the individual, but fails in reducing the gap among the less and more advanced students entering to tertiary education, the genre-based approach provides equal opportunities and tools to students to learn in cooperation with the teacher's guidance and their peers' participation, reducing the gap between advanced and less advantaged students. The
scaffolding process needs to be thoroughly planned by selecting appropriate texts that suit the curriculum and allow all students to work in a level that is higher than the one they have; therefore, it is significant for all students of a specific context and grade. Regarding teacher's discourse, Rose (2005) states that teachers should avoid "IRF" (initiation-response-feedback) since it is focused on evaluating and not on elaborating on learner's responses (Rose, 2005). The scaffolding interaction prepares, identifies, and elaborates on students' responses, provides positive feedback and affirms students' responses and participation. The teacher needs to previously prepare the questions that will serve to scaffold and explicitly teach (Rose, 2005).

The explicitness of the genre-based instruction has been argued by supporters of other pedagogies, such as the progressivist and the behaviorist which state, in a nutshell, that explicit instruction should not prevail. Nevertheless, this type of instruction based on genre regards learning as a social process and is focused on changing power relations and the act of interacting with and controlling different groups of people. "Many researchers recognize that the social interaction plays a role in language use, but they continue to insist that SLA is primarily concerned with cognitive processes that are exclusively situated inside the learner's head" (Lantolf, 2006 p 718). This pedagogy has its basis on Vygotsky's model of social learning (1987), which implies that human learning is a social process, this is done by interacting with others and then integrated into the individual's mental structure. "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological)" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.57).

2. SFL and Academic Writing

As it has been explained before, this study has opted for a genre-based pedagogy to solve a situational problem among participants. Since the aim of this study is to evaluate the progression of a group of EFL IB students towards the attainment of higher levels of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices in writing
expository texts, a systemic functional perspective has been chosen to analyze students' pieces of writing and evaluate their progression.

The "Systemic Functional Linguistics" (SFL) is a theory of language that highlights the relationship between language, text and context" (Coffin & Donohue, 2012, p 65). It tries to explain how humans make meaning from language and semiotic resources. In SFL "text refers to units as small as a clause or as large as an entire academic monograph" (Coffin & Donohue, 2012, p 65). The concept of genre, is used to categorize academic texts according to its purposes, and the concept of register describes the relationship between situational context and the lexicogrammatical choices (Coffin & Donohue, 2012); "a register is the constellation of lexical and grammatical features that realizes a particular situational context (Halliday & Hasan, 1989) In Schleppegrell, 2004), therefore, registers vary through language from context to context.

This research aligns with the definition of language as a tristratal hierarchical system of meanings organized from the most abstract to the most concrete level. Figure 3 shows the three levels of language that this study acknowledges, although the phonological stratum is not considered for this study.
The hierarchical system of language is closely related to the context in which language is produced. This implies that our use of language is strongly influenced by the context of a culture that generates the genres praised by people in different communities, and the language used undergoes the influence of the situation in which language is used. For Halliday (1978, p. 111) “a register can be defined as the configuration of semantic resources that the member of a culture typically associates with a situation type. It is the meaning potential that is accessible in a given social context”. Every situation type is characterized by what is happening, who is taking part, and what part of language is playing. These three abstract language variables are called field, tenor and mode; these three variables together determine the register of a particular textual or oral situation (Halliday, 1978) The concept of register emerges from the social context produced and realized through spoken or written text (Schleppegrell, 2004). Exploring register means attempting “to understand what situational factors determine what linguistic features” (Halliday, 1978, p31). Figure 4 shows the three language variables and its realizations, field realized in ideational resources, tenor realized in interpersonal resources and mode realized in textual or oral resources.
Figure 4 Martin's stratified mode of context in relation to metafunctions and language strata.

This study focuses on the progression of these three metafunctions realized in ideational, interpersonal, and textual choices.

Halliday stratified language content into lexicogrammar and semantics. "This means that language is conceived as having two meaning-making strata – lexicogrammar, concerned with the semogenic potential of clauses, and semantics focused on the semogenic potential of texts" (Martin, 2016, p 37). As Martin states, SFL is a theory of language, not just grammar, and he also points out the misconception around the concept of grammar that, in his words "still follows Chomsky's unfortunate equivocation around the term grammar – as referring the rule-governed nature of language as a whole rather than simply to one of its strata" (Martin, 2016, p 45). Under this perspective SFL when applied into the L2 classroom opens the possibility to help learners find meaning in complex texts, by the overt deconstruction of genres and the elaboration of tasks that aim at different strata and purposes.
In regards to complexity, complexity is present in oral and written texts. Oral texts show complexity through aspects such as conjunctions, discourse markers, and intonation. In written texts, complexity is represented through "nominal elements expanded with pre- and post modification by adjectives, prepositional phrases, and embedded clauses. Participles, adverbial phrases, and other devices allow for expansion of clause-internal structure at the same time that infinitive clauses, that clauses, restrictive relative clauses, and other such structures allow for the embedding and integration of ideas in complex clauses (Chafe, 1985 in Schleppegrell, 2004).

Subordination, for instance, can represent different kinds of complexity into text, "relative clauses, complement clauses, and adverbial clauses introduced by subordinators such as because, although, if, before, since, and others are typically considered subordinate clauses, but some "subordinate" clauses play none subordinating roles as broader discourse links (Schleppegrell, 2004, p13)

When analyzing texts to develop writing, the SFL first analyses the relationship between text and context which refer to the genre and register. That is to say that the exercise is in identifying the relationship between texts and the people who read and write them. This linguistic theory focuses on the details of how language works and how people construe meaning, which according to Coffin (2016) when applied through a genre pedagogy and its cycles it serves to improve realizations of ideational, interpersonal and textual resources (Coffin & Donohue, 2012).

SFL is functional because linguistic systems and structures "are intrinsically organized concerning the complementary kinds of meaning they construe, enact and compose" (Martin, 2016, p 44). In regards to the notion of context, Halliday first developed this as including field, mode and style, and the extrinsic functions as, field, tenor and mode, started to evolve in the mid-1960s (Martin, 2016). Table 2 shows how external functionality is reflected in metafunctions.
As it has been stated before, the analysis of students' writings was carried out following the principles of the Systemic Functional Linguistics' perspective. This standpoint followed the work of Halliday (2014), Martin (1989) and Mary Schleppegrell (2004), and considered aspects of the clause and beyond the clause. Likewise, the analysis of the argumentative essays and the discussion texts involved the macrostructure and the structure of the clause. This means that the focus of the analysis considered the patterns present in the global structure of the genre, for instance, first "the introduction announces the text's orientation and purpose, typically in a thesis statement. In the body of the text, the thesis is developed and elaborated through examples and arguments, and a conclusion summarizes and evaluates the points that have been made" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p 90). Similarly, this author states that each argument tends to follow a similar structure; "each argument is also announced with the evidence to be presented for it, and then presented, and then summed up" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p90). This refers to the elaboration of an argument structured in a topic sentence, supporting details and a concluding sentence. The structure of the paragraph was explicitly taught during the deconstruction of the texts; therefore it was considered in the analysis. Additionally, it is recognized that in order to succeed on the attainment of the parameters of the macrostructure of specific genres, developing writers also need to manage linguistic choices at the clause level.

Based on a systemic functional approach, the register of academic texts include complex nominal groups, embedded evaluative features, and strategies of condensation in conjunction and combination of clauses (Schleppegrell, 2004), which were considered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extrinsic functionality (context)</th>
<th>'reflected in …'</th>
<th>Intrinsic functionality (metafunction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td><em>construed by</em></td>
<td>Ideational resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td><em>composed by</em></td>
<td>Textual resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td><em>enacted by</em></td>
<td>Interpersonal resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Martin, 2016
as crucial features for the analysis carried out. Martin (1989) states the purpose and grammatical features of expository texts in Table 3.

**Table 3. Expository Genre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposition</th>
<th>Nominal expression name arguments to be used, drawing on abstractions. Modality presents claims as possibilities. Reasoning with nouns, verbs, prepositions, requiring subordination and condensation. Markers of contrast, classification, logical sequence. (Applebee, Durst, &amp; Newell, 1984; Christie, 1986; Coffin, 1997; Crowhurst, 1980; Durst, 1987; Martin, 1989a).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argues why a thesis has been proposed, with more than one argument presented in favor of the judgment. Relies on generalization, classification, and categorization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this regard, it has been decided to follow Mary Scheleppegrell's representation of linguistic realizations of contextual variables as Matrix for this analysis. This means that the analysis focuses on the linguistic features exposed in Table 4. Table 4 explains how the register of expositions is contextualized in field, tenor, and mode and realized through ideational, interpersonal and textual choices the ones are going to be observed in the texts written by the participants.
This framework was used as the matrix to evaluate the progression of a group of EFL IB students towards the attainment of higher levels of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices in writing expository texts.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

1. Type of Study

Kurt Lewin firstly coined the term action research in 1930, and it was seen as applied social science, it gained significant recognition in the United States in the 1950s due to its relevance on teacher research but went into decline in the 1970s. Also in the 70s, researchers in the UK such as John Elliott, Jack Whitehead, Wilf Carr, and Stephen Kemmis, developed and presented action research as a "legitimate educational research methodology" (Nasrollahi, Krish, Noor, 2012, p1874) to contribute to a social change. This intervention draws on Mills (2003) description of action research which states that this type of research is "any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers to gather information about the ways that their particular school operates, how they teach, and how well their students learn. The information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the school environment and on educational practices in general, and improving student outcomes" (Mills, 2003, p4)

The nature of action research is analyzed under a qualitative method; it focuses on an individual and small group to improve the clarity of a question or problem. "Library projects, problem-solving in the sense of trying to find out what is wrong […] and learning why teachers do certain things are not action research" (Nasrollahi et al., 2012, p 1875), it is about how to do things better and the impact caused on students. "Action research seeks to clarify the issue investigated and to reveal the way participants describe their experience of that issue – how things happen and how it affects them" (Stringer, 2007, p20, in Nasrollahi et al., 2012, p 1875)

"An action research is the combination and interaction of two modes of activity-action, and research" (Burns, 2009, p 289). The action can take part in a variety of social contexts, being a classroom and a group of students the participants of this one in particular. Its goal is to bring about improvement and change after the intervention. The research is done throughout the systemic analysis of developments to bridge the gulf
between the ideal and the real in a social situation (Burns, 2009). For Elliot (1993) action research is understood as a reflection about human actions and social situations lived by the teachers who have the goal to broaden the comprehension of their own practical problems (Latorre, 2005).

Although, authors who attempt to define action research share certain beliefs, such as the particular feature that action research involves both concepts to cause a change and improvement. This AR relies on the philosophical assumption that "people within a social situation can solve problems through self-study and intervention" (Burns, 2009, p291). It follows the ideas of practical and critical action research; this action research not only does attempt to solve the problem of deficient writing but also expects to foster students' awareness of their learning process to empower them to use the English they have gained in their school life in more advanced academic settings within the writing system. Consequently, this intervention is mainly qualitative and interpretative since the cases are studied reflectively through cyclical observational and non-observational means.

As well as definitions, the action research methodology offers a variety of models to carry out the plan. Most of these models follow similar cyclical patterns differing on the relevance posed in each step. For instance, Mills (2003) offers a more deductive approach, which implements a planned intervention, monitors its implementation and evaluates results. Mills furthermore, provides a 12 step framework for action research, in wherein a nutshell, first, the problem is described, factors involved are considered, research questions are developed, and the intervention is described implemented and reported. Burns (1999) for instance, focuses on planning for action as the first process, observes areas of concern, collects data to determine the action and plans strategic actions based on data, action research is carried out to explore what changes need to be made. On the contrary, Kemmis and McTaggert's approach focuses on implementing an action plan, in the same line as Mills (Nasrollahi et al., 2012)
Therefore, this action research will follow Kemmis and McTaggart's model. They state that the benefits of action research are the improvement of the practice, comprehension of the practice and the improvement of the situation in where the practice takes place. For this reason, action research stands as a suitable method to attain the objectives here proposed and cause a change among students' perspective of their own learning progress. Action research attempts to improve education through a change and to learn from the consequences of those changes (Kemmis and McTaggart's, in Latorre, 2005).

Kemmis and McTaggart's model includes the following steps:
1. to develop a plan for critically informed action to improve what is already happening.
2. act to implement the plan.
3. observe the effects.
4. reflect on the effects.

This intervention, therefore, is based on action research beliefs and models, although, it cannot be considered as pure critical action research since it is not one hundred percent emancipatory of social norms within the status quo. It aims at solving a situational linguistic issue and causes a change among participants to transform students' consciousness of their own learning process; therefore it aligns with practical action research that attempts to solve a situational problem.
The intervention was done by designing two action research cycles. As stated, this intervention follows the notions of Kemmis and McTaggart's action research model. The one was used to design each cycle. Kemmis and McTaggart's model was used in the following way in each cycle.

**Table 5. Action Research Model Applied**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. To develop a plan for critically informed action to improve what is already happening.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The plan has been thoroughly designed to improve students' attainment of academic writing skills by following the genre-based pedagogy based on the Reading to Learn, Learning to Write model of David Rose (2009), as it is believed to work as a means of improvement to attain learners' advanced levels of control within the writing system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Act to implement the plan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The cycles were implemented. Each cycle tackled one text type within the family of the expository genre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Observe the effects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The effects of the intervention were analyzed by drawing on the theory of the systemic functional linguistics, Halliday (2009). After each cycle the texts where analyzed understanding how ideational, interpersonal and textual resources are realized.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Reflect on the effects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection was allowed after the revision and analysis of the texts written by the students after the two cycles and the data gathered in the Focus Group. Furthermore, after the cycles were applied, reflection was carried to evaluate the whole process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Participants in the Study

This study was carried out in a 10th grade EFL class that includes 20 Spanish speaking students from which 7 are boys, and 13 are girls; however, gender, is not relevant for this study and is not going to be considered as a variant. The students in this class are coursing the first year in the International Baccalaureate program (IB), they are
the only class of this kind in the international school, and students belong to a privileged area in Santiago, Chile.

The students that enter to the IB program have been selected under criteria applied to those who show interest and are willing to obtain the diploma, and not every student can opt to this international curriculum due to unreached standards or lack of relation to the profile. To be selected, students need to have average grades above 6.0 in every subject preferentially and should be integral students who attach to some point to the profile the IB states in their curriculum, a profile that aims to develop inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, open-minded and risk-taker students, among other features. Students behavior and attitudes are discussed by the teacher's council, which includes IB teachers, national plan teachers, and the high school head of studies. The students that meet the profile receive an invitation letter to take part in the program. Under this scenario, this class is formed including students that were academically successful in the national curriculum and now face a new challenge to accomplish a new and a higher-level goal in most new subjects; including in the area of language acquisition, the EFL subject, here named English B.

The participants in this study were informed that their pieces of writing and responses to methods in the class were going to be studied to evaluate their progress in the attainment of higher level skills in writing. The principal and parents were informed through a consent letter which they signed and is attached in Appendix B.

3. Procedure and Data Collection

The main goal of action research is to collect data to understand a phenomenon within the context. Data, in action research, can be any type of information, observations or facts that are collected or recorded for further analysis (Johnson, 2012). Action research is systematic which means that before the plan is applied, the researcher should have a clear idea of which data to collect and when. "Collecting data in an action research plan is not a snapshot of a single incident like a test score, nor should data rely
on a single type of data” (Johnson, 2012), for this reason, this plan collects data after the application of each cycle. These data correspond to students writing samples, and a focus group coded in MAXQDA.

The data gathered was the following:

Students diagnostic tests: This evaluation included a section of reading, but that section was not considered for the analysis since this AR only focuses on writing. This diagnostic text was assessed by using the standard writing rubric to measure level B2, commonly used in the First Certificate in English.

- Students written products: After each cycle's intervention, students' pieces of writing were analyzed qualitatively following the analysis proposed by Halliday (2009) and the systemic functional linguistic perspective, aspects of metafunctions realized as linguistic choices were considered. Their performance was analyzed under the following criteria: the genre (global structure of the text), register (field, tenor, mode), paragraph structure (global structure), and grammar (the combination of clauses). These samples, the ones including the lowest level of performance were also included in MAXQDA to simplify the segmentation and coding system.

- Class recordings: The cycles were recorded for further analysis and evidence especially to review the steps in the methodology applied and students' participation.

- Focus group: This was carried out to obtain feedback from students to gather data useful to measure the impact of this intervention on students feeling of autonomy. This data was analyzed by using the software MAXQDA specialized in qualitative analysis.

The design of action research can be intended in one cycle, albeit more than one cycle might be necessary to see results or cause a real change. The cycles or action research spirals (Crooks, 1993) help to organize the processes and need to be considered of relevance over, the explanation of the researchers own practice (Latorre, 2005). It could be argued that the models of AR, only represent the regular and daily practice of every teacher, namely to plan, act, observe and reflect, although action research is
expected to be done thoroughly and systematically, more rigorously than in the everyday practice.

4. Instruments

During the first cycle, students learned about Biofuels, and during the second cycle, students learned about Stem cells. Rothery's cycles and its steps, namely deconstruction, joint construction, and independent construction, as well as building field, were applied to tackle the phases of the genre. In order to set field and build context, students watched informative videos and participated in an oral class discussion based on the themes of each cycle. Table 3. below describes the field where the genres were developed.

Table 6. Organizational Framework For AR Cycles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Information and Field</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Lesson and Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cycle 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prescribed Theme (IB):</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson Topic:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biofuels, Ethics, and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guiding Questions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are Biofuels the best way to replace fossil fuels?</td>
<td>Exposition:</td>
<td>Presentation of lesson topic by allowing discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading tasks from students' textbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deconstruction of an argumentative essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Application of Reading To learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Construction of argumentative essay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cycle 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prescribed Theme:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson Topic:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stem cells</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guiding Questions:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do developments in Science and technology influence our lives?</td>
<td>Discussion:</td>
<td>Presentation of lesson topic by allowing discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading tasks from students' textbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deconstruction of a discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is the use of stem cell associated with a moral dilemma? How do developments in Science and technology influence our lives?</td>
<td>Reading To learn Application. Construction of a discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This study aims to assess the progression of a group of high-school EFL IB Spanish speaking students, towards the attainment of higher levels of proficiency regarding the control of generic patterns and lexicogrammatical choices in writing expository texts. For this reason, this study has considered the following corpus for its analysis; 60 written pieces divided by the following means:

- Twenty diagnostic tests that were checked and analyzed using a validated ESOL writing rubric applied to assess a B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) see Appendix D.

- Forty graded texts that were analyzed using a rubric that covers the following criteria: structure of the expository text, paragraph structure, and vocabulary and grammar, see Appendix E. These 40 pieces were assessed in 20 after each cycle. At the end of the cycles, the text that demonstrated the most reduced performance were analyzed under an SFL perspective to understand and evaluate their progression. These samples correspond to the participants with the lowest written performance.

In order to simplify the data analysis, the texts have been uploaded to MAXQDA a world-leading software package for qualitative and mixed methods research. MAXQDA helps to collect, organizing, analyzing, visualizing, and publishing data. It supports various methodological frameworks, including grounded theory, literature reviews, exploratory market research, and qualitative content analyses, giving maximum flexibility to analyze what it is needed. The texts selected for SFL analysis were uploaded and code in this software.

1. Diagnostic Test

Students were asked to write a persuasive essay based on one of four common topics. The ideas were:

a) the production and sale of cigarettes should be made illegal
b) participating in team sports helps to develop good character
c) Americans should have more holidays and more extended vacations
d) Dieting makes people fat.

Most students chose options a) and d). The revision of students' texts evidenced lower levels of written performance in most students. Students demonstrated limited knowledge of the persuasive genre and limited attainment of complex lexicogrammatical realizations to express field, tenor, and mode. In this regard, this group did not achieve the social purpose of the expository text. They demonstrated poor development of ideas, unclear and unconvincing arguments, unclear and absence of the phases of the genre and paragraph structure, ineffective elaboration of lexicogrammatical realizations, and unsuccessful realization of the academic register; limiting or not achieving the social purpose of the persuasive essay. Text 1. shows the textual transcription of the essay written by one of the participants showing the most elementary performance. No modifications have been made to the text; this is the exact transcript of how the student construed meaning.

Text 1. a) The production and sale of cigarettes should be made illegal.

Being healthy is very important, one of the priorities that we have in life is being healthy, because if your healthy you are sick, and if you are sick you can die. So, if our health is so important and relevant, ¿Why we smoke? ¿Why we put our lifes in danger and we are ok with it? ¿Why cigarettes aren't illegal if we know that they are dangerous?

Most of people that smoke not think thats ok, they don't care, because they like to smoke. That's probably because cigarrattes are addictive, when you start and you like it you want more, and then more, and more, you never stop and think what you are doing, our health is in danger even if you don't smoke, but what about if you mother does, or your brother, your health is in danger too, cigarrattes should be illegal because of the damage that cause on people, for example people that smoke has more opportunities of have pulmonary cancer.

In Text 1: The macrostructure contains two paragraphs, which evidences the writers' limited understanding of the global structure and stages of this genre. The introduction portends a stand in favor of the statement chosen, stating the relevance and
importance of being healthy, the student also includes some grammatical inaccurate rhetorical questions (omission of auxiliary verbs, incorrect word order and use of question marks to open the question) to express mood. The introduction sheds light on the arguments the writer may have wanted to develop, the reader can infer, through this attempt to rhetoric, that the writer considers that smoking is not a right choice. The writer attempts to develop one single argument, and the stages of the genre are not realized correctly. It is written in a reflective mood realized through rhetoric questions with Why, and first-person. Also, words such as probably, are not the best lexical choice in a persuasive register since it demonstrates a lack of knowledge or uncertainty, unlike the social purpose to convince. There is the omission of paragraph structure; the first paragraph does not contain a correct supporting and concluding sentence and the second paragraph, is realized including a topic sentence and one long supporting one. There is an absence of well-defined stages such as the development arguments and the reiteration.

In regards to the structure of the clauses, the topic sentence of the second and last paragraph is made up by four clauses and reads like this; Most of people that smoke not think thats ok, they don't care, because they like to smoke. There is evidence of cross linguistics interference in the first clause with the inclusion of the preposition of between the words most and people. The second clause omits the auxiliary verbs in the second clause, clauses three and four are correctly written. The second sentence in the paragraph shows several unconnected ideas and informal vocabulary to tackle and an academic written task. Indeed the writing shows the absence of nominalization, metaphors and proper mechanics, especially punctuation. However, the following example: cigarattes should be illegal because of the damage that cause on people – demonstrates the presence of the nominalization of the word damage and reads in a declarative mood and third person to realize impersonality. The use of conjunctive resources to create cohesion is limited, as well as clause-combining choices that enable the condensation of information. The text does not present a high lexical density, and ideational resources unfold mainly through mental, relational, and material processes. Table 7. shows the
segments that represent ideational, interpersonal, and textual choices; only the most proper clauses have been selected and represent how the participant construed meaning.

Table 7. Linguistic realizations through ideational, interpersonal, and textual choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ideational Choices</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relational process</td>
<td>Being healthy is very important,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups</td>
<td>One of the priorities that we have in life is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb\Mental process</td>
<td>they don’t care,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups</td>
<td>cigarettes are addictive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb\Relational process</td>
<td>if you are sick you can die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups</td>
<td>our health is in danger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups</td>
<td>your health is in danger too,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups</td>
<td>the damage that cause on people,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups</td>
<td>people that smoke has more opportunities of pulmonary cancer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal Choices</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources for appraisal</td>
<td>is very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality</td>
<td>That’s probably because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood (Statements, questions, demands)</td>
<td>¿Why we smoke?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements, questions, demands</td>
<td>¿Why we put our lives in danger and we are ok with it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements, questions, demands</td>
<td>¿Why cigarettes aren’t illegal if we know that they are dangerous?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources for appraisal</td>
<td>you never stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements, questions, demands</td>
<td>what about if you mother does, or your brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups</td>
<td>cigarettes should be illegal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textual Choices</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive devices</td>
<td>but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive devices</td>
<td>because of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesive devices</td>
<td>So</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Cycle 1: Argumentative text

During the deconstruction stage of the R2L (Reading to Learn) pedagogy students analyzed an essay on Biofuels see Appendix A. Participants were made aware of the macrostructure of the genre and the register. The macrostructure was taught explicitly through the elaboration of pedagogic discourse to scaffold students into the phases of the genre, which include the thesis statement, the arguments, and the reiteration. The register was taught using pedagogic discourse to make the context of the situation explicit; this was done by reading and selecting the lexicogrammatical realizations that represent ideational choices. Ideational choices are realizations of field, interpersonal choices are realizations of tenor, and textual choices are realizations of mode. The text analyzed supported the idea that biofuels were not a viable source of energy to replace the use of fossil fuels. The teacher discussed that one of the aims of the unit was to develop critical thinking and that students were encouraged to provide a personal appreciation in their independent writing, notwithstanding, The transcript of this class can be checked in Appendix E since it was recorded to have evidence of the cycles.

During the Joint construction, the class was encouraged to create together a thesis statement and one argument; it was planned to jointly construct only one thesis and one argument because of time constraint, and also, because it is esteemed that young learners tend to lose interest when participating in a conjoint activity that takes too long.

Text 2, corresponds to the thesis and argument that the participants wrote conjointly during the join construction:
Text 2. Joint Construction

Thesis statement: Biofuels are the solution the planet requires in order to reduce global warming effects.

Argument:
First of all, biofuels are considered to be an ecofriendly source of energy. Due to the fact that biofuels are made of raw materials that are biodegradable, opposed to traditional fuels that are made of raw materials that contaminate the environment. In addition, biofuels release less carbon emissions than fossil fuels, reducing the amount of pollution in the environment. Therefore, biofuels stand as a better alternative to reduce global warming effects.

The product of the joint construction demonstrates how the metafunctions and lexical density improves in collaborative writing. The joint construction includes a range of cohesive devices useful to convey mode, there are clear relational processes and use of nominalization, therefore the field is realized through appropriate ideational resources.


Thesis statement: Biofuels are the solution the planet requires in order to reduce global warming effects.

Argument:
First of all, biofuels are considered to be an ecofriendly source of energy. Due to the fact that biofuels are made of raw materials that are biodegradable, opposed to traditional fuels that are made of raw materials that contaminate the environment. In addition, biofuels release less carbon emissions than fossil fuels, reducing the amount of pollution in the environment. Therefore, biofuels stand as a better alternative to reduce global warming effects.
During the Independent Construction, students had two classes of 50 min. to write their argumentative essay on Biofuels using the context learned in the unit. Participants could use information read in the texts used to set context and building field as well as the text used for the deconstruction, the videos shown in the previous lessons, and the joint construction as a model for students who needed it.

Text 4, is the transcription of one of the participants. This text was written by the same student whose written section was analyzed before the first cycle was applied.

TEXT 4.

Biofuels: The answer to reduce pollution

**Introduction:** For many decades Fossil Fuels have been the principal and most used source of energy, as a result of this they have contaminated the environment realizing high levels of pollution. Nonetheless, there are more options of energy that can replace Fossil Fuels, for example Biofuels. **Nowadays the world needs Biofuels to reduce high levels of pollution.** **Thesis statement**

**Argument 1:** First, as biofuels are produced from renewable resources, they release lower levels of carbon dioxide than Fossil Fuels when they burn. Although the production of Biofuels creates carbon dioxide as a byproduct, which is frequently used to grow plants that, eventually, will become fuel. Thus, is close to be a self-sustaining system.

**Argument 2:** Secondly, Biofuels reduce the impact of greenhouse gases. Studies suggest that Biofuels reduce greenhouse gases up to 65%, and as a result of this, Biofuels reduce global warming effects, unlike Fossil Fuels which increase temperatures.

**Reiteration:** In conclusion, the world needs Biofuels, because they create carbon dioxide as a byproduct, thus is close to be a self-sustaining system. And also because Biofuels reduce greenhouse gases and global warming effects.
In her text, the first feature that evidently improved was the global structure of the genre. The phases were clear; there is a thesis statement, two arguments and a reiteration.

**Field** is realized through ideational meanings the ones are evidenced at the lexico-grammatical level through the choice of vocabulary, closely related to the field of the essay. The text seen from a discourse-semantic level focus on discourse organization of meanings realized lexicogrammatically by the choice of vocabulary that construct lexical relations that convey in this scenario field about Biofuels, prepositional phrases, nominalization, relational, mental, and material processes, and adverbial adjuncts, the ones that are used to develop original ideas that are explored and justified through argument. The writer used the following lexical resources to realize ideational meaning: for many decades, a result of this, biofuels are produced, they release lower levels of carbon dioxide, the production of biofuels creates carbon dioxide, frequently used to grow, biofuels reduce the impact, and biofuels reduce greenhouse gasses. The language chosen by the writer allowed the reader to convey the meaning through processes and context of the situation unfold in the text. The reader engages in well elaborated and accurate clauses that permit comprehension of the field, the writer is trying to construe in the reader, the writer creates relationships and develops ideas within an argumentative framework.

**Tenor**, as well, is realized to develop a projected or imagined social context with a real audience that anticipates an argument in order to show a stance. Tenor can consider the rhetorical context and warrants for arguing with an audience about issues of a particular field realized in a particular register. The writer realized interpersonal meaning through the following lexical realizations: statements that represent mood such as, fossil fuels have been the principal and most, and they have contaminated the environment, responsiveness to the social context, in this case, the use of Biofuels in the world as a solution to Fossil fuels, is developed through clear statement including resources for appraisal.
The features found in the analyzed text represent mode through textual choices realized as varied cohesive devices, such as nonetheless, first, although, which is (which), eventually, thus secondly (secondly), as a result of, in conclusion, thus end and. These linguistic choices, show that the writer was more aware of the academic register used in argumentative texts, making use of parts of the argument and procedures for composing an essay structure including elements to develop academic register.

Table 8. includes the segments that were coded and represent how the student construed meaning by using features of the argumentative epistemology.

**Table 8. Argumentative text (Cycle 1) Coded Metafunctions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Variable</th>
<th>Metafunction</th>
<th>Linguistic Realization</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>For many decades</td>
<td>Prepositional Phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>the production of Biofuels creates carbon dioxide</td>
<td>Nominalization / material process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>frequently used to grow</td>
<td>Time expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>eventually</td>
<td>Time expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Biofuels reduce the impac</td>
<td>Material process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>there are more options</td>
<td>Existencial process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Biofuels reduce greenhouse gases</td>
<td>Material process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Biofuels reduce global warming</td>
<td>Material process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>biofuels are produced</td>
<td>Relational process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>they release lower levels of carbon dioxide</td>
<td>Material process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Biofuels reduces green house gases</td>
<td>Material process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Nowadays the world needs Biofuels to reduce ...</td>
<td>Statement (thesis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>they have contaminated the environment</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Fossil Fuels have been the principal and most used source of energy</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>the world needs Biofuels</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although

wich is (which is)

Thus

Secontly (secondly)

as a result of

In conclusion

thus

And

as a result of this

First

Nonetheless

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Textual</th>
<th>Clause combining strategy</th>
<th>Cohesive device</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Discourse marker</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Cohesive Device</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Cohesive Device</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Cohesive Device</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Cohesive Device</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Cohesive Device</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Cohesive Device</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Cohesive Device</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following text, contains the color coding applied in one the texts analyzed after the first cycle.


Biofuels: The answer to reduce pollution

Introduction: For many decades Fossil Fuels have been the principal and most used source of energy, as a result of this they have contaminated the environment realizing high levels of pollution. Nonetheless, there are more options of energy that can replace Fossil Fuels, for example Biofuels. Nowadays the world needs Biofuels to reduce high levels of pollution. Thesis statement

Argument 1: First, as biofuels are produced from renewable resources, they release lower levels of carbon dioxide than Fossil Fuels when they burn. Although the production of Biofuels creates carbon dioxide as a byproduct, which is frequently used to grow plants that, eventually, will became fuel. Thus, is close to be a self-sustaining system.

Argument 2: Secondly, Biofuels reduce the impact of greenhouse gases. Studies suggest that Biofuels reduce greenhouse gases up to 65%, and as a result of this, Biofuels reduce global warming effects, unlike Fossil Fuels which increase temperatures.

Reiteration: In conclusion, the world needs Biofuels because they create carbon dioxide as a byproduct, thus is close to be a self-sustaining system. And also because Biofuels reduce green house gases and global warming effects.
Text 1 and text 4 correspond to the same participant and they have been chosen and analyzed to evaluate the progression. Text 1 corresponds to the lowest performance in the diagnostic test and text 4 was written by the same participant, however, after the cycle was applied the participant with the lowest performance did not perform in the same way. Her text evidences great improvement.

It has been decided to include in this stage of the analysis the text that obtained the lowest score when texts were graded for school purpose and include lexicogramatical choices that are worth observing. This participant had a regular performance in the diagnostic test; however in this sample, it is evident that the participant's construal of meaning has been limited due to the lack of lexical resources and ideational resources. Text 6 is the exact transcript of a students' piece.


Biofuels it is not compatible with modern days

Introduction: In this days the energy consumption have been incrising greatly and some type of energy resources like biofuels can not endure this type of consumption. **When the biofuels were created we only use it for cooking and heating a very low rate in comparison with nowadays, thanks to this biofuels is not compatible with the energy consumption.** **Thesis statement.**

**Argument 1:** Electricity is an important energy in this time and it is need a fuel that can hold it with out any problems, some type of fuels like biofuels will not endure the rate of consumption of modern days, there is the need that this type of energy resources have a second generation of this that conresist the energy consumption. The energy resources such as biofuels will not shine with out a second generation of this.

**Argument 2:** In ancient times when we use biofuels there was a low rate of population in a country, and it was not a problem the use of land, to biofuels, however, with new days technology the population have been increasing and there is the need the use of this lands for food production. In countries such as Africa the dead because of hunger it is not a rare case, however if the use of land for biofuels increase the world hunger will increase.
**Reiteration:** To summarize without evolution of biofuels and the other types of energy resources, this will not be of help to the humanity on the contrary, it will be a damage and the humanity will may extinct.

The macrostructure of this text follows the phases of the genre; it includes a thesis statement, two arguments, and a reiteration. However, the paragraphs have not been built following the structure that was made explicit during the deconstruction (topic sentences, supporting details, concluding sentence). The writer chose to build their paragraphs, including one long sentence or two, do not show the use of textual resources. The participant presents an important number of lexicogrammatical issues that include namely, lack of textual resources such as cohesive devices, inaccurate use of articles (the, an), subject verb agreement, grammatical tenses such as simple present, spelling mistakes, use of plurals and quantifiers, use of past tense, absence of passive and inaccurate conditional sentences. These inaccurate realizations demonstrate lack of lexical resources to realize the interpersonal and ideational meaning. This text was also coded without including inaccurate realizations; therefore, the number of accurate segments is reduced in comparison to the previous sample text. Table 8. shows the coding of the text 6.

**Table 9. Lowest performance Argumentative Text (Cycle 1).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Variable</th>
<th>Metaphonc</th>
<th>Linguistic Realization</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Energy consumption</td>
<td>Nominalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>The use of this lands for food production</td>
<td>Nominalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Biofuels can not endure this</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>When the biofuels were created we only use it for cooking...</td>
<td>Statement (thesis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Electricity is important energy</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>However (used twice)</td>
<td>Cohesive device</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Cycle 2: Discussion Text

The second cycle was carried out following the same structure of the first. Two sides of the issue were studied during the whole unit: the agreed use of stem cells for human benefit and ethical aspect that reject its use. During the deconstruction, the learners worked with a Discussion Text, see Appendix A, about Stem Cells, the discussion chosen meets the global structure of this expository text.

During the independent construction, students had two classes of 50 min. to write their discussion text on Stem Cells using the context and field built in the unit. Text 7, shows the transcription of one of the participants. This text was written by the same participant who wrote the diagnostic and the first argumentative text sample.

Text 6. Stem Cells discussion, expository text written by a participant.

Stem Cells, give life or Death?

Issues: Nowadays stem cells research has been important to many science advances, although very controversial too. Nonetheless, what makes stem cell different Are they like other cells of the body Stem cells very special cells, because they are nonspecialized cells which have the potential to create other types of specific cells. There are many types of stem cells though the most specials are embryonic stem cells which have the power of create any type of cells, not just cells of an specific area like adult stem cells do. However the population is still insecure about the research or if it is ethical, so many people have different opinions about the topic.

Side 1: One of the common opinions is that stem cells are unethical since scientists can kill a fetus for its embryonic stem cells. Like the introduction said, embryonic stem cells are special and with their ability the organs of the body are made in the fetus, therefore scientists could use them to create organs for transplants even though they will kill the baby. The use of stem cells in this area is controversial and population believes it is unethical.

Side 2: Other common opinion is in favor of stem cells research since they can potentially help treat a range of medical problems and found possible cures for a number of diseases, for example Parkinson, Alzheimer, spinal cord injuries and even stem cells may play a major role in cancer. Stem cells research will bring really important advances in medicine and other very important areas that helps to the population wellness.
Resolution: In conclusion stem cells research is a really controversial and complicate topic, and even if both public opinions are common it is known that the majority of the population support the use and research of stem cells, mostly because of its application on medicine, of course without hurting a human being.

Similar to the product of the first cycle, the product selected to exemplify the second, shows a correct management of the phases of the genre, the macrostructure spreads in three phases, presenting the issue in the introductions, two paragraphs that convey the two main sides of the issue and a resolution in where the writer takes a stance.

In regards to Field, this is realized by the usage of the following ideational choices, the ones are evidenced through different processes (verbs), nominalization and noun phrases, the following lexical relations were found in the text and used as choices to realize ideational meaning: stem cells research has been, science advances, they are nonspecialized cells, the most specials (special) are embryonic stem cells, stem cells are unethical, embryonic stem cells are special, the use of stem cells in this area is, population believes it is unethical, spinal cord injuries. The language retrieved by the writer allowed the reader to understand field, however, there are several inaccurate realizations and inaccurately formed clauses that impede a smoother reading.

The tenor of the discussion text unfolds as impersonal and descriptive. It is realized to develop two sides of an issue. A discussion paper can be highly academic and informative, lengthen and dense. However, participants have written a basic discussion text, suitable as background knowledge of the genre, realized in a simpler academic text. The writer's use of rhetoric is limited by the absence or omission of question marks. Interpersonal choices were realized through resources for appraisal (adjectives), questions and modality such as: very controversial too, what makes stem cells different (?), are they like other cells of the body (?), scientists can kill a fetus, they can potentially help treat a range of, stem cells may play, really important, and very
important areas. The impersonal language of the discussion is realized in modal verbs such as, can and may.

In regards to mode and textual choices, the texts included cohesive devices, clause combining strategies, and conjunctions, realized as follows: nowadays, although, nonetheless, which, though, however, since, and, therefore, even though, for example, in conclusion, and mostly because. Table 9 shows the codification of the text. The texts obtained in the second cycle were also coded by classifying accurate clauses into the three metafunctions.

**Table 10. Discussion text (Cycle 2) Coded Metafunctions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Variable</th>
<th>Metafunction</th>
<th>Linguistic Realization</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Nowadays</td>
<td>Time expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Science advances</td>
<td>Nominalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Stem cells are unethical</td>
<td>Relational process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Embrionic stem cells are special</td>
<td>Relational process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>The population believes it is unethical</td>
<td>Mental process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>The use of stem cell in this area is</td>
<td>Relational process / Nominalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Spinal cord injuries</td>
<td>Nominal groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Advances in medicine</td>
<td>Nominalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Stem cell research is really controversial</td>
<td>Relation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Stem cell research has been important to...</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Very controversial too</td>
<td>Resources for appraisal (adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>What makes stem cell different</td>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Are they like other cells of the body</td>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tenor | Interpersonal | The most special are embryonic stem cells | Statement
---|---|---|---
Tenor | Interpersonal | The population is still insecure | Statement
Tenor | Interpersonal | Scientist can kill a fetus | Statement / modal
Tenor | Interpersonal | They can potentially treat a range of | Statement / modal
Tenor | Interpersonal | Scientist could use them | Statement / modal
Tenor | Interpersonal | Stem cells may play | Modal verb
Tenor | Interpersonal | Stem cell research will bring | Statement
Tenor | Interpersonal | Really important (use twice) | Resources for appraisal
Tenor | Interpersonal | It is known that the majority of the | Statement
Tenor | Interpersonal | Of course | Resources for appraisal

Mode | Textual | although | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | Nonetheless | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | Which (used twice) | Clause combining strategies
Mode | Textual | Though | Clause combining strategies
Mode | Textual | However | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | Since (used twice) | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | And (use four times) | conjunction
Mode | Textual | Therefore | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | Even though | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | For example | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | In conclusion | Cohesive device
Mode | Textual | Mostly because | Clause combining strategies
Stem Cells, give life or Death?

Issues: Nowadays stem cells research has been important to many science advances, although very controversial too. Nonetheless, what makes stem cell different from other cells of the body is that they are nonspecialized cells which have the potential to create other types of specific cells. There are many types of stem cells, but the most special are embryonic stem cells which have the power to create any type of cells, not just cells of a specific area like adult stem cells do. However, the population is still insecure about the research or if it is ethical, so many people have different opinions about the topic. 

Thesis statement

Side 1: One of the common opinions is that stem cells are unethical since scientists can kill a fetus for its embryonic stem cells. Like the introduction said, embryonic stem cells are special because of their ability to create organs for transplants even though they will kill the baby. The use of stem cells in this area is controversial and the population believes it is unethical.

Side 2: Other common opinion is in favor of stem cells research since they can potentially help treat a range of medical problems and found possible cures for a number of diseases, for example Parkinson, Alzheimer, spinal cord injuries and even stem cells may play a major role in cancer. Stem cells research will bring really important advances in medicine and other very important areas that helps to the population wellness.

Resolution: In conclusion, stem cells research is a really controversial and complicated topic, and even if both public opinions are common it is know that the majority of the population support the use and research of stem cells, mostly because of its application on medicine, of course, without hurting a human being.
5. Focus Group

The following qualitative analysis was conducted to the focus group carried out after the AR cycles. The aim to include this data collection resource was that this study also looked to find and understand students' perception of the methodology applied in the intervention, whether it served to improve writing or contributed to their confidence within the writing system in academic contexts. Likewise, this instrument is aimed to understand beyond quantitative data.

The following quantitative data was gathered:

1. **Number of certified participants:**
   - Preliminary English Test: 10
   - First Certificate in English: 9
   - Uncertified: 1

2. **Ages:**
   - 15 years old: 8
   - 16 years old: 12

3. **Year of Certification**
   - **PET**
     - 2015: 6
     - 2016: 3
     - 2017: 1
   - **FCE**
     - 2017: 4
     - 2018: 5

4. **Appreciation towards writing:**
   - Easy: 15
   - Difficult: 4

5. **Considered improvement in writing:**
   - Yes: 18
   - No: 1
6. Confidence gained

Yes: 15
No: 4

From 20 participants, nineteen have certified their English with a B1-B2 or a B2-C1 certification, eight students are fifteen years old and twelve are sixteen years old, they got certified from the years 2015 to 2018. It was learned that most students find English and writing in English easy and only four from the nineteen students present in the focus group find it difficult. Eighteen from the nineteen participants acknowledged a degree of improvement in their writing skills by the end of the course and fifteen students claimed to have gained certain confidence due to their improvement. They also elaborated on their responses and this information has been coded to understand preferences and appreciations towards the methodology applied, the activities, their writing process and confidence.

The focus group has been coded in seven categories: confidence gained, appreciation of methodology, writing skills improvement, appreciation of how easy or difficult is writing, emergence of more complex writing, previous instruction mode and primary school experience.

The categories represent relevant topics discussed in the focus group with the aim to gather more background of the context in where the study is unfolding. Table 10 shows the category coding in MAXQDA and the number of segments. The segments correspond to the number of answers related to the coded question.
Table 11. Codes and the number of segments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number of Coded Segments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Essay or Difficult?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Emergence of more complex writing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>●</td>
<td>Primary school experience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1. Focus groups qualitative analysis

**Confidence Gained**

In regards to the confidence gained, when asked about whether participants felt more confident after the learning process allowed by the methodology and the teaching learning cycle, most students raised their hand when asked to do so if they felt more confident, fifteen students, considered to have gained certain self-assurance. Four students, admitted not feeling more self-reliant after the AR was concluded.

The participants' answers have been transcript included students typos and lexicogrammar mistakes. Albeit most participants considered a positive change in their writing skills, four students revealed low levels of positive appreciation towards the real impact of the methodology in their confidence within the writing system. Table 11 shows the answers or segments that represent the perception of these four students.
### Writing skills improvement

Students were asked to speak about their writing skills, the questions attempted to elicit answers related to their appreciation towards the fact of improvement or halting the process in the level. Most participants considered that their English writing skills have improved in time, only one student did not ponder development in the last three years; she mentioned that she had learned all the English she had, in seventh grade when she had the time to study for three months in the UK, then other participants mentioned their experience during the interchange term they lived at Saint Johns school. Other participants on the other hand, considered that not only writing had improved but also vocabulary after this year of teaching, others thought their had learned but were definitely not that good at writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>Carol: I’m always confident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>Teacher-researcher: 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>Cecilia: I don’t know, but I don’t feel confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>Gram: yes, if show me the structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>Vane: of course, if we continue doing that, I will improve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>Paula: I don’t know, I think like I need to improve by reading thinks or by people telling me how to spell thinks, because I’m not very good at spelling thinks at English or Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔</td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Confidence gained</td>
<td>Paula: I don’t know I might feel a bit more secure next year if I improve more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13. Writing skills improvement appreciation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Yes: 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>No: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Teacher-researcher: Everybody that's great!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Cecilia: Not writing skills, English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>I went to English in 7th grade, so, it was like they talked more, I learned a lot, and I haven't learned that much in this past years, my level is like almost the same as 7th grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Cecilia: Similar to the one I had in 7th grade. That's why I said...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Students: yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Catalina: yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>I had like a 5 point something and I remember the same task, I had a seven, so I had an improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Diego: I think that my writing skills have improved a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>but more than my writing skills, I think that my vocabulary has grown this year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>aula: I don't know because, I still think that I write the same, but with a more structure, kind of the way I put the words in order, in a good way, but I think that I still have to improve more, my spelling...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Daniela: I think that I have learned like many things this year, but I don't know, I think I'm bad at English so...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Fernando: well I've improved, but my writing in general is not very good, because the words just flow and I don't get much structure of...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Writing skills improvement</td>
<td>Angela: I think I have improved a lot, but I need to practice more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appreciation of Methodology

Then, participants were asked whether they considered their writing skills had improved thanks to the explicit methodology used in the action research cycles, it is important to remember that all students, parents, and head masters from the faculty were properly informed through an explanation letter they all signed. All students considered the methodology was useful at certain degrees of difference. The following table illustrates segments taken from the transcript, see Appendix C.
Table 14. Appreciation of methodology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>I had a seven, so I had an improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>I didn’t even know that topic sentences existed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>Fernando: it is useful, but I forget when I’m writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>so I think that what I’ve improved the most here, is writing, because before coming here, it was like, any kind of structure at all, it was like flowing...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>Arturo: yes, so know I do have some idea of the structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>Gime: I think I improved like structure, and as Diego said, I expanded my vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>Nicolas: I do believe that my writing skills have improved because the fact that we were practicing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>tafa: I think my writing skills have improved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>Vane: I agree with what Gime said, for me it is better to learn when I see an example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSFRECT</td>
<td>Appreciation of methodology</td>
<td>Vane: of course, if we continue doing that, I will improve.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does writing represent high or low levels of complexity for you?

The following question attempted to elicit answers related to their feelings in regards to the degree of difficulty assigned to English writing. Fifteen participants find English easy, they considered it does not represent a higher levels of complexity within the curriculum nor in the English class, use of English seems to be the most complex skill to develop and learn for them. One of the participants acknowledges that writing is one of the skills he has improved the most during the course and others consider English as a complex skill to develop although they considered themselves to be better at writing in English than in Spanish, their mother tongue. Others claimed having difficulties with English writing because for them it was difficult to connect their ideas, demonstrating lack of knowledge of cohesive strategies in their writing pieces. Table 14 shows the codification of this analysis.
Table 15. Level of complexity assigned to English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>15 people, so I guess only 4 find it difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>Cecilia: Not writing skills, English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>andiela: Because I don’t know, for me it is like difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>it was difficult, English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>my writing in general is not very good, because the words just flow and I don’t get much structure of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>so I think that what I’ve improved the most here, is writing, because before coming here, it was like any kind of structure at all, it was like flowing...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>Nicolas: but yes, because it’s hard for me but in general to put my ideas on a piece paper so making any type of writing text it would be harder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>Nicolas D: I think that I’m not very good at writing in English, because I don’t know how to connect ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>Nicolas: I think that I’m better at English than Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Easy or Difficult?</td>
<td>it is very hard for me to do a good like a thesis or essay at anytime</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emergence of more complex writing

Participants were also asked to remember when did they start writing more complex texts, the following codes represent the tendencies gathered within the participants. Some explained that in primary school they were asked to write sentences and more complex structures started to be taught in seventh grade, others stated that they had ongoing more complex writing and academic pieces of writing during the year of this study.

Table 16. Emergence of more complex writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Emergence of more complex writing</td>
<td>Diego: I think that a whole piece of text, in a more complex way, has to be, in seventh or eighth grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Emergence of more complex writing</td>
<td>I think it was this year. Because personally for me, last year they told us to write something, a whole text, but they didn’t ask more complexity, for example the words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous instruction mode

This study attempts to explain also the context of participants in deeper terms. It is considered important to describe students background in academic contexts within the
writing system. They were asked to describe how their English classes were in the past years. Some students indicated that their English classes included the writing of phrases instead of larger pieces of text, adapted from authentic material, and writing was used as a product to include ideas, vocabulary and grammar structures comprised in the unit, but the genre was not taught explicitly. One of the participants mentioned that teachers would ask them to write for instance, a letter, but they would not teach them how to write a letter, the texts were not made visible for students, therefore, learners who were not aware of registers used in a letter as well as its phases and social purpose would not be able to attain the social purpose appropriately. Other participants explained that they learned genres in the Spanish class but not in the EFL class. Table 16 shows the segments that demonstrate this evidence.

**Table 17 Previous instruction methodology.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>Paula: Doing phrases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>Other students: sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>Paula: They would just say write a letter or write an essay, but not with a structure like 2topic phrases, not like that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>Catalina: in Spanish we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>Catalina: they taught us, so it wasn’t necessary for the teachers of English, we already knew that in Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>Carol: Yes, I think I started with paragraphs...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Previous instruction mode</td>
<td>before this year we hardly did any writings texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Primary school experience**

Participants were also asked to describe if writing was present at some point in the English class. Some participants said that since first grade and every bimestrial tests, which is a summative text in where students sit every two months, it is done in every subject and the mark weighs a 60% of the final score of the Bimester. The other 40% is obtained by assignments, written projects, quizzes and oral projects. Table 17 shows students reference to this section of the focus group.
Table 18. Primary school experience in the teaching of writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Primary school experience</td>
<td>Mellina: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Primary school experience</td>
<td>Mellina: Yes, last year in every bimestral (bimonthly test)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOCUS-G-TRANSCRIPT</td>
<td>Primary school experience</td>
<td>Gimena: Since first grade writing is part of the bimestrial, so during the bimester we practice writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Results

6.1. Texts Analysis

In total, 60 pieces of writing were checked, all of them were graded every time, as part of the assessment of the unit. Participants were graded by applying a rubric which included the following criteria: structure of the genre, paragraph structure, grammar and vocabulary, see Appendix E. The texts that scored the lowest were coded in MAXQDA2018 a software to segment and classify qualitative data. Under a semiotic paradigm a representation of the language realizations of these participants were expected to describe their learning process towards the attainment of advanced academic skills. The results found are explained in the following areas: Global genre (macrostructure, structure of the paragraph, purpose of introduction and thesis statement), lexicogrammar (lexical relations realized to convey ideational, interpersonal and textual choices).

In regards to the macrostructure of the genre, the analysis of texts showed that the 20 participants improved the structure of it, all participants improved the macrostructure after the first cycle. Text 1 showed the lowest performance achieved within the diagnostic texts, the sample's purpose was realized poorly in two paragraphs that were far from achieving the social purpose which was to persuade the reader by means of persuasive strategies, appraisal, statements, and rhetorical questions among others. Students tended to follow the structure that was made explicit during the teaching learning cycle, most of them separated their arguments in paragraphs that carefully tried
to write including a topic sentence, supporting details and concluding sentences. The text analyzed was realized in four paragraphs, the introduction and the paragraph present a general simple construction of paragraph, including topic sentences, one supporting detail and one concluding sentence, the other two paragraphs were written by conjoining two sentences. This is an improvement since the same participant wrote text 1 and was the most elementary student who demonstrated not been aware of paragraph structure in the diagnostic. In the discussion text, the participant showed a great improvement by writing a four paragraphs discussion including three well constructed paragraph, the conclusion was written in one sentence.

Concerning lexicogrammatical realizations, students also showed improvement. It is estimated that as students are more aware of language, they learned the fastest. They have realized of the importance of good writing. Students were allowed to use English-English dictionaries to find and use academic vocabulary. One of the areas that visibly improved were the use of cohesive devices, verb processes and nominalization of verbs and adjectives, as well as the use of modal verbs improved to realized interpersonal meaning in the two academic contexts.

One of the estimated findings is that building field is one of the keys to succeed in writing, learners need to be exposed to a variety of texts and make language visible in the classroom for the student to use and understand a model. It is essential for the teacher to use a pedagogic discourse that includes scaffolding strategies and involves all students gradually into a process of learning and improvement, motivation is also essential since this social pedagogy attempts to develop skills in learners with the lowest language performance. Students that had more field or general background and information about the theme of the unit, tended to write better pieces, they had more to say, more to elaborate on, when the field was more unknown for them they tended to perform poorly. One student that did not performed badly in the diagnostic test had a lacking performance after the first cycle in the Biofuel texts (Text 6), this student performed better regarding lexicogrammatical realization in the persuasive essay, and
then in the discussion text, although in the first argumentative essay about biofuels his performance did not attain higher levels, this is considered to have happened due to the fact that the participant admitted having a limited knowledge of the topic and might not have been that involved in the class when building field and setting context during the teaching learning cycle. In this regards, it is evidenced that building field is essential to attain advance writing skills, and that ideational meaning needs to be constructed through the listening of videos, audios, and the reading of a variety of authentic texts, as well as the explicit deconstruction of a text that serves as model for learners to write their own on the topic.

Cohesive devices were the lexical feature that improved the most in regards to textual choices, from bare to basic use of connectors such and and so, to more complex and thorough use of realizations such as therefore, notwithstanding and although. Most texts represented tenor through more elaborated ways of realizing appraisal resources such as, much, more, most, best, and words such as important, benefit, advantage, etc. and general opinion statements.

As an overall qualitative appreciation, it is deemed that the application of the two cycles have impacted beneficially to the participants, all students have demonstrated certain attainment of advanced writing skills, realized in complexity and accuracy, students with a low performance moved a step into the attainment of advanced writing skills. It is estimated that in the eventual situation that a new action research cycle was planned for this group in the course of eleventh grade most students would have attained higher levels of academic performance within the writing system.

6.2. Focus group

The focus group gathered the following data. In general students had a positive reception of the methodology, these were participants who had interest in learning and follow explicit performance harmoniously, during the focus group they were sitting at their desks in a U shape in the classroom and the teacher closing the U forming a square
shape. There were 19 of 20 participants present that day. Students were encouraged to participate in the focus by providing their answers, the teacher had to ask individually to some students so they could provide their appreciations since the class is not that participative when dealing with speaking tasks, they are willing to learn but the class is mostly passive, three to five students are the ones who willingly participate in speaking activities without being asked or named. The teacher-researcher went through a set of questions, see Appendix C and asked students to elaborate on their answers. The focus group served to comprehend that confidence is something that goes beyond the writing system, participants affirmed to feel more confident but due to their elaborations it could be perceived that the process has not ended and these cycles served as keystone to their learning process. Most students feel that seeing the text and analyze it, served as model for them to write their own, and if they continue learning in this way, they will eventually gain more confidence within the writing system. It is also estimated that this is a big change for students considering that they mentioned that writing was part of the subject but it was never taught explicitly, therefore, they acknowledged and liked the explicitness of the teaching learning cycles pointing the model and the joint construction as what it works best for them to follow and improve.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to inform the progression towards advance levels of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices. The participants formed part of a study which purpose was to describe their progress under a qualitative socio semiotic paradigm. The participants were exposed to a variety of texts appropriate to attain higher levels of proficiency in the IB program.

The findings show that linguistic complexity increased when context and field were built and set deeply. Learners rely on the information provided since they need to have background knowledge to be able to write and build well-constructed arguments. It is estimated that there were strong relationships among lexical density, and how much they knew about the topic. The purpose of this study was to answer the following research questions: a) How does the application of a genre-based pedagogy help the attainment of higher levels of control regarding generic pattern and lexicogrammatical choices in writing expository texts?. The results draw the following conclusions. The application of the genre-based pedagogy helped students gradually attain certain control of generic pattern realized in consistent elaboration of separated paragraphs that aimed to contain its purpose. The paragraphs demonstrated writer awareness of structure of the paragraph and its social purpose, including topic sentence, supporting details and concluding sentences most of the time and increasingly in the product of each cycle. The expository texts students wrote, demonstrated learners' awareness of language and patterns of progress such as the use of more advanced lexicogrammatical choices. Interpersonal meaning was mostly realized in rhetorical questions, statements, modal verbs, and resources for appraisal, textual choices were realized in an increase of more elaborated cohesive devices which was evidenced since the first cycle. The progression of learners toward advanced levels of control in a second language can be understood as the control of grammatical patterns and expansion of vocabulary and these have been perceived and found in the analysis of these texts. The second research question b) How does the application of a genre-based pedagogy improve complexity and accuracy of
grammatical patterns present in the writings of students? Complexity and accuracy are gained through real exposure to authentic texts and the application of a teaching learning cycle. This process allows learners to make language visible, to understand what it is expected for them to write and how academic registers manifests. In the reading and writing of new genres, learners become aware of the social purpose of different genres, in the case of this study, two texts that belonged to the family of expository texts were deconstructed but participants also read texts included in their English books and visual material such as videos and audios, that were previously chosen for this plan, with this exposure the learners acquired knew knowledge that were gradually able to manifest following a model.

In regards to complexity, this is marked by a progression from common sense lexicogrammatical features to metaphorical meanings. It means a more sophisticated way to use lexical resources and realized in the three metafunctions of language. Complexity progressed through elaborated noun phrases, technical and abstract vocabulary, relational processes that link nominal structures, effective use of logical connectors, and effective use of modal adjuncts and others (Schleppegrell, 2008, p88). Struggling writers present difficulties linking the topics they introduce to create balance expositions by means of lexical, grammatical, and discourse organizational strategies, when this is achieved it can be admitted that the writer has improved. Expositions are a difficult task that present more complexity than narratives (Sleppegrel, 2008), involving logical interrelationship of prepositions, requiring subordination and condensation of linguistic elements.

The third question wanted to explore students' appreciation and feelings towards the action research process. The question wanted to determine c) To what extent does the application of a genre-based pedagogy develop students' autonomy to use academic language within the writing system? Since it is estimated that the genre-based pedagogy is a friendly, social and highly effective practice to improve writing skills, learners received it in a positive and harmoniously manner. As they can see their gradual
progress, they naturally gain certain confidence within the writing system. Participants admitted feeling more confident and expecting to feel even more self-assured in the future if they continue learning with this methodology. However, it is believed that there still exist certain predispositions about participants' own performance in the subject. Schlepegrell states that language development is an ongoing process and that attention to this development is crucial to progress in addressing the achievement gap and other important educational issues. Students need many opportunities to practice writing in ways that enable them to represent register variations.

1. Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study was the lack of collaboration included in the plan. Since the teacher-researcher used her teaching context to be studied, she had to be attached to the teaching context. The participants of the study were part of the IB class, which is only one class in the school, therefore, the teacher researcher works alone. This study could have been enriched by the collaboration of a peer, to transmit the knowledge to more than one class. Although, this can still be done and the genre-based pedagogy is planned to be presented to English teaching faculty members.

In regards to collaborative action research, this study has shared the results and findings with the participants and their parents have been aware of the process previously signing a consent letter. It has been also guided by the professor at university contributing with assessment and support. It is estimated that as Bryant (1995) states, CAR is also very democratic in that it encourages a great degree of talk and interaction between colleagues, inviting active collaboration in a joint attempt to improve teaching. All participants in a collaborative action research project are equal partners in the decision making processes affecting both the means and the ends of the research (p. 9).
2. Suggestions for further research

This study can be adapted for different aims. If done in collaboration, it can add to the literature of collaborative action research and utilizing methods of comparative studies under qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. Since this study was done in a setting of selected students, it could be applied in a context that follows the national curriculum in order to compared data and applied correlation with the international one.

This study can also extend into a longitudinal study to see the real progress of the same participants. The same group still needs to learned a variety of genres before may 2020, and their progress could continue being assessed in terms high levels of attainment.
CHAPTER 6: REFERENCES


Rose, D. (2005). *Democratising the classroom: a literacy pedagogy for the new generation*, University of Sydney


APPENDIX A: DATA SET FOR ANALYSIS

Biofuels Essay

Title: Biofuels: The green alternative?

In recent years, environmental problems, especially the use of fossil fuels, has become one of the most commonly debated issues. It is widely known that fossil fuels are non-renewable resources and the use of fossil fuels harm the environment, such as the combustion process of fossil fuels that leads to global warming. However, current societies are still dependent on fossil fuels. Because of the environmental problems and in order to decrease the wide-ranging consumption of fossil fuels, researches argue that agricultural based fuel or bio-fuel is one alternative to replace fossil fuels and apply it as a new energy source. In general, bio-fuels are fuels that predominantly are produced from bio-renewable or renewable feedstock, such as corn, sugarcane, wheat and so on. This essay asserts that the utilization of bio-fuels in the world is not a viable alternative to fossil fuels because it confronts difficulties and results in disadvantages in the future. The arguments to against bio-fuels which will be assessed are related to social structure, economic development and the cost of production, as well as the arguments concerning agriculture and environment.

Firstly, an important issue that should be considered is the use of bio-fuels and the problems posed in the social structure. Because bio-fuels benefit for the environment, bio-fuels production and the fuel market will grow rapidly; therefore, the availability of resources is an important factor. As a result, there is an increase of demand for grains due to the population growth (Blum et al., 2010; Lancaster, 2002).
One of the most conspicuous problems has undoubtedly been the worldwide food crisis (Murphy, 2009).

Secondly, production costs of bio-fuels can vary widely depending on the feedstock and the process of the production of bio-fuels crops increases the competition in land utilization among food crops and bio-fuels feedstock. Hence, food prices that are based on the same yield will increase sharply and consequently might result in food shortage for people who spend most of their household income on food. Food shortage and great food prices have many negative effects for societies because food is fundamental to maintain life. The sharp upsurge in prices of food crops generates difficulties for the larger part of the world’s population. It has exacerbated the malnutrition and world hunger in countries and also makes the poor suffer (Murphy, 2009).

Cycle 2:

**Stem Cells Discussion**

There is a huge amount of opinion and information on stem cells and their use in research and medicine - from both scientific and ethical perspectives. The aim of this discussion is to provide a clear overview of the science of stem cells and of the legal and ethical aspects of the subject. First, it covers the science of stem cells, then it is followed by a section on the legal aspects of stem cell research, both from a national and international perspective and then there is an in-depth exploration of the ethical issues, especially those concerning the early human embryo.
Why do scientists carry out research on stem cells? In most cases our bodies use tissue stem cells to replace damaged or worn cells. This repair mechanism is so efficient that, even though it occurs on a daily basis, we hardly notice it. However, where the damage is extensive, this repair mechanism can fail. Also, not all of the tissues in our body, for example brain tissue, can repair themselves efficiently, and many degenerative diseases are not yet treatable by modern medicine. Transplantation of organs such as the heart can be an option, but it relies on a plentiful source of transplant organs, and many are in short supply.

What is the role of the law in tackling the ethical and social issues raised by stem cell research? How do we decide if we should ban research completely, allow it or attempt to control it? Who decides these things? What if we disagree? And what should happen internationally when different countries, cultures and peoples have different attitudes towards something as controversial as stem cell research? Is international agreement possible or desirable? What does law do? Law serves many purposes. It tells us that some behaviours are acceptable or unacceptable in society and if it is important enough to make a rule about it. It gives us rights to protection against harm from other people and from the state. It aims to protect us from harming ourselves, especially before we become adults. It also offers protection to those who cannot protect themselves, like very young children and those with mental incapacity. Many argue that it should also protect the unborn. Law can help to shape a society that is better for all of us. It can work to promote certain social goods, such as human welfare, social development and economic growth. But we do not all agree about the kind of society in which we want to live or what counts as ‘better’.

Few people doubt the medical potential of stem cell research. But ethically it has proved extremely controversial. As with other new areas of medical research, there are
issues like proving the effectiveness and minimizing the risks, personal questions about donation and consent, and social issues like whether everyone can afford the therapies and how much health service resources they would consume. But what makes this area especially contentious is the source of the cells, and in particular the use of human embryos. Different European countries vary greatly in their laws about stem cell research, reflecting the deep ethical conflicts which exist about the nature of the human embryo, and what are, or are not, permissible uses. Why is this so controversial?

Ethics and the scientist The turn of the twentieth century saw a noticeable change in Europe in public attitudes towards science and technology. While science is still held in high esteem, scientists are no longer regarded as a largely independent, elite group which periodically offers discoveries and finished products to an accepting society. People are now more critical [10]. The society, whose taxes and investments provide the research funds and infrastructure for scientific endeavour, now demands more accountability for what is done on its behalf. They want to know what and who is driving the research, how well its risks have been taken into account, or what alternative solutions there might be. People want to be able to voice their objections if what is proposed might go against their core values and beliefs. This is especially so in the area of stem cells because it touches on some very basic beliefs about what a human being is, when human life begins, and what is permissible in research in pursuit of medical treatments. As a result, not only the public but also funders of research now expect scientists to be able to show they are aware of, and understand, the ethical and social dimensions of their work. Scientists themselves are increasingly recognising that ethics is not just a matter for society as a whole, but is something they need to think about for themselves.
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<td>ALVAREZ CORRALES, DIEGO ALONSO</td>
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<td>AMADEI MONCH, MARCO ANDREA</td>
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<td>TORIBIO PAEZ, SOFIA GABRIELA</td>
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APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

CARTA DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO PARA PADRES

Estimados Padres:

A través de la presente carta de consentimiento informado se le comunica que su hijo/a ha sido invitado a participar en la investigación titulada “Developing Advanced Writing Skills in SLA” (Desarrollando Habilidades Avanzadas Escritas en la Adquisición de la Segunda Lengua), la que será realizada por la profesora de inglés Paola Acevedo Ampuero para optar al grado académico de Magister en Lingüística Aplicada al Inglés de la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

Esta carta tiene como objetivo entregarle la información necesaria para que Ud. decida si desea o no que su pupilo/a participe de esta investigación. Si usted está de acuerdo se le solicita que firme la presente y se le dará una copia para que la guarde.

El objetivo de este estudio es evaluar la progresión de estudiantes de Bachillerato Internacional y de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera hacia el logro de niveles avanzados de control en relación a patrones genéricos y elecciones lexicogramaticales en textos evaluativos.

Este estudio permitirá identificar, la progresión de su hijo(a) en la asignatura de Inglés B del Bachillerato Internacional, con el propósito de ver patrones comunes de ascenso en el logro y producción de inglés escrito en contextos académicos.

Si usted accede a que su hijo/a participe, este/a contribuirá con sus textos escritos, los que comprenden un ensayo argumentativo, una discusión escrita y una reseña, para ser estos analizados bajo el método de la Lingüística Sistémico Funcional. Además de esto, se espera evaluar la opinión de su hijo/a sobre la metodología utilizada en la enseñanza de escritura y como esta contribuyó en su nivel de autonomía para escribir textos académicos. Esto último será evaluado a través de un Focus Group.

La participación de su pupilo en esta investigación es importante porque contribuirá a profundizar el conocimiento respecto de cómo progresa esta habilidad productiva del
idioma inglés en estudiantes de Bachillerato Internacional de primer año y así mejorar las prácticas y planificar en base a conocimientos concretos. La participación en este estudio no provee riesgos para los participantes y se realizará en horario de clases de inglés en el establecimiento.

La participación de su hijo/a es totalmente confidencial, ni su nombre ni su RUT ni ningún tipo de información que pueda identificarla/o aparecerá en los registros del estudio. Solo la persona responsable de esta investigación y la profesora guía tendrán acceso a los resultados obtenidos, los cuales tienen fines académicos. Si Usted no desea que su hijo/a participe no implicará sanción, no se usará su información, ni participará en el Focus Group.

Si tiene dudas o consultas respecto de la participación de su hijo/a en el estudio puede contactar a la profesora responsable, Paola Acevedo Ampuero, cuyo correo electrónico es paola.acevedo@sekchile.com o su profesor patrocinador, María Cristina Arancibia Directora de Docencia y Asuntos Estudiantiles y Profesora Asistente en la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, cuyo correo electrónico es marancar@uc.cl.

Quedando claro el objetivo del estudio, las garantías de confidencialidad y la aclaración de la información, acepto voluntariamente la participación de mi hijo/a en este estudio.

___________________________
NOMBRE Y FIRMA
APPENDIX C: DATA SET FOR FOCUS GROUP AND TRANSCRIPT

1. Is it hard or easy to write in English for you? Do you like it?

2. Was writing present in your previous English classes?

3. How was writing taught in your English class during your previous school years?

4. What do you find most difficult when writing in English?

5. Do you think your writing skills have improved during this school year?

6. If your answer is “yes”, why do you think your writing skills have improved?

7. If your answer is “no”, why do you think they have not improved?

8. What do you think has improved the most?

9. Do you think that reading texts and seeing the structure and language in them helps you to write better?

10. Would you like to be able to write good academic papers in English at University?

11. Would you feel more confident now if you are asked to write any expository text?

Teacher-researcher: 19

Teacher-researcher: 19, so who is absent?

Students: Gabriel
**Students:** Gabriel is absent.

**Teacher-researcher:** But, is he in the school?

**Students:** No

**Teacher-researcher:** All right it doesn't matter. So…

**Teacher-researcher:** From the ones that are here, please raise your hand if you have taken the PET or PET

**Teacher-researcher:** How many of you sat for this certificate one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, all right. 11

**Teacher-researcher:** How many of you have taken the F.C.E

**Melina:** Taken?

**Teacher-researcher:** Taken, because you don't have your results yet so maybe you can pass it or maybe not but.

**Teacher-researcher:** I hope you do

**Teacher-researcher:** Nine people, all right. Thank you

**Teacher-researcher:** So, do you know if Gabriel took any of those?

**Students:** PET

**Teacher-researcher:** All right.

**Teacher-researcher:** So, regarding your age, regarding your age…How many of you are fifteen?

**Teacher-researcher:** 8, Alright, how many of you are 16?

**Teacher-researcher:** 11, Eleven, so okay fifteen raise your hand again. All right we're good.
Teacher-researcher: Another question.

Teacher-researcher: The ones who took the PET or PET, When was it? In 2015?, 2016? 2017? So when was it? The ones who took the PET, 2015 rise your hand. 2016, 2017 anybody? You took the PET last year (addressing to Fernando) yes.

Teacher-researcher: FCE, now 2015?

Teacher-researcher: Two thousand and sixteen. Seventeen anybody. Two thousand and eighteen.

Teacher-researcher: Micaela, you don’t have any certification, right?

Micaela: Right.

Teacher-researcher: Now I want you to speak a little bit. I'm going to ask you questions related to your perception towards writing, mainly or towards the teaching of writing. For instance.

1. Was writing a constant in your previous English classes?

Teacher-researcher: Was writing a constant in your previous English classes? Do not think of this year, think from last year backwards, more or less, since you were first grade till last year.

Melina: Yes

Teacher-researcher: So, Melina, it was a constant.

Melina: Yes, last year in every bimestrial (bimonthly test)

Teacher-researcher: So only last year.

Melina: No, no, but I don’t remember
**Teacher-researcher:** Ok, So only remember last year.

**Melina:** No, I think that every year.

**Teacher-researcher:** So, every year was important, it has been important. Alright - Gime?

**Gimena:** Since first grade writing is part of the bimestrial, so during the bimester we practice writing.

**Teacher-researcher:** So, do you remember how you were taught writing in primary school

**Paula:** Doing phrases.

**Teacher-researcher:** Doing phrases.

**Other students:** sentences

**Teacher-researcher:** Sentences, based on what?

**Paula:** The topic of the unit

**Teacher-researcher:** ok. Alright. What about middle school?.

**Paula:** We were taught the same.

**Other students:** Different…

**Teacher-researcher:** Different grammar tenses?

**Students:** yes

**Teacher-researcher:** And what about writing? Did you learn, for instance, how to write a letter?

**Class:** Aah! Yes.
**Teacher-researcher:** Yes. When?

**Paula:** But, I think like not with a defined structure

**Teacher-researcher:** Alright.

**Paula:** They would just say write a letter or write an essay, but not with a structure like topic phrases, not like that.

**Teacher-researcher:** All right. Not with a guide for instance, on how like for example, the teacher... did the teacher teach you about the content you needed to add in a letter for instance, or how to greet, or how to close a letter, so structure was not taught and grammar tenses and vocabulary were taught and you needed to put them in a written piece of text.

**Class:** yes

**Catalina:** in Spanish we

**Melina:** in Spanish we they…

**Catalina:** they taught us, so it wasn’t necessary for the teachers of English, we already knew that in Spanish.

**Teacher-researcher:** Ok, so you saw the structure of a letter for instances in the Spanish class.

**Class:** yes

2. **When did you start writing large pieces of texts? More than just one paragraph.**

**Teacher-researcher:** Great. Great. And do you remember when… When did you start writing larger pieces of texts, because for example you told me that in primary school
you were expected to write sentences, so when did you move from a sentence to a paragraph or to a whole piece of text?

**Teacher-researcher:** Do you remember more or less? Diego?

**Diego:** I think that a whole piece of text, in a more complex way, has to be, in seventh or eighth grade

**Teacher-researcher:** seventh or eighth grade.

**Diego:** But with more, I don’t know how to say it, in a more complex way, I think it was this year. Because personally for me, last year they told us to write something, a whole text, but they didn’t ask more complexity, for example the words, it wasn’t necessary that the words were…

**Student:** formal…

**Diego:** No, no, no more level, I don’t know how to say it…

**Teacher-researcher:** Advanced.

**Diego:** Advanced! Advanced! More advanced.

**Teacher-researcher:** Alright, alright. Do you agree with Diego?

**Class:** yes

**Speaker 0:** Carol?

**Carol:** when I was, when I started, we didn’t learn English only in the school, I went to a separate, because in Brazil basically you go to school in the afternoon or in the morning, and I went to school in the afternoons, so in the mornings I had English classes in a British school only, and there I started writing, like writing pieces, when I was 9.

**Teacher-researcher:** Nine… And do you remember how your teachers taught to write? Was it explicit or did she just ask you to put some ideas in a piece of texts.
Carol: Yes, I think I started with paragraphs…

Teacher-researcher: paragraphs…

Carol: Yes

3. Is writing easy or difficult for you?

Easy: 15

Difficult: 4

Teacher-researcher: thank you, anything else to add? So, is right easy or difficult for you, okay this is very personal, but sometimes we have certain preferences, like I know, we can say that listening is the easiest part of English because I understand a hundred percent of everything, but I cannot speak it that well or grammar is not good, but I want you to answer here regarding writing, is writing easy or difficult for you? in general, alright? so how many of you find it easy? Right.

Diego: Can you tell us… is it only easy or difficult?

Teacher-researcher: Only easy or difficult. Alright, 15 people, so I guess only 4 find it difficult.

4. Do you think your writing skills have improved during this school year?

Yes: 18

No: 1

Eight have gone to London
**Teacher-researcher:** Have you noticed that your writing skills have improved in a period of time? for example said that you started writing more complex pieces when you were in 7th grade, so do you remember more or less, if your English has improved from 7th grade till 9th grade. So how many of think that your English has improved?

**Teacher-researcher:** Everybody that's great! that means that your teachers are trying to do something!

**Class:** laughing

**Teacher-researcher:** Cecilia? Do I count you or not?

**Cecilia:** No

**Teacher-researcher:** Alright, Cecilia, so why do you think that your written skills have not improved since seventh grade?

**Cecilia:** Not writing skills, English.

**Teacher-researcher:** English in general?

**Cecilia:** Because I went to English in 7th grade, so, it was like they talked more, I learned a lot, and I haven’t learned that much in this past years, my level is like almost the same as 7th grade.

**Teacher-researcher:** So, are you saying that the level that you have now is…

**Cecilia:** Similar to the one I had in 7th grade. That’s why I said…

**Speaker 0:** But, Did you learn more there then? In London?

**Cecilia:** yes

**Teacher-researcher:** yes, why, why do you think that happened.
Cecilia: because of the environment, and people that are used to talk in English everyday, everyday, and is the context.

Teacher-researcher: how many of you have also gone to England? 7, […] in general, how many of you have gone to Saint John’s school, any year, not only this year any year.

Class: 8

Teacher-researcher: Who else, I mean, Gime, you also went there, is your experience similar to Cecilia’s?

Gime: Yes, I actually learned a lot with fluency and structure, because in there you learn to speak like if you were like native, so you become more fluent and more like relaxed when talking, so it’s not like, it doesn’t show that you learn in the school…I don’t know how to explain it.

Teacher-researcher: Yes, because you are not only having English, you are having everything in English, so you have a lot exposure.

Teacher-researcher: I’m asking you this, because last year I was talking with a student, and she told me that, she didn’t learn that much there, because she did not interact with native speakers that much, she only received English in the class time, but for example, her friends were also Hispanic, so she couldn’t socialize that much in English, at least that is what one of the students told me. So that is why it is interesting and I want to learn more. So… Diego.

Diego: The thing is that I went there, with Melina, and Micaela and Shopie

Melina: and Vale, and Gabo

Student: and me!

Diego: The thing is that, when we went there, they told us that normally there are more, the people that go are for more countries than the ones that went that year, so we lived
24/7 with only people that speak Spanish and three people that spoke English, so it is like and English school here in Chile because the rest of the people only speak Spanish.

**Teacher-researcher:** So, but you were attending classes with native speakers, as classmates…

**Melina:** in year 10, in year 10, we are like half Spanish people, and half native speakers of English.

**Teacher-researcher:** And did you interact? Did you have time to interact with them?

**Students:** not so much

**Diego:** yes, but not so much.

**Melina:** two friends

**Teacher-researcher:** who were from there?

**Student:** yes.

**Melina:** and the others, didn’t like us

**Teacher-researcher:** Alright.

**Students:** laughs

5. **Which is the skill that you think that improved the most in your stay in the UK: listening, speaking, reading or writing?**

**Teacher-researcher:** So, which is a skill that you think that improved the most in your stay in the UK: listening, speaking, reading or writing?

**Students:** Listening.
Teacher-researcher: Diego?

Diego: Listening, because English people speak very fast

Teacher-researcher: And they do have an accent as well which maybe in the very beginning it was hard for you to understand a hundred percent but then you got used to it.

Students: Yes

Teacher-researcher: Yes, so listening definitely, any other skill that you think it improved in London?

Students: Speaking

Teacher-researcher: Speaking as well?

Gimena: Speaking, at least for me, because I went on a term were there wasn’t any Spanish speaker, so I had more chances to speak naturally with somebody else.

Teacher-researcher: That’s good then, so you were lucky in comparison to the others, but I’m glad, that it served.

6. Do you think that reading texts and seeing the structure and language in them helps you to write better?

Teacher-researcher: So, what about this year guys? We have covered writing in a very concrete way, we have covered the argumentative essay, we have covered the discussion, we have covered the review, and next year we are going to continue covering these text types that are important for the IB. And, you know that the IB expects that you could actually understand the purpose of those texts. Now, not now, I know that have seen this in Spanish in the past, but now you probably make the connection that in
English an argumentative essays is written in the same way as in Spanish, you need a clear introduction, with clear thesis statement, with your arguments in different paragraphs, you can also add a counter argument and a conclusion, alright? so in your opinion, have your written skills or writing skills improve during this year? What do you think and be honest, so guys answer..

Students: yes

Teacher-researcher: Catalina, what do you think?

Catalina: yes

Teacher-researcher: Yes, why.

Catalina: Because, I remember like the beginning of the year, you… I remember like the first task you sent us, for example in my case, I had like a 5 point something and I remember the same task, I had a seven, so I had an improvement, because I know that I had to use other words, that I can search up for, for example, there were words that not even existed, or topic sentences I didn’t even know that topic sentences existed.

Diego: I think that my writing skills have improved a lot, but more than my writing skills, I think that my vocabulary has gro… expanded this year, because of the texts that we read on the book, and the tasks that you give us, for example the task that you gave us last week, no this week and last week, so more than my writing skills is my vocabulary.

Teacher-researcher: You vocabulary has enlarged. alright

Anybody else? Paula what do think?

Paula: I don’t know because, I still think that I write the same, but with a more structure, kind of the way I put the words in order, in a good way, but I think that I still t I have to improve more, my spelling…
**Teacher-researcher:** Definitely, you know that writing is a process, I mean, you cannot study the whole night and wake up and being better at writing, it is process, the only way in where you actually improve is by writing, and I’m not expecting you could be experts by the end of this year, I’m not expecting that I would be crazy if I would, because we still have a lot practice, but it is important what you are saying, because you at some point are aware that this a process and that you have improved certain aspects but you still need more practice probably. Anybody else? let see, Daniela for instance?

**Daniela:** I think that I have learned like many things this year, but I don’t know, I think I’m bad at English so..

**Teacher-researcher:** Why do you think is that?

**Daniela:** Because I don’t know, for me it is like difficult, I don’t know, like to write a lot and have a lot of ideas and structure, structure them.

**Teacher-researcher:** Do you have the same impression? I mean, have you had always the same impression or is it something that happens this year?

**Daniela:** No I remember that like, in 8th grade, I had that…, it was difficult, English

So it is not something new it’s been always a little bit hard for you.

**Daniela:** Yes

**Teacher-researcher:** but that doesn’t mean that you are bad at English, that mean that probably you need to focus a little more, just that, do not think that you are bad at something, because that is like a stone that there, I mean on your path yourself, take it off. Alright? Anybody else? Fer, what do you think?

**Fernando:** well I’ve improved, but my writing in general is not very good, because the words just flow and I don’t get much structure of the text.

Has it been useful for you to see for example how the text is and then to write it, is it useful? Or do you think that you learn in a different way?
**Fernando:** it is useful, but I forget when I’m writing.

**Teacher-researcher:** alright, Why do you think that happens to you?

**Fernando:** I don’t know, I have been always like this

**Teacher-researcher:** like that, so you consider yourself as a distracted person

**Fernando:** yes

**Teacher-researcher:** yeah? Alright. But do you think that if you try to focus a little bit you could improve?

**Fernando:** Yes

**Teacher-researcher:** I agree, good. Another person, Arturo, what do you think?

**Arturo:** in Venezuela, the English was mostly like the use of English exercises we do, with very little writing there, it was only in Spanish, the writing class, so I think that what I’ve improved the most here, is writing, because before coming here, it was like, any kind of structure at all, it was like flowing…

**Teacher-researcher:** it was like free writing, creative writing.

**Arturo:** yes, so know I do have some idea of the structure, but I do need a lot of time to fix it.

**Teacher-researcher:** alright, ok, ok. Gime, what do think, about your own writing skills, you told me that you had improved a lot in London. But what about this year.

**Gime:** I think I improved like structure, and as Diego said, I expanded my vocabulary, but the way I write I think is the same. So, I don’t know.

**Teacher-researcher:** alright, so it has been polished a little bit.

**Gime:** yes
Teacher-researcher: ok, let’s see Diego, Nicolas sorry, Nicolas Castro.

Students: laughs

Nicolas: I do believe that my writing skills have improved because by the fact that we were practicing and before this year we hardly did any writings texts, I mean the bimestrials but apart from that I can’t remember any other but my writing…

Teacher-researcher: and that’s weird because you have a very good level of English, I mean spoken, your English is almost flawless, yes

Students: laughing and clapping

Nicolas: but yes, because it’s hard for me but in general to put my ideas on a piece paper so making any type of writing text it would be harder, but it has improved.

Teacher-researcher: ok good, Nico Donoso, what do you think?

Nicolas D: I think that I’m not very good at writing in English, because I don’t know how to connect ideas, but it also happens to me in Spanish, so I

Teacher-researcher: yeah, that could be real, I mean if you have a problem in Spanish you can also have it in English, but not 100% of the times, but although both are languages, you develop languages in a different way, Spanish is your mother tongue, probably you don’t think that much before speak it, and probably you are not aware that much of the grammar you are using and probably you do it in English because it is your second or foreign language, so when you develop a language, not necessarily you will repeat the same patterns.

Nicolas: I think that I’m better at English than Spanish.

Teacher-researcher: alright, now […] Vane what do you think?
Vane: in my situation is kind of the same as Arturo, because in my school in Venezuela, we did not do like writing, nothing, so when I came here, I found it really hard to adapt to the English, and think I have improved but I think I need to improve more.

Teacher-researcher: anybody else wants to share his/her ideas? Angela what do you think?

Angela: I think I have improved a lot, but I need to practice more.

Teacher-researcher: ok, Sofia?

Sofia: I think my writing skills have improved but I know, I, my writing, is not perfect, because I have problems with tenses, grammar, those kind of things, and I know I have to work harder before last year, for example now in summer, I mean I was thinking like how can I improve in summer, and I was thinking I really like to read, I like reading, and I think that now I can read more English than Spanish, and in that way I can learn more words in English and I can improve so my writing the next year.

Teacher-researcher: alright, so guys, I’m about to finish, but for example, considering what you have improved during last year, during this year and considering if continue working writing, everything you will learn next year. Would feel more confident now for instance to have to write and argumentative essay in English at university.

Students: yes

Teacher-researcher: would you feel more confident now, at least having this idea that “I saw that in my school, so know at least I have like base knowledge to write more complex type of texts at university” how many of you think or feel a little bit more
confident this year, regarding your future studies? Raise your hand, how many of you do feel more confident?

**Carol:** I’m always confident.

**Teacher-researcher:** yeah, of course that is also a characteristic, but I’m talking regarding writing, to write specific texts, you know that we have seen three types of texts, which are the argumentative, the discussion, the review, the next year we’ll see the report, the news report, the article… I’m going to repeat the questions: do you feel more confident, maybe to face tertiary education or university studies in English?

**Teacher-researcher:** 15

**Teacher-researcher:** and the ones who do not feel more confident yet, raise your hand.

**Teacher-researcher:** 4 people, alright.

**Teacher-researcher:** and the ones who don’t feel that confident, do you think that at some point you could progress if we continue with this explicit methodology, teaching you the structure of the text beforehand, practicing the texts, having me showing you certain words within the text and showing certain structure, do think that if you continue learning how to write could you feel more confident writing at university?

**Cecilia:** I don’t know, but I don’t feel confident, the more things I know the more difficult I find the texts and everything I have to write, and I don’t I’m not going to make a perfect text, it is impossible.

**Gime:** yes, if show me the structure, I will learn, but for me I need to sample from people like us, that have written with mistakes and we can fix them.

Teacher-researcher: alright, that is actually a good idea, we could do that. Alright, who else?

**Vane:** I agree with what Gime said, for me it is better to learn when I see an example.
**Teacher-researcher:** but I did that I showed you examples.

Vane: of course, if we countinue doing that, I will improve.

**Teacher-researcher:** alright. I get it know. Paula?

**Paula:** I don’t know, I think like I need to improve by reading thinks or by people telling me how to spell thinks, because I’m not very good at spelling thinks at English or Spanish, so it is very hard for me to do a good like a thesis or essay at anytime, because I don’t feel that I’m writing the things. But, if you improve next year, more than you did this year, would feel more confident, or do you think that that is a feature on you, that you are a little bit insecure at some point.

**Paula:** I don’t know I might feel a bit more secure next year if I improve more

**Teacher-researcher:** ok.
# APPENDIX D: DIAGNOSTIC TEST RUBRIC

## CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH

Language Assessment

Part of the University of Cambridge

## Assessment Criteria: B2 Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Communicative Achievement</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>All context is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.</td>
<td>Uses the conventions of the communicative task effectively to hold the target reader’s attention and communicate straightforward and concrete ideas, as appropriate.</td>
<td>Text is well-organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generate good effect.</td>
<td>Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common words, appropriately. Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms; with control and flexibility. Occasional errors may be present but do not impede communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Minor misunderstandings and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is, on the whole, informed.</td>
<td>Uses the conventions of the communicative task to hold the target reader’s attention and communicate straightforward ideas.</td>
<td>Text is generally well-organised and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices.</td>
<td>Uses a range of everyday vocabulary and some simple and complex grammatical forms; with a good degree of control. Errors do not impede communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Incompleteness of task may be present. Target reader is only partially informed.</td>
<td>Uses the conventions of the communicative task in generally appropriate ways to communicate straightforward ideas.</td>
<td>Text is connected and coherent; using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed.</td>
<td>Performance below Band 1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*95*
APPENDIX D: CLASSROOM RUBRIC FOR GRADING TEXTS AND MATRIX FOR SFL ANALYZIS

CLASSROOM RUBRIC FOR GRADING TEXTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>10-7</th>
<th>6-4</th>
<th>3-2</th>
<th>1-0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genre</td>
<td>The text is staged in a way that achieves its purpose effectively:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The introduction starts with a clause setting context, then it is followed by a clause in which the author states her/his position and then another clause in which he/she provides a preview of sides. The body includes supporting argument for every side provided in the introduction. The conclusion provides a review/summary of facts presented and restates the author’s position.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph</td>
<td>The text is organized in paragraphs. These are structured effectively according to the global structure. Content is directly and closely linked with readings dealt with in class. Writers may use extra sources to enrich their discussion. Vocabulary selected is coherent with technicality and formality of the topic. Presence of evaluative vocabulary to present ideas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp;</td>
<td>Clauses are structured and combined effectively. Connectors at clause level may be basic [but, and, or] but between paragraphs there must be a wider</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
variation [therefore, additionally, etc.]. Content and function words are spelled correctly. No elementary mistakes should be observed: subject-verb agreement, parallel structures, and verb-tense framework. Make sure to use complex constructions to communicate ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Contextual Variable</strong></th>
<th><strong>Linguistic Realization</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field (Presenting ideas)</td>
<td>Ideational Choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noun phrases/nominal groups (participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verbs (process types)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepositional phrases, adverbial adjuncts, and other resources for information about time, place, manner, etc. (circumstances)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resources for marking logical relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenor (Taking a stance)</td>
<td>Interpersonal Choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mood (statements, questions, demands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modality (modal verbs and adverbs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other resources for evaluative and attitudinal meaning (e.g., resources for appraisal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode (Structuring a text)</td>
<td>Textual Choices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cohesive devices, including conjunctions and connectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clause-combining strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thematic organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Based on Halliday (1989, 1994).
Transcript 1: Deconstruction of macrostructure

Teacher: So, the first thing that I want you to notice is the number of paragraphs. So, how many paragraphs?

Students: 1…2….

Teacher: Look at the whole text.

Student: 4!

Teacher: yes! 4 paragraphs, well done…

Teacher: Now, what is the purpose of the first paragraph? What is the first paragraph? Come one! Very simple question!

Student: The introduction!

Teacher: yes! The introduction, well done! So, the second paragraph is?

Students: the body…

Teacher: yes, the body, and which part of an essay is it?

Student: ideas…

Teacher: yes, ideas…

Teacher: but what is the aim of the second paragraph.

Student: the first argument.

Teacher: yes, very good Daniela, the first argument.
Teacher: so, here in the first paragraph we have the introduction, and in the second paragraph we have the first … (giving time to students to answer)

Students: argument…

Teacher: yes, good. So, what is the thesis of this essay? Where is it? You find it, find the thesis of this essay…

Student: we have to read the whole essay?

Teacher: just find the thesis, you tell me…

Student reading inaudible, mumbling the text.

Student 1: in general biofuels are fuels that are produced….(reading from text out loud)

Teacher: mmmm not really, keep looking…

Student 2: This essay asserts that the utilization of biofuels…

Teacher: Melina?

Student 2: This essay asserts that the utilization of biofuels in the world…

Teacher: That line Melina? (indicating the one in the text)

Melina: yes!

Teacher: Yes!, very good “this essay asserts that the utilization of biofuels in the world… Very good! So, this is a thesis and it’s clearly stated, it is just one independent line…
Transcript 2: Deconstruction of paragraph

Teacher: so here you saw, that this paragraph, the instruction is built by sticking many sentences together, the topic sentence, the supporting ones, and well, the concluding sentence of this paragraph in particular (introduction) is the thesis… How many supporting sentences, can you have in a paragraph?

Student 1: three..

Student 2: “las que quiera”

Teacher: the ones that you want.. The minimum, is one…a paragraph should be built with a minimum of three sentences; the topic sentence, the supporting, and the concluding one…but obviously, you can add as many supporting details or supporting sentences as you need, you decide…depending on the amount of information you are giving…

Now how do you connect these sentences? How do you make them, one coherent paragraph?...

Student: with connectors…

Teacher: yes, connector such as, can you read the ones you see here?

Students: however, because of.., in order to…in general…for instance…

Teacher: do you see any “but” or any “also”?

Students: noo

Teacher: yes, because they are informal, very good, they tend to be not used in the beginning of sentences in academic writing.
Transcript 3: Focus on topic sentence

Teacher: Fernando, can you read the topic sentence of the first argument?

Student 1: because biofuels benefit from the environment…?

Teacher: mmmm the topic sentence… look, here is where the introduction ends, right?

Student 1: yes

Teacher: So, where is the topic sentence of the first argument? Here the first argument starts, what is the topic sentence?

Student 1: an important issue to consider is the…

Teacher: very good, the topic sentence is the first line of the argument, the first line of the paragraph.

Student 2: always?

Teacher: always… the topic sentence is the first line of the paragraph, is the main idea of the paragraph, it is the most general and always the first line…

Student 3: “pero ahi, sería de The use of biofuels? O sería todo?

Teacher: (teacher reads the whole topic sentence) this is the topic sentence. From “Firstly” to “structure”. It contextualizes everything that comes next.

Teacher: then, (teacher reads supporting details), I’m providing more information, again, we have connectors here, we have “as a result”…

Student 4: Firstly!
Transcript 3: Focus on register

Teacher: Regarding language… What type of language is used here? Personal or impersonal language?

Student: formal

Teacher: yes, formal

Students: laughs

Teacher: what type of language, personal or impersonal?

Student: impersonal…

Teacher: ok, good… but I saw some faces looking at like “what?”… what is impersonal language?

Student: you are informing…

Teacher: you are just informing, you do not include yourself in the writing…like: “it is widely known”, who can translate that for me please?

Student: what?

Teacher: it is widely known…

Students: se conoce…, es bien sabido…

Teacher: se conoce, es bien sabido…Can you change that into personal language?

Student 1: everybody knows…?
Student 2: I know…

Teacher: I know… good… that’s personal language, I am including myself…

_Transcript 1: Elaboration of thesis statement_

Teacher: We are going to construct together, as class, one thesis and one argument. So how could we start our thesis? Obviously, the thesis goes in the introduction and it can be after some contextualization… the introduction needs to contextualize the issue, ok? So, let’s write together, but first let’s decide as a class, supporting or rejecting the use of biofuels? Raise your hand if you support biofuels, ok, so all of you support, good, soy now let’s raise hands the ones who reject the use of biofuels…

Teacher: pero sofia! (addressing a student that raised her hand both times?)

Students: (laughing)

Student: “No se que pienso”, (laughing)…

Teacher: ok, let’s support biofuels then, as an example, then you will write your own ideas. So, how do we start?

Student 1: Fossil fuels…

Teacher: alright, fossil fuels… (writes on the board)

Students 2: aren’t we talking about biofuels?

Teacher: I don’t know, Micaela said fossil fuels, and I’m just writing…

Students: (laughing)

Student 3: come on Micaela! I want a good thesis! (said her friend)

Teacher: ok, so…
Student 3: Biofuels are…

Student 4: why are you so awesome? (kidding on her friend)

Teacher: alright, another student…

Student 5: the solution

Teacher: good, Biofuels are the solution…

Student 6: that we need…

Student 3: noo, not that we need… no “we”

Teacher: very good guys! Impersonal language…

Student 7: that…

Teacher: so, Biofuels are the solution that…

Student 7: the planet needs…

Student 8: requires!

Teacher: ok, why?

Student 8: because it is more formal…

Teacher: yes, so Biofuels are the solution that the planet requires…

Students: in order to…

Students: in order to reduce…

Teacher: ok, you better raise your hand so I can listen to you…Diego, you were saying something…

Student 9: in order to reduce…

Student 3: global warming…
Student 10: green house effects...

Teacher: Biofuels are the solution that the planet requires in order to reduce global warming, are you satisfied with that thesis?

Students: yes!

Teacher: Biofuels are the solution that the planet requires to reduce global warming ... effects.

Students: (happy about their thesis).