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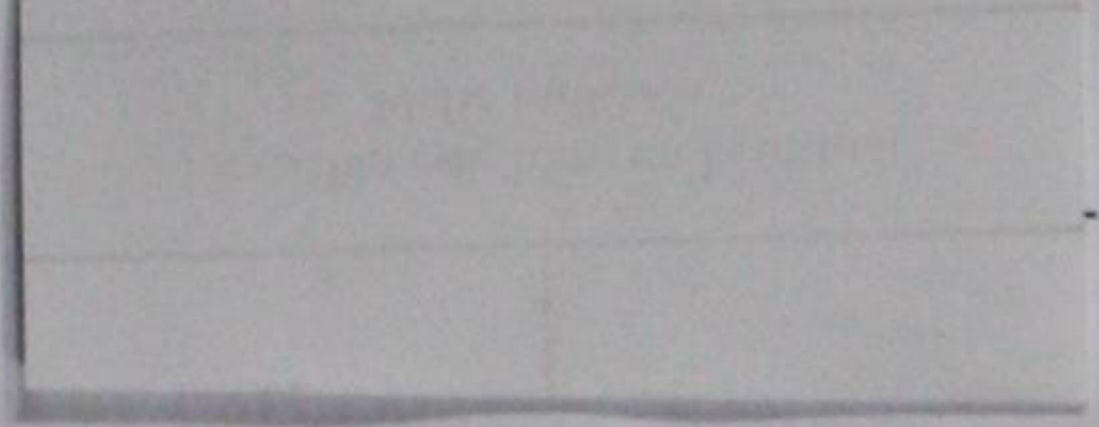
**MAESTRÍA EN SEGUNDAS LENGUAS Y CULTURAS CON ÉNFASIS EN INGLÉS COMO  
LENGUA EXTRANJERA PARA ALUMNADO ADULTO**

**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON WRITING PROBLEMS PRESENT IN STUDENTS  
OF TOURISM AT THE UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL BRUNCA CAMPUS AND A  
PROPOSAL OF A REMEDIAL PLAN**



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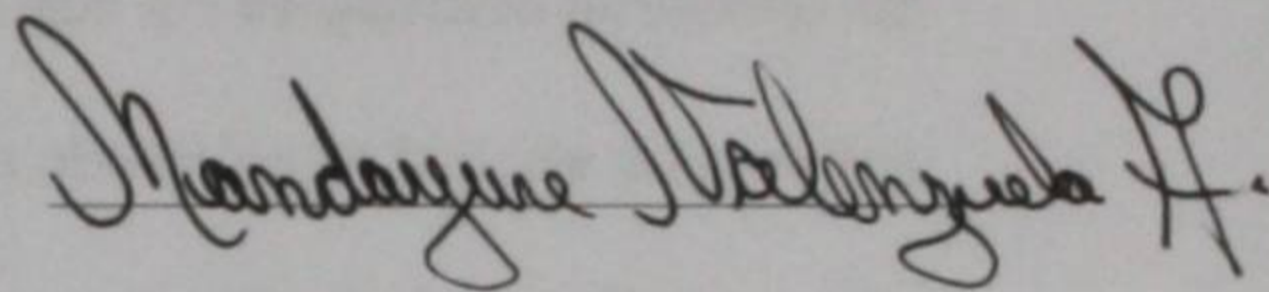
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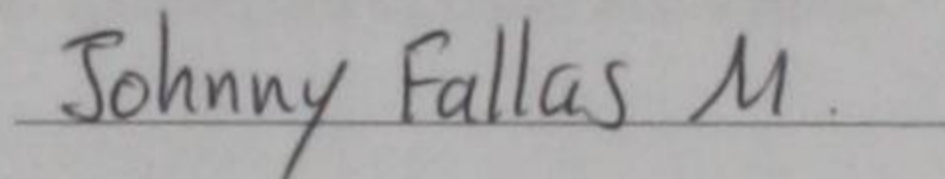
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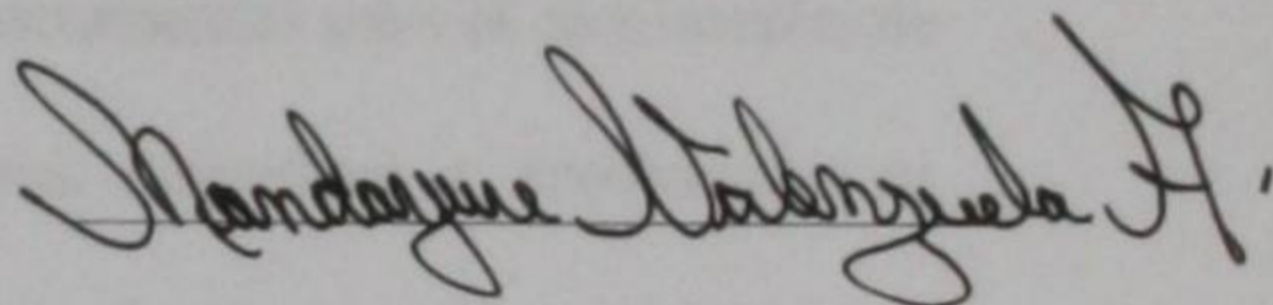
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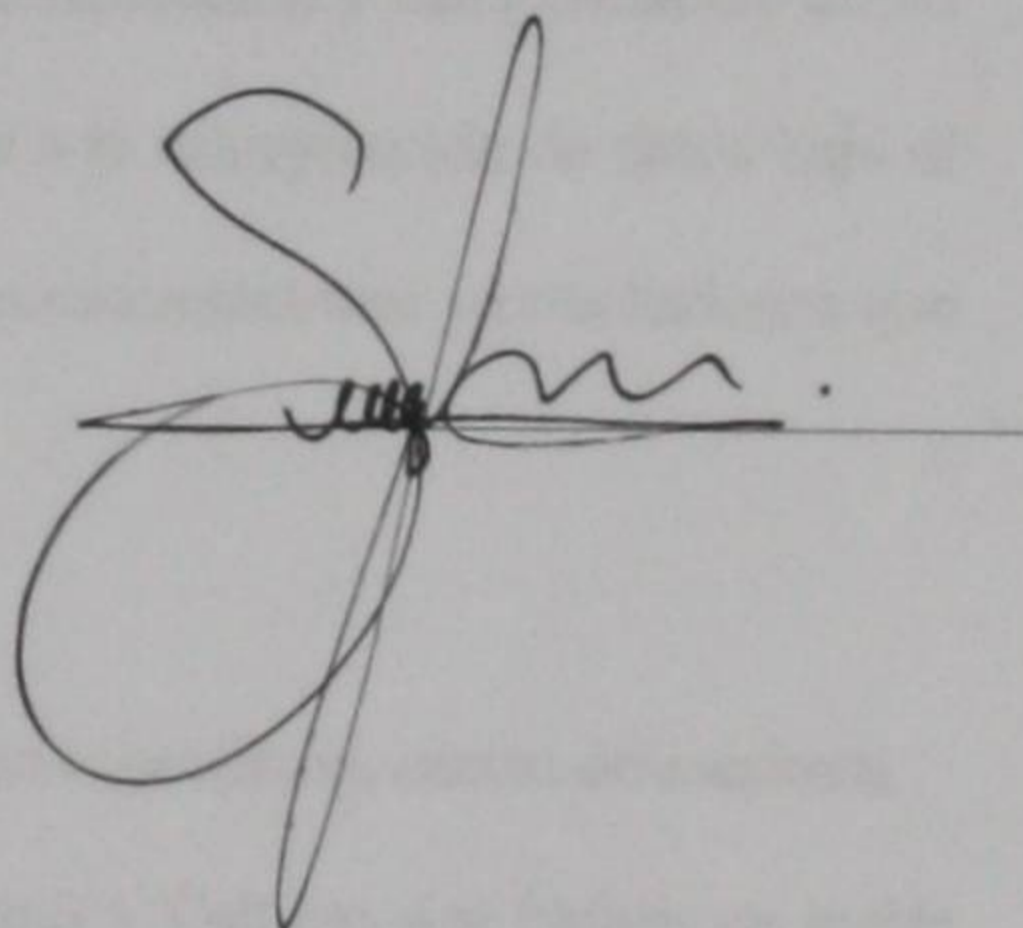
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## RESUMEN

Esta es una investigación de carácter cualitativo que se llevo a cabo en la Universidad Nacional en la sede Regional Brunca, localizada en el cantón de Pérez Zeledón, San José, Costa Rica. La misma exploró y diagnosticó el porqué y en cuáles fases del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de la habilidad escrita del idioma inglés como parte de los cursos de inglés para propósitos específicos de la carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible, no permitían a los estudiantes superarse en esta área a pesar de haber pasado por cuatro cursos en este idioma antes mencionado. Las preguntas de investigación consistían en recabar donde en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje y cuales aspectos prevenían que los estudiantes mostraran un nivel superior en el área de escritura. Con base en los resultados obtenidos en la parte diagnostica se recomendó la implementación de cambios en áreas como capacitación de los profesores y la creación de un centro de escritura como parte de un programa de apoyo para el éxito académico de los estudiantes.

Los datos se recopilaron a través del uso de varios instrumentos para la recolección de información como cuestionarios, observaciones en las clases, entrevistas y recolección de artefactos como lo fueron las composiciones revisadas por los profesores en el área de escritura. Después de esto, se realizó el análisis de los datos mediante codificación y categorización de las referencias recolectadas. Los resultados se obtuvieron gracias a la triangulación de datos bajo el escrutinio de cada categoría. Esto permitió llevar a cabo las recomendaciones y conclusiones que fueron presentadas al final del proceso.

**Palabras Claves:** Enseñanza-aprendizaje, Inglés para propósitos específicos, centro de escritura.

Investigación para optar al grado de Maestría en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas con Énfasis en Inglés como Lengua Extranjera para Alumnado Adulto, según lo establece el Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado de la Universidad Nacional. Heredia. Costa Rica.

## ABSTRACT

This is a research Project that explored and diagnosed the processes and the aspects in the development of the teaching and learning of English as Foreign Language writing. In this process students of the Tourism Major at Universidad Brunca Campus were failing to accomplish successfully. Among the research questions that were used as guides for the development of this project were to see what aspects of the learning process in writing students were showing difficulty to become successful English as a Foreign Language writers. Afterwards, the analysis of data provided valuable aspects that were a matter to establishing suggestions and recommendations like the implementation of a writing center as a way to help learners become academically successful.

The data were gathered under the use of data collection instruments such as questionnaires, classroom observations, unstructured interviews and artifacts such as students' revised compositions. After this, the researcher carried out the analysis of all the instruments through a process known as coding and categorization of units of study. The methods of data analysis permitted the researcher revise each category in depth which allowed her come across with recommendations and conclusions described at the end of this research project.

**Key words:** Teaching-learning process, English as a Foreign Language, writing center

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Study

The trends in writing pedagogy have given rise to collaboration as a model for teaching students especially if they are learning a foreign language. However, practices in *English as a Foreign Language* or EFL writing classrooms at Universidad Nacional, specifically in Tourism, that have come to play a poor role in the process of developing the writing skill. For this reason, the purpose of this qualitative research is to investigate the writing classroom dynamics and point out what aspects are not working properly, for students majoring Tourism do poorly in developing writing tasks evidenced at higher levels. This research project is considered a good source for teaching reflection and a contribution to the field of Applied Linguistics. The following section will explain how this project was organized.

#### Macro View of the Research Project

The research project here developed was carried out by one researcher who plays the role of an insider in all the process, for she was the person who posed the problem and proceeded to give a solution to it taking into account the points of view from within the events. This research project provided an account of proceedings in the dynamics of writing classrooms at Universidad Nacional Brunca Campus located in the southern part of Costa Rica. The dynamics of the writing classrooms were classified in a typology that permitted the researcher to order these processes in its corresponding types. This categorization of units of study allowed good analysis of the different events that took place in and out of the classroom context. After the categorization of

the units the analysis permitted the establishment of the theory which then led to important findings that will give essential implications in the inquiry process of EFL writing and the field of Applied Linguistics.

The population that was selected for the investigation was vast. The researcher observed four groups of integrated English courses for the Tourism major, part of the efforts to provide these students with *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP) courses which means that the English they learn is oriented to their future fields of work. The students' proficiency levels were varied. There were two groups that belonged to the first level. These pupils had a basic management of the language while the ones in level II had a better command of the target language. Though students at higher levels had some knowledge about the language they also showed serious difficulty when writing in English.

In order to carry out the collection of data the researcher used three main tools. A questionnaire given to both students and professors involved in the process and classroom observations. In addition, the collection of artifacts such as students' revised compositions and the syllabus of English courses of the major were also important when analyzing data. Furthermore, two unstructured interviews also permitted the researcher to count on more evidence of these accounts.

For the presentation of the project the researcher divided it into five chapters which contain the main sections of what constituted the whole process investigated. The first chapter constitutes the introduction of all the process. Chapter II comprises theoretical framework which portrayed the review of the literature in the area inquired. Chapter III basically describes the methodology used to carry out the proposal and finally chapter IV presents what was found after a semester of hard work to seek for the truth through these pages.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Students at the university level are required to develop a great variety of types of writing tasks not only in their mother but also in the foreign or target language, which in most of cases, is English. As the world becomes smaller due to globalization; the mastery of the English language and even a third language whether Cantonese, French or any other is a prominent requirement. Writing is a language activity, an “act of the mind” (Berthoff 29) that is carried out not only to convey meaning or to be developed for academic purposes; it also comprises cultural aspects such as communication and the transmitting of history from generation to generation. For the foreign language learner, writing in another language opens doors to a set of fields such as the academic area, the job market and other opportunities for professional development around the world.

This study is an effort to investigate the origin of writing problems students from the major of Tourism at *Universidad Nacional Brunca Campus* (UNABC) are currently presenting and also this research is an attempt to propose a solution to the current problems they are facing in the development of the skill. Some experts in linguistics such as Stephen Krashen have stated that the area of foreign language writing has not been as deeply explored as the other areas of EFL. Even though the area is still in an emergent stage, more recent studies show that second language writing has come into “its own field of inquiry”(Hedgcock 597). For the purpose of this study, there are various aspects of foreign language writing are going to be explored. The first aspect of interest is the foreign language learner as the core subject of the learning process. Second aspects of concentration are critical pedagogy and teaching practices in Second language writing classrooms. Moreover, the ways treating errors and forms of feedback, assessment and

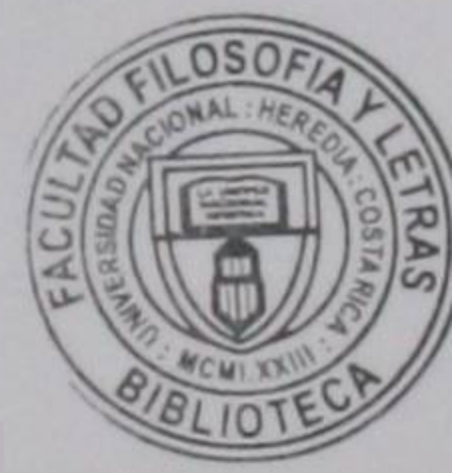
evaluation in L2 writing will be described. In addition, the operation of remedial plans such as the *writing centers* in other institutions from other countries would be the last aspect of interest.

### The Second Language Writer

The L2 learner has come to be one of the central aspects in researching the area of L2 writing. The learner or the writer, in this case, is a complex subject since every person has unique ways to develop the ability to write; actually, some learners are not born to write, thus, they need plenty of training. Foreign language writers embody a totally opposing representation from the monolingual writers (Hedgcock 598). Raimes quoted in Hedgcock's investigation that the L1 writer does not have the same need that the L2 writer. The latter group "needs 'more of everything' in terms of heuristics, content, writing practice, and feedback than the mother tongue counterparts" (598). It is also important to reflect on that the learning process of a second language is composed of a series of stages that lead the learner to the mastery of that target language. Writing is considered a productive skill and therefore a difficult skill for many second language learners to master.

Some experts such as Barbara Kroll identified that "in the 1960's, ESL composition teaching in North America was dominated by a controlled model [...]" She also asserted that the L2 "student's writing was [not] genuine and the writing was meant to reinforce language rules and not for purposes like addressing a topic or communicating with an audience" (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 219). In this model, the writing was so controlled in order to reduce the possibility of errors that the student could not properly deliver the message. Current L2 writing teaching has not escaped from that old fashioned model. In some L2 writing classrooms, teachers still use that controlled model. In some other cases, grammar comes to be the most prominent aspect in

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writing that the teachers and so the students forget about the essentials of the writing skill, which is to communicate ideas meaningfully. O' Malley and Valdez emphasize that writing requires the use and control of different types of knowledge (136). David Ausubel also has referred to the previous knowledge to make learning significant for learners. He criticized teaching methods that presented isolated items for students to repeat over and over until they could memorize them, preventing meaningful learning to occur. He called this systematic or "rote learning" (qtd. in Brown Douglas 79). For this, teachers and writers should really highlight on the use of new trends that are now governing pedagogical practices in the area of foreign language writing in order to make it noteworthy to pupils.

In order to reach competence in the writing skill, the students need training. Kroll also suggests that "to establish a writing curriculum [...] that can target specific principles [...] it is essential that students be given a placement test that includes asking them to produce one or more writing samples" (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 221). The problem with this recommendation Kroll gives is that many writing courses are integrated and there is no placement tests. In fact, a lot of Universities never place students according to their ability in the different areas. The learners have to be in a determined level according to his or her general performance in the foreign tongue. Kroll establishes that "without placement instruments that can sort out the levels of writing proficiency, it is not possible to establish curricular goals" (idem). The principles Kroll evaluated distill some of the best practices in designing a curriculum that works for the learner, but they are still on the paper.

## L2 Writing Pedagogy and Instruction Practices

Critical pedagogy was heavily influenced by the works of Paulo Freire. He strongly endorses students' ability to think critically about their education situation; "this way of thinking

allows them to recognize connections between their individual problems and experiences and the social contexts in which they are embedded" (Freire n.pag). In addition Freire recognizes that the practice of "banking education" in which the instructors just deposit knowledge to passive recipients still take place in many of classrooms.

Advocates of critical pedagogy claim that teachers face multiple complex decision-making situations, for the work of teachers is rigid; this means that education is conditioned by politics, establishing guidelines educational programs have to follow. This is why, in so many cases, professionals in education have to comply with several outer factors that condition their practices. Freire maintains that critical pedagogy gives power to teachers to be independent and to establish their own practices under their own philosophies. Criticism of one's own pedagogy really helps improve and change old imposed thinking patterns or methodologies to the development of own teaching philosophies and self reflection.

In regards to L2 writing, although teachers agree that writing should be both linguistic and rhetorical appropriate, observation suggests that politics on old fashioned teaching practices have put aspects such as grammar teaching as a key source of second and foreign language learning processes over time. Seeing the limitation of such narrow focus on the teaching of writing, theorists have become critical of language learning and they have stipulated that teachers themselves should be more open to monitor their own practices and be willing to the change.

From the Freirean point of view, the current teaching practices in EFL classrooms at UNABB, specifically in Integrated English courses for tourism that are mostly characterized by having students being passive recipients of knowledge. In such model, students are deprived from being critical thinkers. Opposing this practice, Freire poses that students should be treated

as human beings able to pose and solve problems as well as being social actors in cultural, educational and political areas.

In order to implement Freire's proposal at UNABB, is by empowering educators in the way that they can reflect on their own philosophies and transmit this thinking pattern to students through innovative practices. Teachers and students can become practitioners of the criticism that Freire proposes to build up a dialogical relationship and gain knowledge on their own identity and roles as instructors and learners.

There are practices in L2 writing instruction that should be considered. According to Krashen's *Writing: Research, Theory and Applications* all the students should have good reading habits because it is necessary for them to acquire the code. As students frequently read, they improve their writing skills in short periods of time and reach a competent level. It is not to say that the results are going to appear overnight, but reading does have a positive effect on writers. Krashen also determined that this positive effect of reading habits on writing is mostly noticeable in native speakers of the English language. He stipulated that even though studies on EFL writing are not numerous, he assured that "reading might possibly have some positive effects on learners of English as a foreign language as well" (28). Confirming Krashen's point of view in regards to the effect of reading over writing, there are two more studies in the area; one carried out by Barbara Kroll and the other by Fumiko Yoshimura. Despite of the limitations of the latter investigation, Yoshimura arrived to the conclusion that reading does have a positive effect on the writing skills of EFL learners, especially if they use a checklist this investigator designed to guide reading (1879). Kroll also acknowledges that "without doubt, readings serve some very practical purposes in the writing class, particularly for English language Learners (ELL's) who have less fluency in the language"(qtd. in Celce-Murcia 224).





In the case of English for specific purposes, as it is this particular case, Johns and Price-Machado delineate that "an examination of texts from a variety of different texts from a variety of different disciplines is likely to show how complex the learning task is" (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 225). This also demonstrates how texts from different fields and disciplines contrast and it "reveals implicit distinctions disciplines make about what constitutes good writing" (idem). This shows how important is to choose the appropriate texts to present to students and also the ways to present them.

### Error Correction and Writing

First of all, it is prominent to describe what an error is and to establish the difference from what a mistake is. According to Douglas Brown "An error...reflects the competence of the learner. While mistakes can be self-corrected, errors cannot" (205). As it is widely known, language is composed of four skills that are listening, speaking, reading and writing. All four are equally important, but the so-called productive ones, say speaking and writing, have been and still are subject of interest to numerous investigations.

Errors have long been a matter of obsession among many researchers and professors. In the past, errors were seen as problematic phenomena but recently, teachers see them as a source of evidence for having students learning from them. Also, errors serve to see the learners' level and they may work as an starting points for teachers to start working on helping students overcome those errors. Instructors who work using errors as important tools may gain knowledge on why they occur and the source of them and how frequent they tend to happen. Once sources of errors are identified professor can establish remedial plans to try to eradicate them. Sources of errors are those caused by interference of the mother tongue into the learning of a foreign

language process, influence of pedagogical procedures, L2 learner strategies and communication, faulty generalizations, markedness among other factors that prevent EFL writers become proficient in the target language.

In the area of writing, there are manners to provide feedback as a way to treat errors that has been used for years. Some of these ways are comments on the margins of compositions, focus attention on forms and not on form. The latter really affects students' future performance since as Douglas Brown establishes "error analysis can keep [teachers] too closely focused on specific on language rather than viewing *universal* aspects of language" (207). It is noticeable how harmful this practice can turn into if teachers do not practice different forms of giving feedback to reach the goal of second language learning, which is "the attainment of communicative fluency in the language" (Ibid 206).

As it was aforementioned, the writing skill was usually taught under so much control trying to keep students away from committing mistakes. But this form to teach writing was against human nature, for individuals learn by trial and error. Douglas Brown points out that "human learning is fundamentally a process that involves the making of mistakes" (204). He also establishes that the process of foreign and second language learning is just as the process of first language acquisition in which children make countless mistakes from the adult perspectives. Careful feedback from other people shape and surely provide humans with the pathways to learn what is "acceptable". This is the exact same process that adult EFL learners should face when learning a language.

In regards to second language writing, feedback that the learner receives from others lead them to become successful. In addition, depending on how they learn, they will have preferences related to the way they want to be corrected. Research has not demonstrated yet the positive side

of direct correction of errors. Rather than this, it has “suggested that a variety of indirect, self discovery techniques can help students to monitor and self correct themselves” (Hedge 127). The use of strategies such as margin commentary, rule discussion and rote practices do not help learners gain any more knowledge in the use of the language, especially for writing purposes. The following section explains in detail how different forms of feedback benefit students in developing good written products and overcome errors and mistakes easily.

### Forms of Feedback, Assessment and Evaluation in L2 Writing

L2 writing assessment plays a prominent role in the process of the learning of writing in a foreign language. In prior instruction shows that feedback was really straightforward and that teachers directly wrote their comments, commonly in red pen, on the margins of the students written assignments.

Currently, feedback and assessment have evolved in theory and practice. They comprise numerous forms of feedback but first two aspects will be distinguished in the following lines. Those aspects are basically *summative writing assessment and formative feedback* (Hedgcock 606). The former basically complies with the requirements for administrative processes, placement and exit screening (*idem*). The latter, is in essence a very positive way to motivate students and engage them in revision of their own drafts (McGarrel and Verbeem 228). Moreover, this type of *feedback* seeks to have the students refining the intended message of their pieces of writing instead of focusing on form. *Formative feedback* calls for the objective of “motivating for immediate and substantive revision” (Knoblauch and Brannon 260). These authors suggest that the revision is beneficial and learners start respecting others’ comments as well as taking this process more seriously.

There is another, and more common, type of feedback which is called *written commentary*. This type of feedback has been used for years. Experts such as Goldstein have demonstrated that the use of written feedback is ineffective because the students do not know how to use the teacher's comments. One subcategory of written feedback is the so-called "*corrective feedback*" (Nakamaru 36). The use of *corrective feedback* has been strongly criticized by Truscott who asserts that this practice, at the local level, is totally harmful. She proposes that "grammar correction should be abandoned "in the light of the putative absence of 'valid reasons' for continuing the practice (360). Truscott also considered the idea that "well-constructed teacher commentary" should be improved and matured [and may have a positive impact and results on students' writings] (qtd. in Hedgcock 606). Not only teacher commentary should be the way of giving students feedback. *Self assessment* also plays important roles in L2 writing. In this regard, O'Malley and Valdez state that "ELL students at the beginning levels of proficiency in English need time not only to acquire the language but also to be able to communicate their ideas and plans". [This is not to say that students in beginning levels cannot evaluate their own progress. Clemmons et al. also assert] that even little kids at the kindergarten level can learn how to identify essential aspects of good work" (38). In the same way, "self-assessment in writing encourages the type of reflection needed to gain increased control as a writer" (O'Malley and Valdez 151). These same authors suggest that the use of four ways in which learners can encourage self assessment are the use of dialogue journals, learning logs, assessment of interests and checklists of writing skills. These new trends in assessment and feedback in the English classrooms are working properly; that is what, Truscott proposes teachers to practice instead of using strict methods in checking students' work that do not allow to be self critical.

Literature on L2 writing suggests that teachers are no longer the only responsible characters for the improvement of students' written work. As an alternative, there are new procedures in which students and teachers talk about each student's progress. This procedure is called *conferencing feedback*. This technique is very useful because the students are the ones that criticize their own work and still reformulate ideas. Hedge suggests that the use of a checklist would be helpful for the learner to start engaging in such process (313). In this way, learners start discovering their own ways of writing and revising.

Obviously assessment is not the only way in which learners and teachers engage into revision processes. Instructors also need to use numbers in order to evaluate writing. As it was mentioned previously, summative writing assessment is often used as a means to write records either for "placement and exit screening" (Hedgcock 606). To illustrate this feature, studies postulated by Cumming, Kantor, Powers, Hamp-Lyons and Kroll have demonstrated that measuring student writers' performance fairly and meaningfully requires meticulous attention to an array of linguistic, rhetorical, and psychocognitive operations (qtd. in Hedgcock 607). This outcome shows that the evaluation of writing should be done under careful scrutiny.

Hedgcock quoted Weigle's seven questions concerning the design and implementation of assessment tools. Every teacher should use them in order to do the evaluation/assessment planning the best possible. These questions are:

What are we trying to test? Why do we want to test writing ability? Who are our test takers? Who will score the tests, and what criteria ...will be used? Who will use the information that our test provides? What are the constraints...that limit the amount and the kind of information we can collect about tests taker's writing ability? What do we need to know about testing to make our tests valid and reliable? (607).

This shows that evaluation of writing is not an easy task, because these same authors stated that ESL and EFL writing ability are dependent upon the interaction with other language skills. The rater's perception is tremendously influential and problematic, for a text that is judged as "good" may not be the same in all circumstances and contexts. The evaluation of writing should be objective and professors should work on the creation of well structured rubric and scoring guides to reach impartiality when evaluating written work.

### Remedial Plans in the Writing Area: Writing Centers

English language learners need supporting elements in the different writing language programs. In *writing centers*, pupils learn the principle of collaborative pedagogy. With this, students are required to start with problems and solve them with applications or strategies to deal exactly with the problem. Therefore, learners "instead of being observers of questions and answers, or problems and solutions, [pupils] become immediate practitioners (Goodsell n.pag) and they really learn how to attack the problem and eliminate it from its roots.

One of the purposes of a *writing center* is to create a relaxing atmosphere for the learner to feel willing to compose any piece of writing. "*A writing center* is a friendly support place for students and not a tightly controlled classroom. The ideal writing labs do not threaten or intimidate students by being too quiet [...] instead [students openly talk about how they feel about writing]" (Harris 6-7). With this, the author proposes that writing centers are a very smart option, and numerous universities have provided students with great opportunities to learn how to write.

### Antecedents of Writing Centers

Now that this general definition of *writing center* has been mentioned it is important to note how these places started. This tendency of “writing centers began in the 20<sup>th</sup> century [... in fact,] these centers were not professionalized until 1970s” (Waller n.pag). The earliest writing centers, often known as labs which purpose is to enhance writing instruction, were an extension of the classroom. Carino quoted in Waller’s work that “initially writing labs began within the context of the classroom [... they] were viewed more as methods than sites and often focused too much on the grammatical aspects of writing” (n.pag). But after all this confusion that existed with the perception and the direction that writing centers should have followed, these centers were moved out of the classroom and became an additional or adjunct to the classroom work and it involved remediation. Harris points out that “writing centers have evolved with different kinds of institutions and different writing programs and therefore serve different needs” (qtd. in Waller n.pag). Most writing centers in universities and colleges in the United States are created by the English departments who see the need to have students improve their writing abilities depending on their needs that may be in grammar or content, mechanics and other writing conventions.

### Pedagogy in Writing Centers

In the writing centers, *collaborative pedagogy* and learning follows educational principles like involvement of the students in the construction of their own learning (Goodsell n.pag.). Also, teamwork is one of the endeavors that *collaborative pedagogy*, focuses on to prepare students to work in groups and give feedback among them in order to build leaning. Furthermore, in *collaborative pedagogy* it increases the exchange of ideas among the tutors and their students. In the area of writing, students “formulate ideas, clarify their positions, test an

argument or focus a thesis statement before committing it to the paper” (Idem). In this way, students are the ones learning how to develop higher order thinking skills with the help of the tutor and other classmates. Additionally, collaborative pedagogy creates a collaborative classroom which is considered an opportunity to solve problems and dilemmas related to learning processes. Actually, students in a single writing center do not come up with the same exact writing problems and needs. The flaw of one student is the strength of the other and with the use of peer cooperation and the help of the tutor, writing problems can be treated and amended in the writing center.

On the other hand, tutoring at writing center is a task that demands a lot of content knowledge and patience from the instructor in order to deal with the students’ individualized needs. Writing centers and also remedial plans focus on satisfying the needs of every learner because “each [pupil] arrives with a different motivation for learning English and with different plans of using it in the future” (Thonus 15) even though Kroll asserts that “not even EFL instructors can come [...] understand how to respond to students’ writing in order to guide them in producing “the ideal written product” (141); the tutors make a big effort to help students discover how they can please and satisfy their own needs by helping themselves build up their knowledge and abilities to produce good pieces of writing. Tutors at writing centers should be clear that they do not have to proofread students’ compositions. On the contrary, students are the ones in charge of revising their writings and judge themselves. Tutors in this case, help students notice their mistakes and help pupils find the ways to solve the issue and edit what does not seem proper in a determined composition.

Finally, the problem with the conceptualization of the writing centers is that teachers perceive that these places are made up to help students study content that could not be covered in



the classroom for a semester or the school year. Some universities in the United States have experienced that misunderstanding in regards to the writing center because teachers send their students with the lists of topics that they are having problems with and the tutors are expected to carry out a miracle in a few weeks (Thonus 14). Due to the numerous students that are registered in a single integrated course, professors do not have the time to work with the new strategies to teach writing to foreign language learners as they should. In some cases, teachers still do the old methods of making the student work and correcting everything at the sentence level directly in their compositions instead of practicing the different feedback techniques. As it was stated before, practices like those mentioned by Truscott are damaging but there are measures in regards to EFL writing that should be implemented as soon as possible.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

#### Statement of the Problem and its Importance

As it was stated in the Framework of reference, the mastery of a foreign language is one of the most vital requirements to get a good job position not only in Costa Rica but also around the globe. Globalization and free trade agreements among countries have put English as the language for global communication. As it is stated in the *National Geographic* magazine Lovgren reports that "English is now regarded as a basic skill [...] which [people may] learn at an early age so they can study through English later" (1). That is why, elementary schools, high schools and universities around the world have been concerned about the prominence of the mastery of a foreign language. Now, universities have to provide students with the opportunity to learn another tongue. Due to this, enterprises expect prospect employees to command the English language (Idem). It means that a person should be proficient in the use of the four language skills and culture as well.

Lately, professors and administrators of the language programs at Universidad Nacional decided to implement English programs for students to face the challenges of this changing world. In response to the demands of the fields of work, the institution started to offer English courses that fit the needs of some of the majors at the university. Consequently, a new English for Specific Purpose program was launched at the Chorotega Campus around the year 1999 and at the Brunca Region in the year 2006 with the opening of the tourism major in these two institutions (Ajustes en la Instrucción del Idioma Inglés Carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible 3). The tourism students are now being offered English courses with the specific purpose for their future career. Moreover, the English program has been improved



immensely since it was first operating in both branches of Universidad Nacional. Despite the enhancement of the English curriculum, writing problems have emerged, now that students are taking the fourth English course in the second level of the major, their level of English should be a lot better than it is. This assumption is based on the informal observations and evaluation of the professor of the course.

The causes of the writing deficiencies in some students of the tourism major at Universidad Nacional Brunca Branch are being diagnosed in this investigation. This issue has evolved from informal conversations among colleagues at professional meetings when teachers usually speak about how they are doing with some groups or about students. In these spaces, professors have manifested their concern in terms of students' writing insufficiency. From this perspective, it is clear that there is something that is not working properly and this project intends to investigate the causes of writing troubles in a deeper way.

The real issue lies precisely in that students of the Tourism major, specifically at the second level, present low proficiency in the writing skill. According to the program of the course (Integrated English IV- level II), these students should be able to write resumes, letters, e-mails, educational reports, summaries, response papers and even short compositions like essays. (Ajustes en la Instrucción del Idioma Inglés Carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible 31), though they have been in contact with the language for 180 hours per course. According to that program and to the American Council on the Teaching of foreign languages (ACTFL) proficiency guidelines for writing these students should be in the Intermediate-high Level. In this level, the student should be able to:

[...] meet all practical writing needs such as taking notes on familiar topics, writing uncomplicated letters, simple summaries, and compositions related to work, school

experiences, and topics of current and general interest [, ...] connect sentences into paragraphs using a limited number of cohesive devices that tend to be repeated, and with some breakdown in one or more features of the Advanced level. They can write simple descriptions and narrations of paragraph length on everyday events and situations in different time frames, although with some inaccuracies and inconsistencies. (Breiner et al. 4-5).

However, the compositions of these pupils show that they are not capable of meeting with the abilities and the exigencies of the intermediate- high level explained above. In addition to the ACTFL Proficiency guidelines, the European framework establishes that students at this level (A2 in Writing) "can write short, simple notes and messages about everyday matters and everyday needs. They can write very simple personal letters; for example thanking someone for something" (236).

Even though the researcher is judging based on students compositions and not on students possible results in any standardized test like the *Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC)* or *The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)*, it is evident that learners can be placed at a basic stage based on their written products. At this point of the major, learners should be positioned at a higher level at least at the B1 echelon (Idem).

This investigation will discover the possible causes of writing insufficiency in students of tourism in higher levels. It is important to observe where in the process they are failing. To accomplish the goal the investigator has carried out classroom observations as well as the application of questionnaires to both professor and students. The collection of artifacts such as students' compositions will also show evidence of the problem being described.

## RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

The research design that was employed to carry out the present project is Qualitative, specifically exploratory and interpretive. According to Cresswell, qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (18).

## MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the writing problems among students of Tourism at Universidad Nacional?
- What aspects in the writing process are affecting students in order to reach a competent level in that skill?
- What are the emerging reasons why students are not meeting the expectations on the Tourism objectives?

## RELATED RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do professors treat errors when they check students' compositions that were assigned as homework?
- Do comments on students' error be addressed directly to the words, on the margins or at the end?
- To what extend students incorporate changes in their writing texts from the ways professors correct them?
- Do the types of feedback that teachers employ bring about significant improvements in students' writing in the short and long terms?

The appropriate answers to these questions required the use of methods that pertain to the qualitative design. The use of punctually statistical instruments such as questionnaires helped the researcher discover particular strategies that the professors used in the writing process. But the application of instruments at a specific and particular part was not enough. The researcher had to engage in the classroom sessions to know about the processes from a different and more natural perspective. These questions provide pathways to offer interpretive accounts that are described in the chapter of analysis in this investigation.

## PARTICIPANTS

### The Students Placed in Level II and IV of Tourism

The students of Tourism taking integrated courses of English at Universidad *Nacional Brunca Campus* (UNABC) are the main sources of investigation. The investigator chose four groups of Tourism to identify the writing problems that students show in their compositions. The following paragraphs describe each group in detail.

### The Students of Integrated English Courses II

The level of proficiency of English that students currently present at level I in the Integrated English II course is basic. According to the document *Ajustes en la Instrucción del Idioma Inglés Carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible* and the ACTFL guidelines, these students should be able to

Create statements and formulate questions based on familiar material [...] these are short and simple conversational-style sentences with basic subject-verb-object word order.

They are written mostly in present time with occasional and often incorrect uses of past

or future time. Writing tends to be a collection of simple sentences loosely strung together, often with repetitive structure. Vocabulary is limited to common objects and routine activities, adequate to express elementary needs. Writing is somewhat mechanistic and topics are limited to highly predictable content areas and personal information tied to limited language experience. There may be basic errors in grammar, word choice, punctuation, spelling, and in the formation and use of non-alphabetic symbols. Their writing is understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives (Breiner et al. 5).

#### Group 80

The first group under study is the one called Group 80. This group is composed of fourteen students. There are seven girls and seven boys. The age of students in this group range from 17 to 26 years. All of them are single. The people are from different places of Pérez Zeledón such as El Jardín and San Isidro de El General but some others are from Buenos Aires, San Vito, Uvita that belong to the province of Puntarenas specifically in the Southern part of Costa Rica. In this group, five people have taken courses of English in private institutes and one of them at INA which is a prestigious learning institute.

In addition, seven of the students live with their nuclear family and the ones from places far away from the university, have to rent apartments in San Isidro de El General, which is the largest town of the county of Pérez Zeledón. In this class there are two pupils who belong to the group called, "bailes populares KATUIR". One girl participates in the drama club and there is one boy who is part of the group called "cuerdas" because they play guitars.

### Group 81

This group is composed of 18 students. There are 7 women and 8 men. The age ranges from 17 to 27 years. There is one married woman but the rest remain single. People in this class are from different places of Pérez Zeledón like San Isidro downtown and El Jardin, but others are from Buenos Aires, San Vito and Puerto Jimenez which are located in the province of Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Because of the location of these places 5 students have to rent apartments near the university. As in group 80, there are 5 students who have taken English courses in private institutions. In this class, two boys belong to the soccer team. The professor reported that there are no learners with curricular adaptations, at least officially.

### The Students of Integrated English Courses IV

There are two groups at this level, group 85 and group 87. At level II in the Integrated English IV and according to the document *Ajustes en la Instrucción del Idioma Inglés Carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible* and the ACTFL guidelines for writing these learners should have an Intermediate-high Level (14), which was specified above in this project.

### Group 85

The first group is called 85. It is a large class of twenty two students. There are seven boys and fifteen girls. The ages of people in the group range from 18-28. All of them are single. They come from various places around the county of Pérez Zeledón except for two girls who had to move from San Vito, Coto Brus because of the distance. There are two people who have taken English courses other than the ones they have taken in the university. There is one girl that belongs to ASEUNA that is a committee of students that also have to do with university elections



and other important decisions. There is one boy and a girl who belongs to the dance group called KATUIR, four men belong to the soccer team and one to the drama club. There are two reported curriculum adaptations for two female students.

#### Group 87

This group is composed of just thirteen students. There are eight girls and five boys. Their ages range from 18-23. There is one student who is married and the rest are single. There is one female learner who is from Heredia. The rest live in towns that belong to Pérez Zeledón. There is one boy who practices table tennis but he is in Universidad Nacional Omar Dengo's team. Two girls dance in KATUIR and another from the drama club

#### The Professors

This section is intended to describe who the professors of the integrated courses II and IV are. The investigator will use acronyms to refer to each of the instructors to protect their identity.

The first professor is E.F. He is 24 years old. He lives in the community of Palmares; a small town located 9 kilometers South from San Isidro de El General, Pérez Zeledón, San Jose, Costa Rica. This professor is in charge of teaching the reading and writing course to the students of the level I taking the Integrated English II, specifically group 80. This instructor got his bachelor's degree from Universidad Nacional in the year 2007 and started working at this institution in the same year. He will enroll in a master's program in education at Universidad Nacional in the year 2010.

The other professor in charge of teaching the reading and writing course to the students of the level I taking the Integrated English II, specifically group 81 is I.C. He also lives in the community of Palmares which location was described above. This professor is 29 years old. He

obtained his bachelor's and Licenciatura degree from Universidad Estatal a Distancia known as UNED. He is currently studying law and wants to become an attorney. He has been working at UNABC for 2 years. He started in the year 2007 in this institution. Moreover, this instructor also works for the ministry of Public Education in a elementary school during the morning but he alternate schedules with the one in the university.

The third professor which served as a source of information is Y.A. She is 30 years old. She lives just 5 kilometers north from Universidad Nacional. This location will be described in the following section. She is in charge of teaching Integrated English IV- level II, specifically to the group 85. This professor graduated from the bachelor's program in English Teaching in the 2001 has worked at UNABC since then. This professor also works in an elementary public school since the year 2002. She is currently enrolled in a master's program in Universidad Latina. She is working in the final project to get her master's degree.

Last but not the least, is the professor A.S. of the group 87. She is 27 years old. This instructor lives in Pedregoso which is a small town located 3 kilometers Northeast San Isidro de El General. She got her bachelor's degree at Universidad Nacional in the year 2004. She started working at UNABC in the year 2007 and has worked teaching the tourism major during these two years. The professor also works for the Ministry of Public education during mornings. She is currently enrolled in the master's program at Universidad Nacional.

## SITE OF RESEARCH

The investigation takes place at Universidad Nacional Brunca Campus which is located in the community of Sinai, Pérez Zeledón. It is located 1.5 kilometers far from San Isidro downtown. There is also a spectacular view of the Talamanca mountain range. This university is near the main road to Rivas, this road has a light traffic, so there is not much noise. . On the other hand, some improvements in the university's bathroom have made the atmosphere somewhat noisy. There is also a forest in the back part of the buildings. In fact, there are a lot of mosquitoes in some classrooms, especially in the morning. The weather in this part of the country is mostly hot and humid.

The campus is not so big. It has five levels, for it was built in a hill. In the main level there are three offices and the library. In front of these offices there is a parking lot for students and teachers. Next to the same offices there is a roofed parking lot for the administrators' cars, university's cars and buses.

In the second level there are two offices, the language laboratory, a computer laboratory, the photocopy place, two ping-pong tables, and a classroom, that is also a storage place. People from the university place old computers and other machines in this room that is available for teachers to work there. In the third level, there are six big classrooms, two bathrooms and a hallway. The next level is used by the "scientific" high school. In that level, there is also a gym that is shared with a public high school nearby. All these level are connected by stairs. On the left side on the second level there is a cafeteria. It has ten tables with four chairs each. All the tables are red and the chairs are white. There are also two trashcans inside the cafeteria. The entire building is painted in gray and red and it has black ramps for handicapped. All doors are

green. The last hall has various classrooms varying in size and number (qtd. in Garro and Mora 91-92).

### The Classrooms

Group 81 Room C5. This classroom is located in the last of the pavilion or wing of the university. The room is very white and the windows are really big. The room has the view of the soccer field and part of the mountain that is behind the buildings. The floor is beige; there is a fan because this classroom tends to get really humid. The room is bigger than the ones in other wings. The capacity of the classroom is for 45 people sitting comfortably. The furniture is new and in good condition for people to use.

Group 80 -Room A6/ Group 85- Room A4/ Group 87 -Room A3. These classrooms look the same. They are in the second level of the building; that is why, they are basically similar. They are small rooms but still have a capacity for around 35 students seated. These rooms were recently painted using beige and gray colors and a piece of wood dividing both colors in the wall. The floor is red and the doors are green in the outside and gray in the inside. The room has windows on the left side, which permits people to see the mountain that is right behind the university. The classroom has numerous chairs and tables that are brown and others are reddish. All of the furniture is in good conditions to be used by the learners

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS EMPLOYED

### Questionnaires

According to Hernandez, Fernandez and Baptista, questionnaires are a very common data collection tool "a questionnaire is a set of questions related to one or more variables" (391).

The questionnaires in this investigation were used for the purpose of collecting data from the professors and students. The instruments served as key sources of information since the inquiries were intended to get data that was not evident during classroom observations. The kinds of questions were both closed and open. The second type of inquiries helped the investigators gain knowledge about the opinions and points of view of students as well as those from the instructors.

### Structured Classroom Non-Participant Observations

The observations carried out were structured. The researcher used an instrument to observe those events that dealt closely with the area of writing which are methodology, error treatment and feedback basically among other aspects of interest.

The investigator tried not to participate in the development of the classroom activities. At least she did not talk to students but professors were constantly asking her how the project was going and aspects like those.

### Unstructured Interviews

One unstructured interview was carried out at some point during the development of an observation. The investigator took advantage of the moment in order to ask the instructor of the

course about how the types of assignments and when writing took place in his class. The interview was transcribed and it was included in the Appendices.

There are two unstructured interviews with two different students. One of the interviews took place in the classroom in another hallway of the university. This was a natural conversation that was carried out in Spanish.

The contribution of the unstructured interviews is valuable because the instructor and students did not feel threatened because the conversation were too natural and part of common conversations between observer and teacher being observed or the students as well. In addition, interviewees give valuable details that helped the researchers put the pieces of the puzzle together to arrive to important conclusions.

#### Artifacts

##### Compositions of the Students Revised by their Teachers

The compositions that students wrote were also valuable sources of information since the researcher desired to analyze not only the amount of writing that is being done in class and as homework but also how the teachers check those works to identify how they treat errors and give feedback to pupils. According to Le Compte and Preissle the artifacts “constitute data indicating people’s sensations, experiences, and knowledge and which connote opinions, values and feeling. Artifact includes symbolic materials such as writing and signs of nonsymbolic materials such as tools and furnishings” (216).

## PROCEDURES

### Selection of the Sample Population

Since the researcher investigated where in the process of the learning of writing students were failing to meet with the expectations of the syllabus of their major, she had to choose four groups that are currently enrolled in the program. In each class the researcher carried out around ten observations in each class and applied the rest of data collection instruments such as questionnaires to the fifty nine learners and some unstructured interviews. As mentioned previously, the purpose of selecting all these groups was to identify where in the language learning process students are failing to meet with the expectations of the program of writing at higher levels of the major.

### RESEARCHER STATUS AND POSITION

In this project the researcher has the role of an insider because she had experienced processes that were described in the different observations. Actually, the problem posed to carry out this research was because her students had been presenting writing deficiencies in the writing skill. This aspect increased the validity and usefulness of the project since it looks for the remedial plan for a problem that needs improvement.

The researcher is a young woman. She is a graduate student from Universidad Nacional Brunca Campus. Then, she continued with the Licenciatura program in Heredia, Costa Rica during one year and a half and interrupted her studies in Costa Rica. She studied a semester at Appalachian State University which is located in the state of North Carolina, United States, as an exchange student from Universidad Nacional. She is currently, studying in the master's program of second languages and cultures at Universidad Nacional. Regarding this researcher's working experience; she has been working for the Ministry of Public Education in Costa Rica for 5 years.



Also, this researcher worked at C.E.I.C that stands for Centro de Estudios en Inglés Conversacional, a language institute ascribed to the Escuela de Literatura and Ciencias del Lenguaje of Universidad Nacional in Heredia.

## CHAPTER IV

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### General Results

In order to analyze the data gathered from the different instruments employed in this project, which were structured classroom observations, questionnaires, unstructured interviews and artifact collection (see appendices 74, 76, 78 and 81). The investigator decided to first, classify all the information into two main categories in the format of a concept map for the purpose of carrying out a thematic analysis in an orderly manner. The researcher sorted out the data that was attuned with the research purpose into broader themes. These broader themes (In-Classroom writing processes and out-Classroom tasks) created the main basis for the rest of subcategories that were described. The researcher had these broader themes in mind since the very beginning of the investigation process as a way to keep the project oriented.

Consequently, the results were reported using a narrative account illustrating it using a set of figures that portrayed each topic from the concept map. The concept map showed that the writing classes represented the processes the researcher wanted to see and how it was being carried out both in and out the classroom setting. The first category, "writing in the classroom", was deeply studied due to the engagement the investigator had in the site with the four groups of the tourism major, having at the end 10 observations completed in each group. The structured observations were intended to distinguish the main processes that occurred in a writing



classroom, starting with the warm-up activities, followed by the presentation of the new tasks to the learners and finally the ways they received feedback and assessment from the teacher or classmates as a way to close the session successfully and meaningfully. Figure 1 depicts the processes observed during the field work in the section named "writing in class". The other section "writing out of class" was investigated using other methods such as questionnaires to students and teachers and unstructured interviews as well. This figure contains the main general categories analyzed through the process of this investigation.

The categories selected lead to a thematic analysis that allowed the researcher to work on emergent themes without losing the perspective of the research inquiry or purpose. The following topics were the core basis of the aspects that were emphasized in the research inquiry process. In addition, the investigator decided to show results and triangulate the instruments employed.

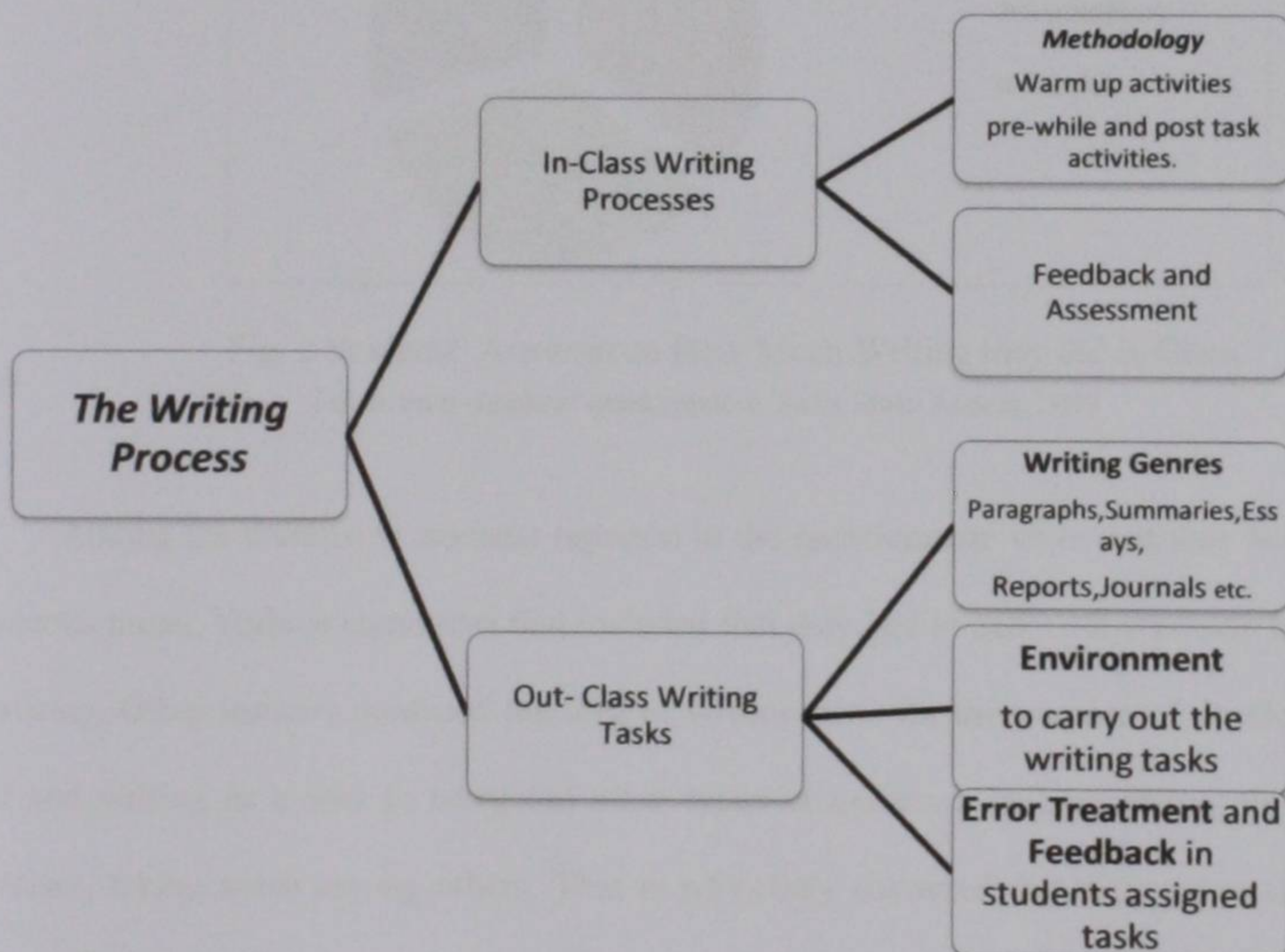


Fig.1. Display of the Typology of the Dynamics of the Writing Classes

## IN-CLASSROOM PROCESSES

### Focus of the Classes

Graph 1 is the evidence from the questionnaire in which students answered the question how much writing they did in classroom sessions. A 36% of the total population of fifty nine respondents pointed out that they always wrote in classroom, whether it was taking notes, fill in grammar exercises. A 34% percent said that they wrote often, while a 28% stated that they sometimes wrote in class and just a 2% percent replied that they rarely developed writing texts in the classroom.

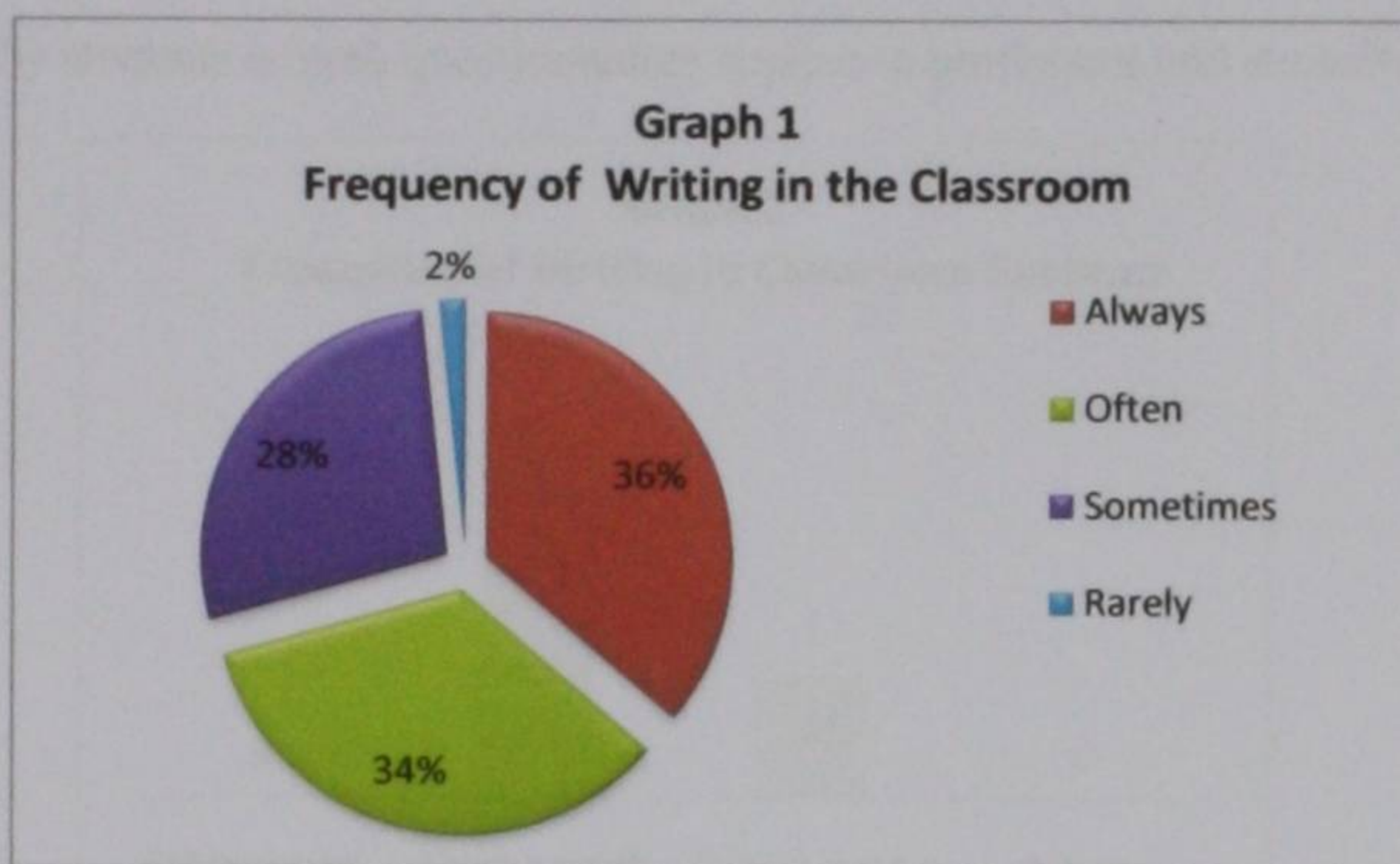


Fig. 2 Students' Answers on How Much Writing they did in Class  
Taken from students' questionnaire. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

Among the comments students reported in the questionnaire were that they had to write numerous times. Various comments that included that they had to carry out a weekly homework in writing. Other learners confused the idea of writing texts for the purpose of developing that skill and writing as a way to carry out other types of exercises such as filling out grammar exercises, taking notes among others. That is why, they answered that they wrote in most of classes. The researcher decided to use these qualitative comments in favor of the assumption that

students did not commonly write in class. Even though this question was explained orally to the students who collaborated with the questionnaire it was evidenced that they could not differentiate writing with a purpose other than filling out grammar exercises for example.

Likewise, according to professors' answers to the same question students reported; it appeared that tutors did implement writing exercises very often in class. Three instructors stated that they developed writing tasks at least once a week, while only one professor pointed out that the core of his classes was grammar because the content in the area was heavy and so he had students writing just once a month. The reply of the professors for this question was attuned to the ones given by students in both questionnaires applied to professors and students.

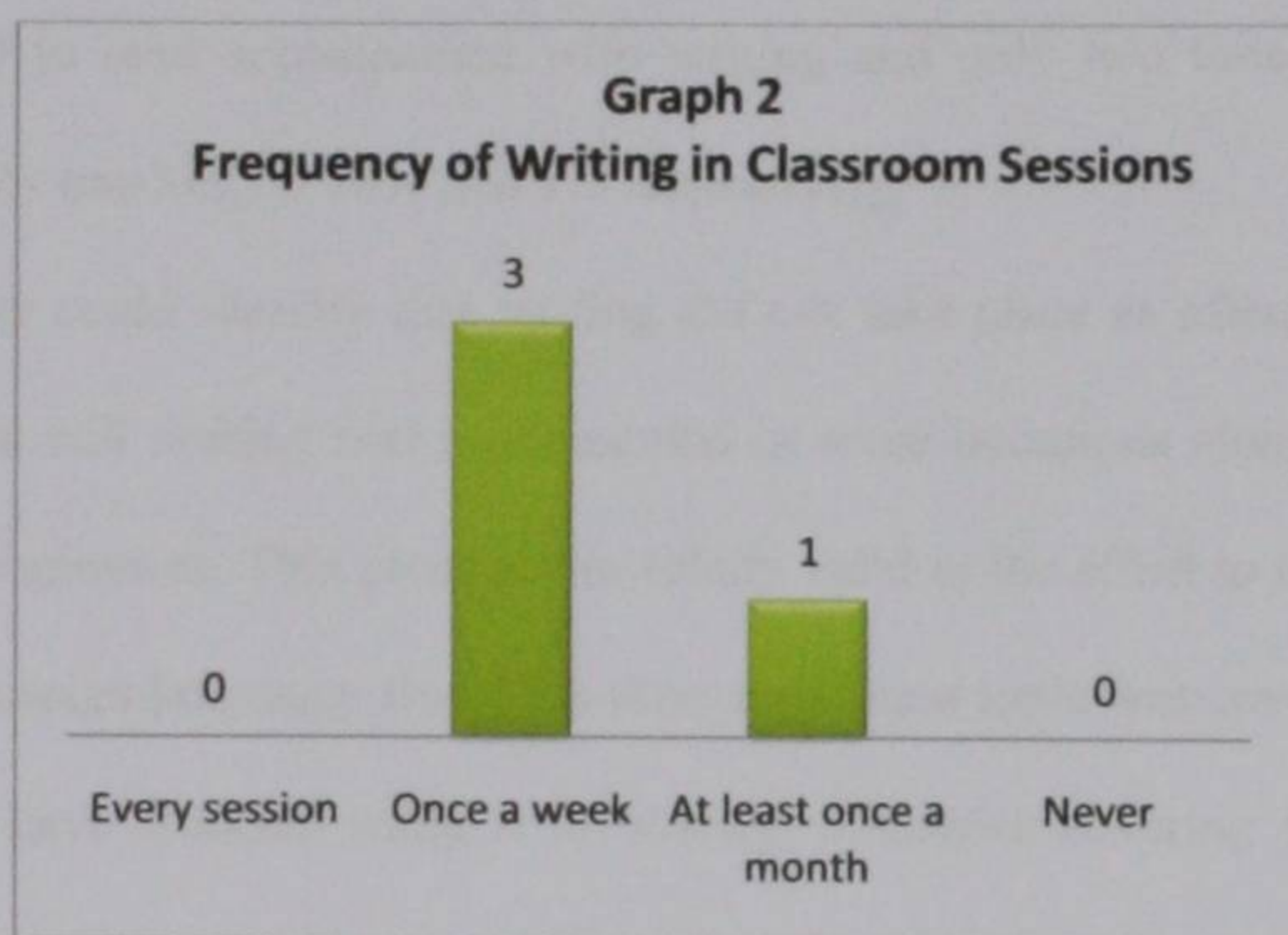


Fig.3. Amount of Writing Professors Implemented in the Classroom  
Taken from Classroom Observations. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

The investigator compared these two positions of the learners and professors to the observations that she carried out. Opposed to the answers they gave in their questionnaires; the observations' results evidenced dissimilar outcomes. Even though the learners and instructors established that they carried out writing tasks often, the observations which are the true examples of what happened in the class, reported that the focus of the majority of classes was given to

grammar. Douglas Brown points out that "classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence" (245).

Actually, graph 3 showed that 55% percent of the time was devoted to grammar only. This means that the instructor had students working on grammar cloze activities from beginning to end. And this pattern was repeated over and over during twenty two lessons observed. On the other hand, five times were dedicated only to writing, which indicates that 12% of the period committed to this skill. This showed that the amount of writing was not appropriate to the quantity of time that was favored to grammar. In addition, there were four sessions in which reading was implemented giving it a 10% percent of the total amount of forty sessions. Seven occasions were used to read accompanied with writing and only two times to grammar and writing simultaneously resulting in 18% and 5% respectively.

The researcher could identify that writing did not take place as often as professors and students reported, but still writing was implemented in some occasions along with other skills that were used as complement. This process was totally valid in the effort to have students learn how to write in the foreign language. But, each time a grammar topic was covered it would have been appropriate to have students using it in writing; otherwise covering so much grammar without putting it to practice would have no effect on students' compositions.

Analyzing this graph, the green part showed that 10% of the time was keen to reading only. The researcher simply judged that the professor did that with a blurred purpose or to fill out the space, because reading should use other skills such as speaking or writing to become significantly understood and commented with students to see if they could understand the text. The same happened with writing. Professors who taught writing needed to know that this skill could have been a lot more meaningful if students were provided with tools such as good writing

prompts and also readings, or movies, short videos that would have helped them face the blank paper. At least 18% of times the development of reading and writing skills took place. Even though professors complained about the lack of time they had to incorporate some skills, there was evidence that classes could be planned with the purpose of having all skills balanced.

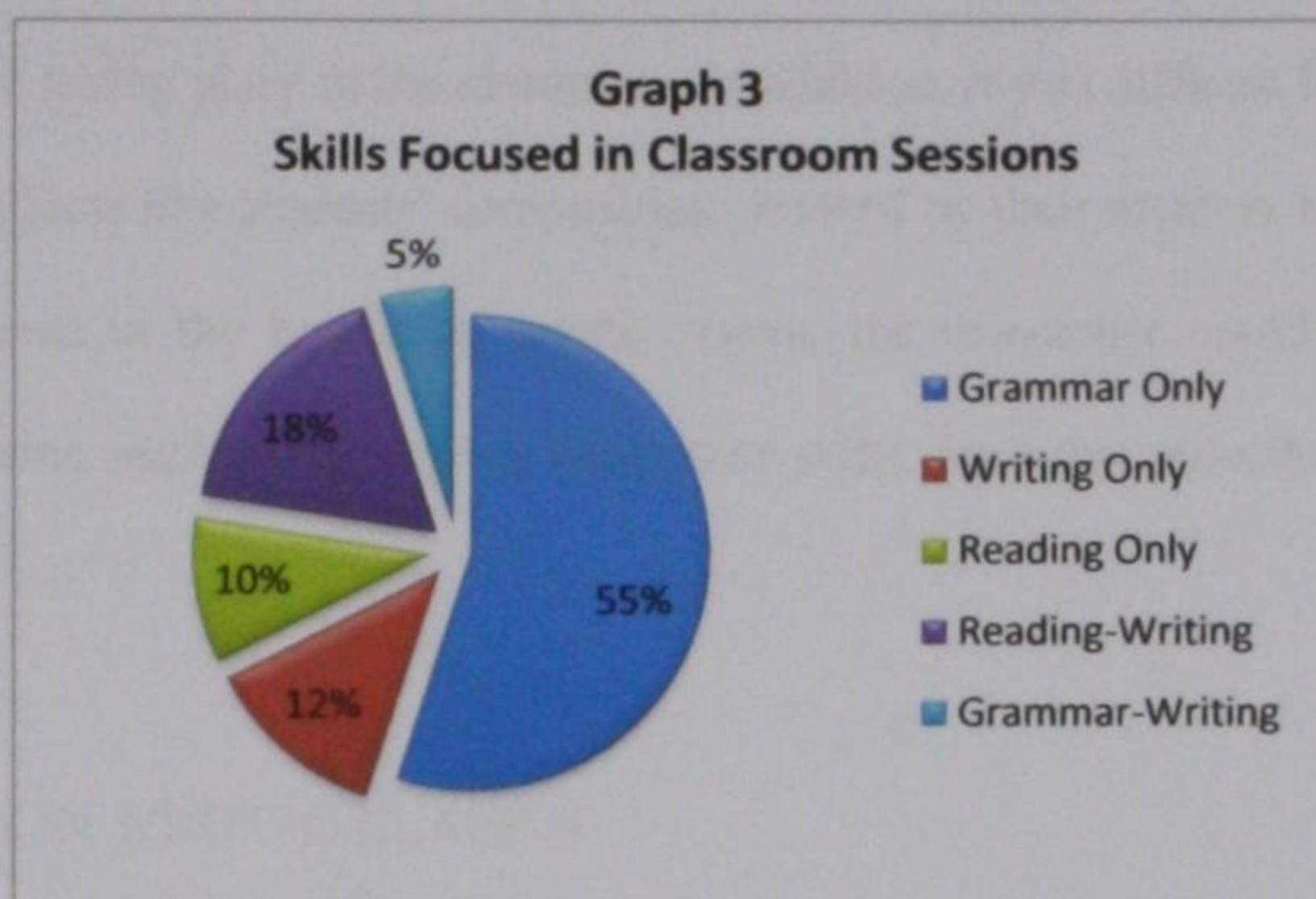


Fig.4. Focus given to Writing Classes

Taken from Classroom Observations. Sofia Mora Abarca 2009

According to the three instruments used to unveil the inquiry of how much writing took place in the classroom, there appeared interesting results that were obtained from the questionnaires applied to both students and professors and a totally opposing result from the classroom observations came out. The assumption that the researcher drew here was that professors knew the investigation was intended to know how writing classes were implemented. Thus, they could not risk themselves onto say that they rarely carried out writing if the classes and objectives in the programs demanded professors to have students develop some writing tasks in the classroom or at least guide them to develop writing as homework.

In regards to students answer in the questionnaire, the researcher could notice that students misinterpreted writing in English as a task itself, instead they do writing as a means to carry out other tasks for example complete grammar exercises which is definitely not the same as writing texts. That is why; they replied that they often wrote in class. The researcher heavily relied on her annotations in the forty observations made because they portrayed the true processes that were taking place in the classroom. In addition, it was difficult for the investigator to collect some artifacts like students' compositions revised by their mentors because they had a few, especially those in the beginning levels. Again, the researcher could demonstrate that writing was not being implemented along with other skills since the collection of artifacts was not easy.

#### METHODOLOGY IN WRITING CLASSES

Methodology was treated under the definition given by Douglas Brown as a reference. He defined methodology as "the different plans for presenting language to students in an orderly manner" (2). Using this definition as the initial point, the researcher started analyzing the processes that took place in the classroom beginning with the warm-up activities and following the pre-, while and post task activities. Each of them was described in separate sub topics to illustrate the researcher postulations. The categories analyzed here were mainly based on classroom observations; some of the categories were supported by using certain responses excerpted from the questionnaires applied to students and instructors to give validity and reliability to the theorization process.

### Warm-up Activities

A warm up activity is a preparatory procedure that is carried out in the beginning of an activity. First of all, the investigator analyzed the classroom observations. She used an observational protocol sheet (see appendix 1, page 74) in which she could determine the way the professor developed the reading/writing classes. The investigator could identify that the different sessions began with an unclear purpose. The professor usually started the classroom session giving instructions on the task students were supposed to carry out, giving messages, giving new copies to students and collecting the money from copies and so on. The examiner noticed that the first minutes of the class were messy and were not intended prepare the students' minds for the main activities. In many other observations, it occurred that the professor did not even carry out any warm-up exercise. The following figures 2 and 3 illustrate the assumptions of the investigator. At the end of the observation period, the researcher could determine that in thirty classes professors did not carry out a warm up activity as way to motivate students. Only in ten occasions the investigator could really see that the instructors used a quick activity to prepare students for the main tasks. It included the use of creative activities such as games, crosswords; have students narrating past experiences among others.

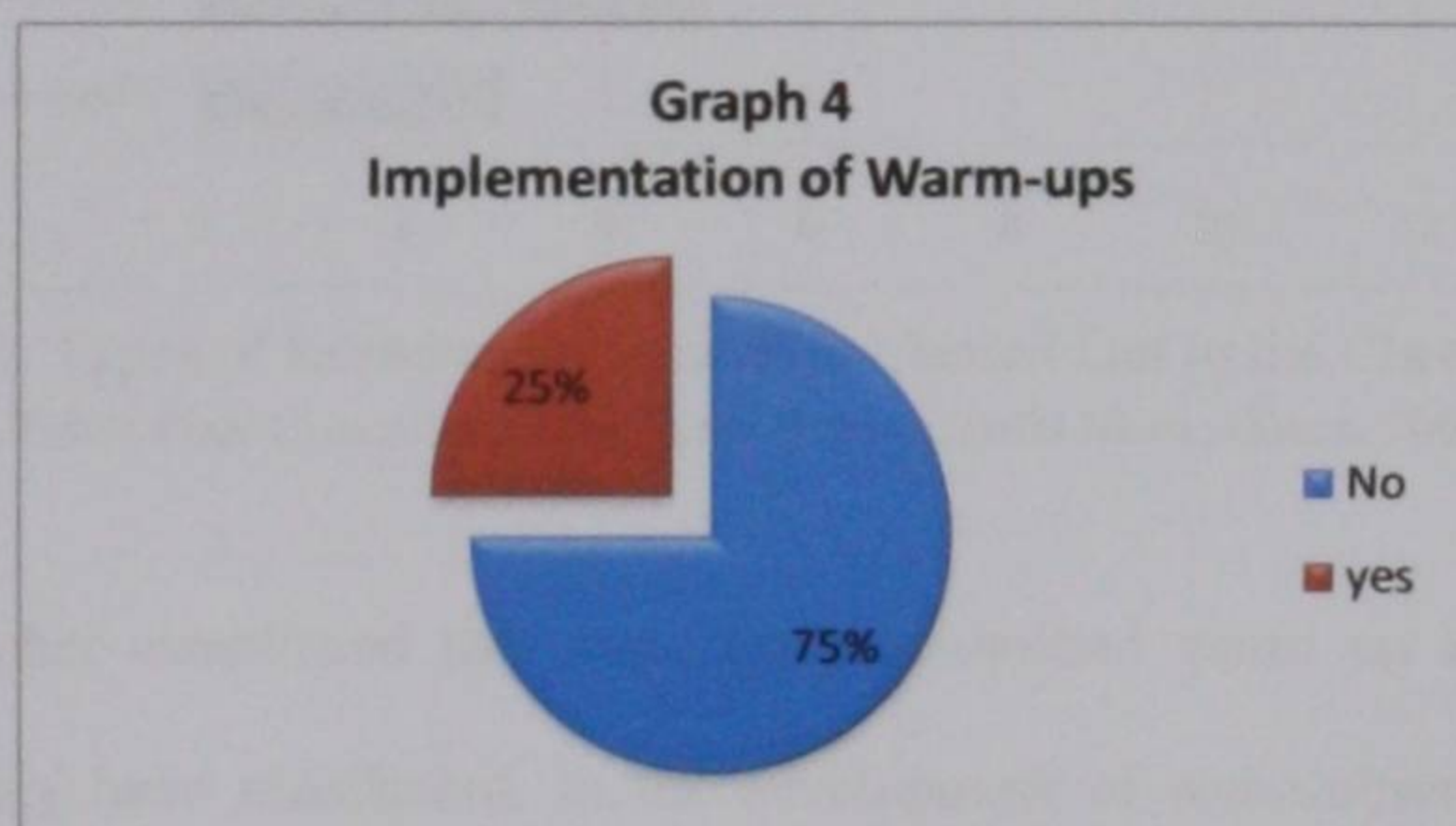


Fig.5. Number of Times that a Warm-up Activity was Implemented  
Taken from Classroom Observations Reports. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

Likewise, the following figure (graph 5) showed that the beginning of the class was used to undertake the following kinds of activities. Most of the times, the professors began the class with a great variety of aspects. As stated above, the activities that were excerpted from the observations and they were used to introduce a topic, to check previous work, give instructions to the task of the day, to carry out a creative activity and it was about the topic being treated in class, give messages from the professor or classmates, to carry out evaluations (quizzes mainly), review subject matter and in some many occasions no warm up was given under any conditions. All of these activities were labeled as shown in graph 5.

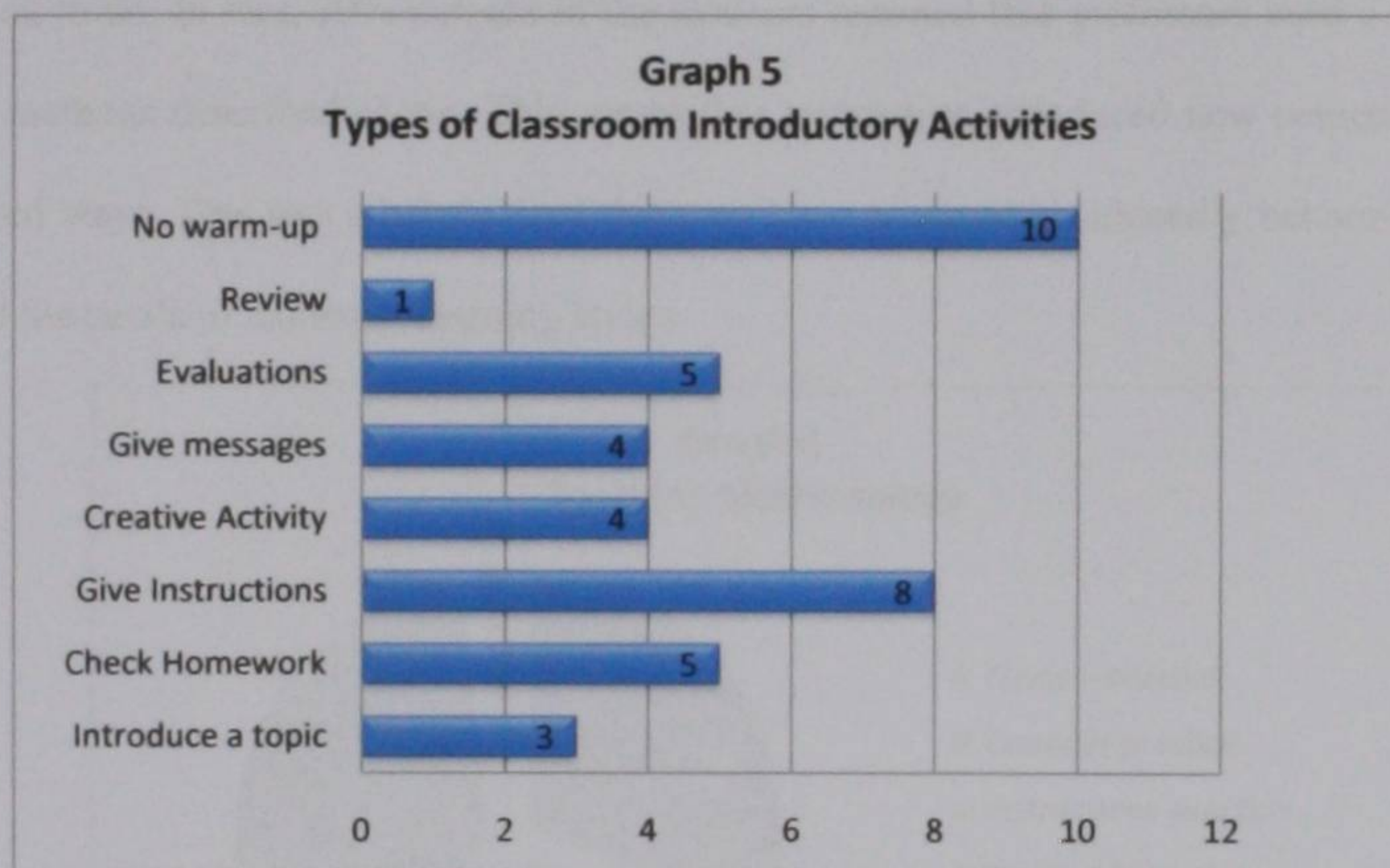


Fig.6. Types of Introductory Activities Carried Out in the Classroom  
Taken from Classroom Observation Reports. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

The researcher established that most teachers omitted warm up activities from their classes because they have manifested, in the development of some observations, not having enough time to develop contents; that is why, they rushed and in some occasions they preferred



to explain what students had to basically develop in the class as the main task to cover everything possible. In the following sections, the researcher described the other moments of the classroom development to study how the tasks were presented to students. The researcher asked learners (using the questionnaire) what type of methodology does the professor use to teach? (see appendix 2, page 76). 30% percent of learners answered that most teachers combined elements such as explanation of theoretical aspects and then had them working on the practice. 19% of pupils thought that their professors gave examples and then had them working. Practice alone was done just 5% of the time and giving the instructions to carry out practice a 5% as well. The following graph demonstrates that instructors used a variety of methods to show students what they had to do. In fact, 39% percent of the students reported that professors used a combination of the methods described above. This meant that instructors introduced new content to students in varied ways. This was a helpful tool that may have occurred accidentally but served as a way to feed the needs of students' learning styles.

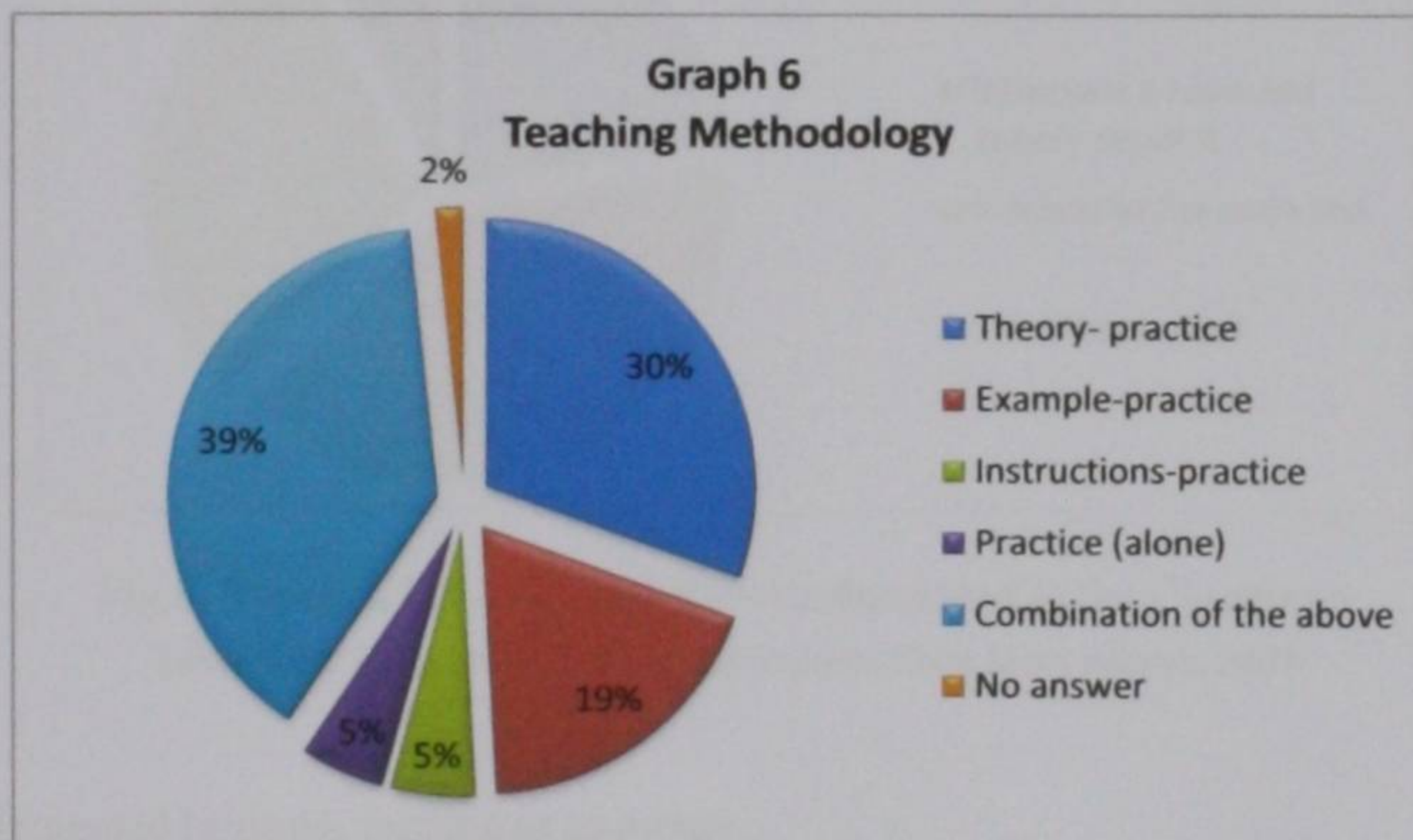


Fig.7. Teaching Methodology According to Students Responses to the questionnaire

Taken from Students' Questionnaires. Appendix 2, page 76

### Pre- Task (writing, reading or grammar) Activities

Another important aspect that was observed in classroom sessions was the implementation of pre-task activities. The presentation of a language skill is important in the way that it prepares students' minds and it influences them to carry out the main task successfully. The different professors did something in this part of the class; this means that 40% of the time, they introduced a new topic. 22% of the sessions, professors explained some theory about the tasks that students had to carry out or they gave instructions for students to follow the rest of the session. Finally, 8% of the pre-task were used to check students' homework. Among the pre-task activities the researcher demonstrated in this graph the types of procedures that were implemented in this part of every session.

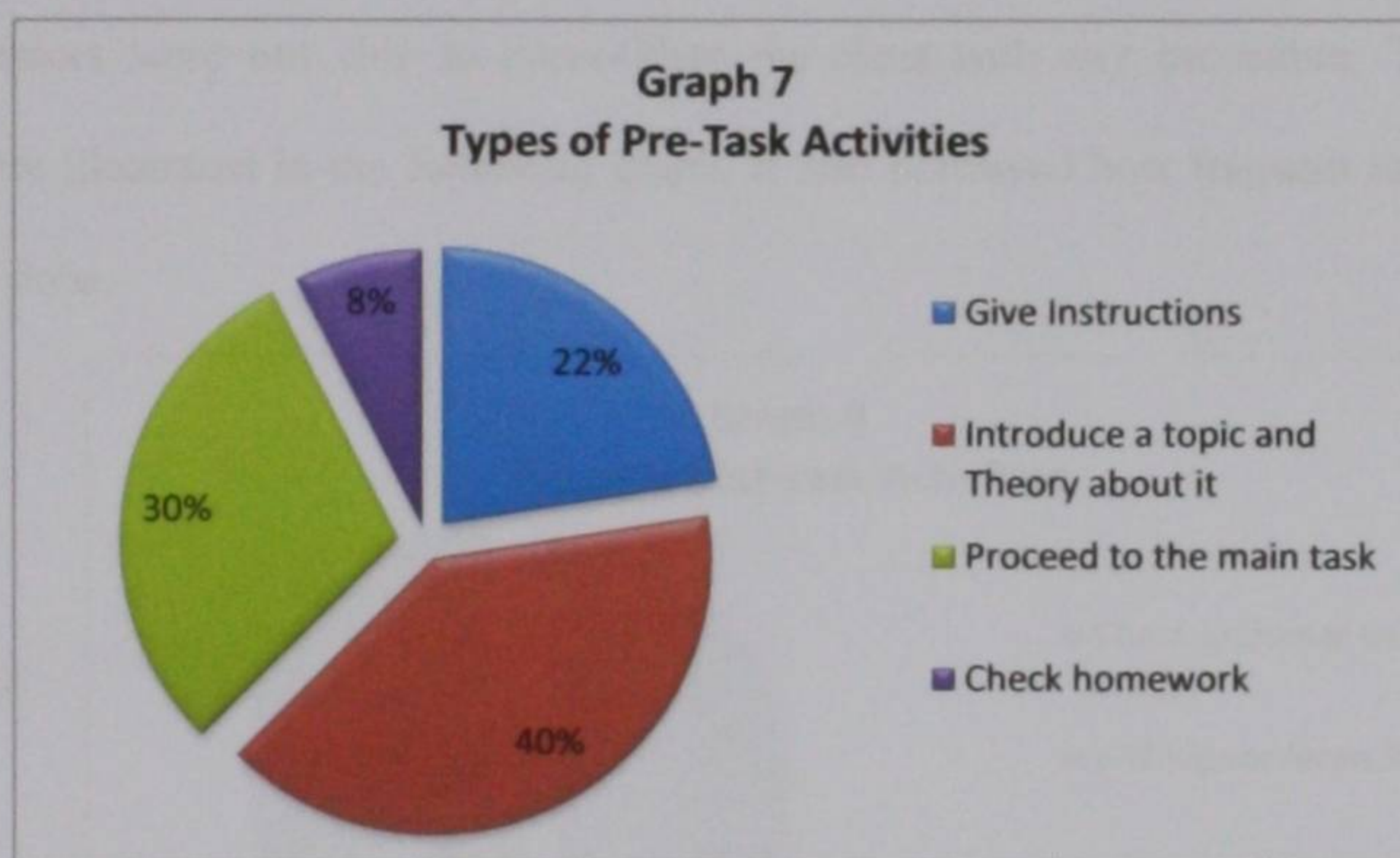


Fig.8. Types of Pre-task Activities implemented in the Classroom  
Taken from Classroom Observations Reports. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

### Tasks Implemented (writing, reading or grammar)

The task that was highly employed in the forty observations carried out was grammar. If grammar has to happen in an English course, that is in the writing area. That is why, some

professors focused on that part of language teaching in many sessions. Graph 3 on page forty five demonstrated the tasks implemented in the majority of these courses.

#### Post-task (writing, reading or grammar) Activities

Not in all classes a post-task activity could be implemented since the time of the class was limited to an hour and forty minutes per session. There were other periods in which it was possible to call the revision of grammar exercises a post activity. There were some activities like checking grammar exercises orally that happened in 47% of the total sessions, writing conferencing, reviewing activities that took place just in 3% of the classroom meetings, and comments about the activity 5%. The rest of times which was a 35% of the classroom time in which professors were not able to consolidate the class with any procedure. The post-task activities were illustrated in the following graph. It also portrayed how frequent the determined activity was done.

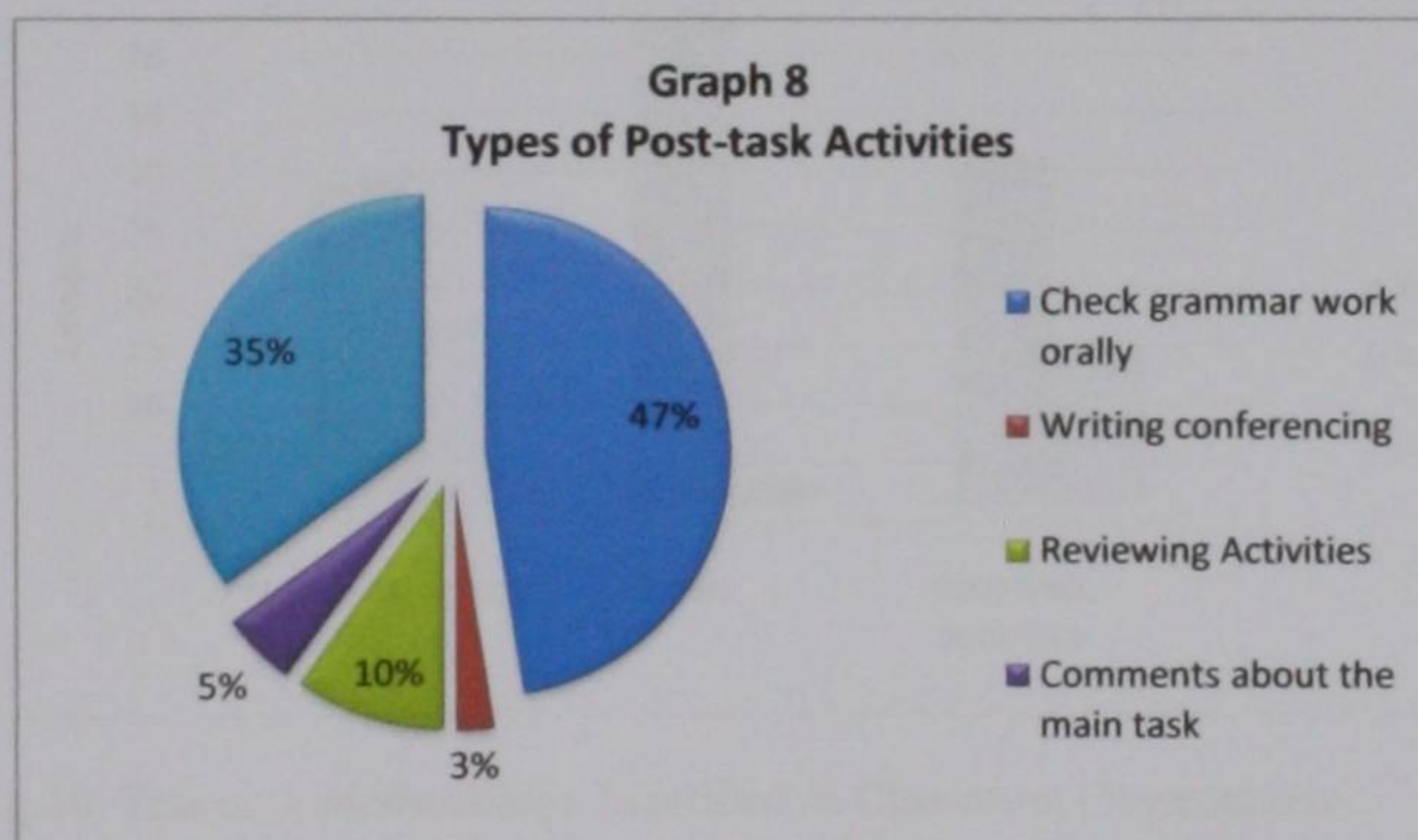


Fig.9. Types of Post-task Activities implemented in the Classroom  
Taken from Classroom Observation Report. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

As it was demonstrated, the classroom activities and the way they were implemented were not appropriate. Beginning with the warm-up activities, the classroom also ended in the same way. It indicates that the class began and ended with no specific purpose which meant that there was no evidence of preparatory and closing activities at all. The majority of observations pointed out that professors were mainly interested in first, introduce the topics using brief explanations, giving instructions to have student working the whole class in activities that were grammar mainly. At the end, there was so much to do in regards to the main grammar activity that there was no time to carry out the consolidation process of the class. In can be said that students sometimes had to go home and finish their work not sure if what they did in class was correct or not. The same pattern could be attributed to writing and reading skills.

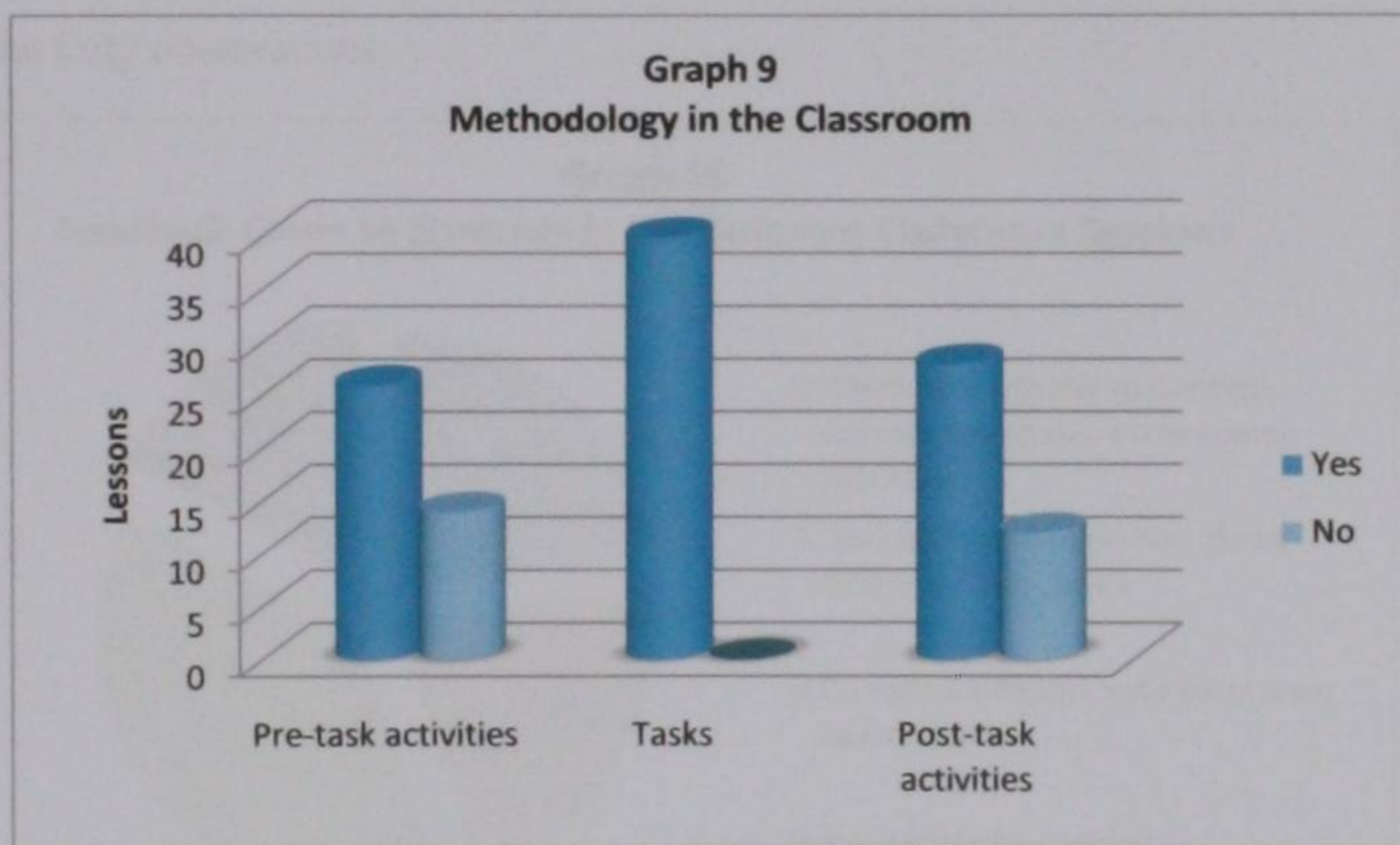


Fig.10. Teaching Methodology Identified in Classroom Observations  
Taken from Classroom Observation Reports. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009



## CORRECTION APPROACHES

### Feedback Provided In Classroom Sessions

During the observations, various types of teacher feedback were given to students despite the task the class was based on. In many occasions, the types of error feedback provided was to correct students in an oral way, type of conferencing, and also writing comments of the margins of the compositions that took place in some classes. When grammar was the focus of the class, the professor provided the kind of feedback in which students gave the answers of exercises and the professor confirmed if the answers were right or not. Moreover, as part of the process, the professor gave further explanation on the topics or structures that were not clear to students. As mentioned in the aspect of post-task activities, due to time constraints no feedback could be provided to students in many of the sessions studied. Figure 10 portrayed the kinds of feedback provided in the forty observations.

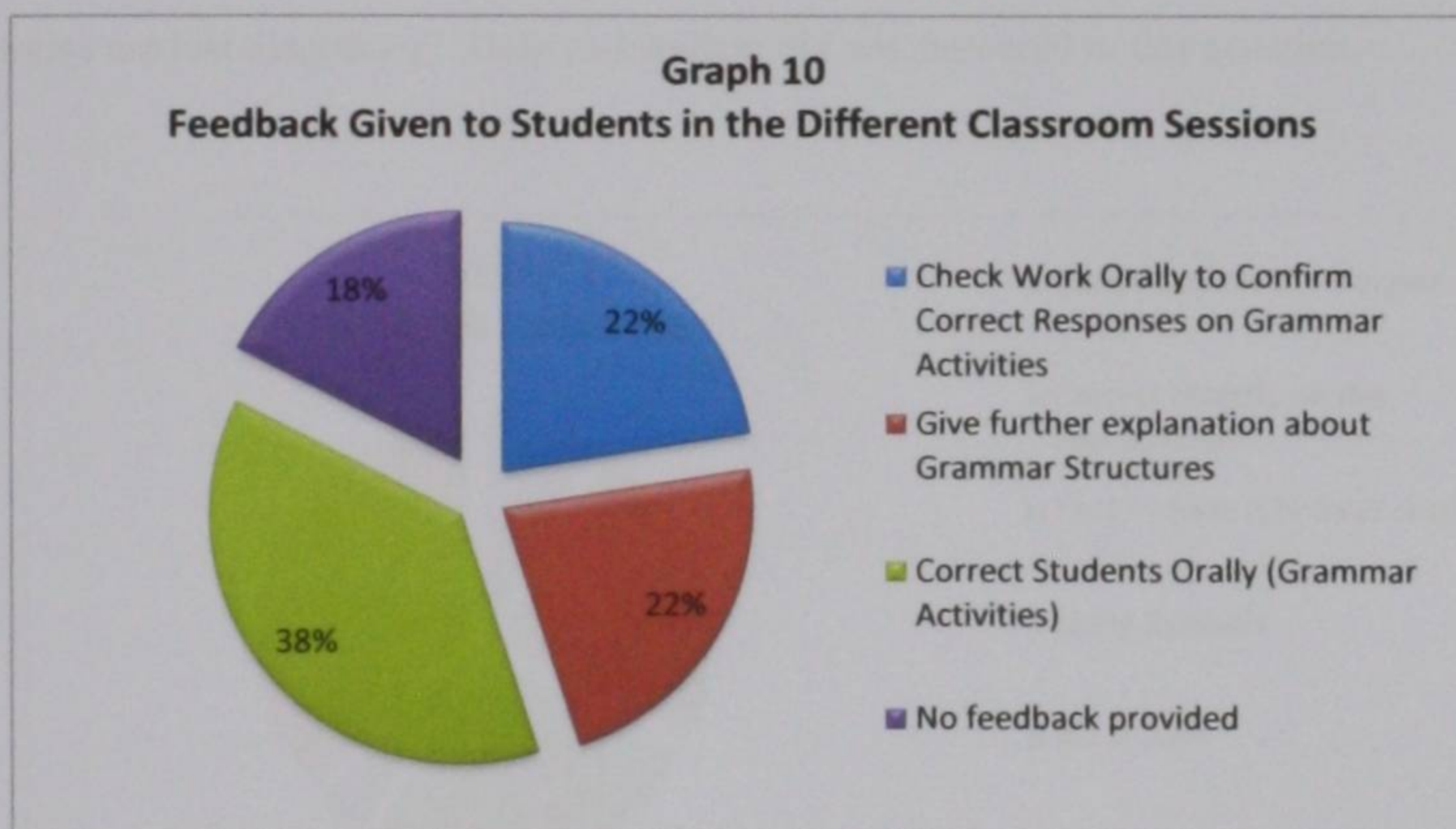


Fig.11. Types of Feedback Given to Tourism Students in the Writing Class  
Taken from Classroom Observation Reports. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

Contrasting classroom observations to the questionnaire applied to students the last category of interest was the type of feedback they preferred. In this section learners reported to have a variety of predilection in regards to the way they were corrected. 37% of the learners inquired responded that they liked any method mentioned that the professors would use to correct them. A minor number of pupils 8% answered that comments on the margins were right for them, while a 27% of learners would like the face to face or conferencing method for receiving feedback. In fact, among qualitative comments they gave, some students mentioned that they would remember all teachers' comments and they would also clarify everything just by talking about the composition. Contrary to that, some learners stated that they would forget about oral feedback. Having the professor using symbols to point out the mistakes was popular among 24% of the population inquired. Finally, the use of commentary on margins was less popular. Only 8% of respondents preferred this type of feedback. Actually, one girl wrote in that "comments on the margins are just disgusting". Only one student did not answered to this question.

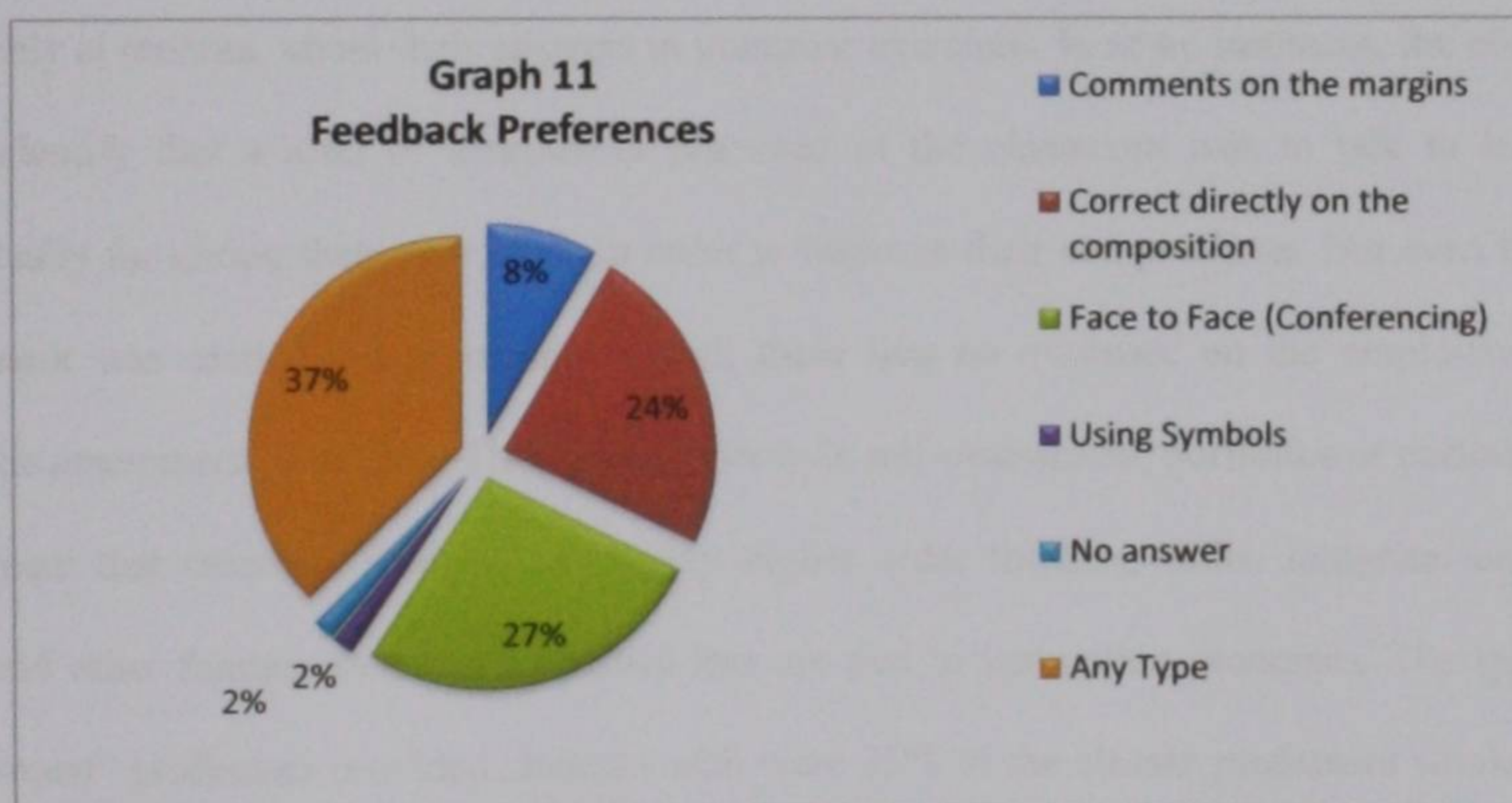


Fig.12. Students' Preferences in regards to Feedback  
Taken from Students' questionnaire. Appendix 2, page 76

Based on graph 11 which showed the learners' predilection in regards to the kind of feedback, it has been demonstrated that most students like to receive feedback of any sort. In addition, a good number of students were in favor of the conferencing type of criticism, which was very popular among students at higher levels. Professors would really implement different types of feedback because not all students have the same ways to understand and analyze their own mistakes.

## ASSESSMENT

In this investigation the researcher would use the term of "Authentic Assessment to describe the multiple forms of assessment that reflect student learning, achievement, motivation, and attitude on instructionally-relevant classroom activities" (O'Malley and Valdez 4).

During classroom observations teachers used multiple ways to assess students' work. Some professors normally walked around the classroom to help students in case they had questions or doubts. Also, one way to check activities done in class was to ask students, commonly at random, about their answers in grammar exercises. In some instances, the observer could identify that a kind of assessment practiced in the classroom was to talk to learners individually for giving them new ideas in order to improve their compositions. But even though assessment was carried out to certain extend, there was no evidence on the employment of authentic assessment in writing. These aspects include self-assessment, portfolios or performance assessment that demands students to employ higher order thinking skills, integrate language skills and other fundamental characteristics that are tied to instruction processes. The types of "assessment" professors provided students with were 35% of the classes professors would walk around students' seats to see if they needed some help. 17% of the sessions teachers gave

positive comments and new ideas to students to improve their work (this happened when students wrote texts in class), and to make sure students did exercises, instructors asked them to participate by giving or reporting the answers to the practice they carried out as part of the main task. Here there is a graph that illustrates the types of assessment and evaluation of the students' activities in the different sessions.

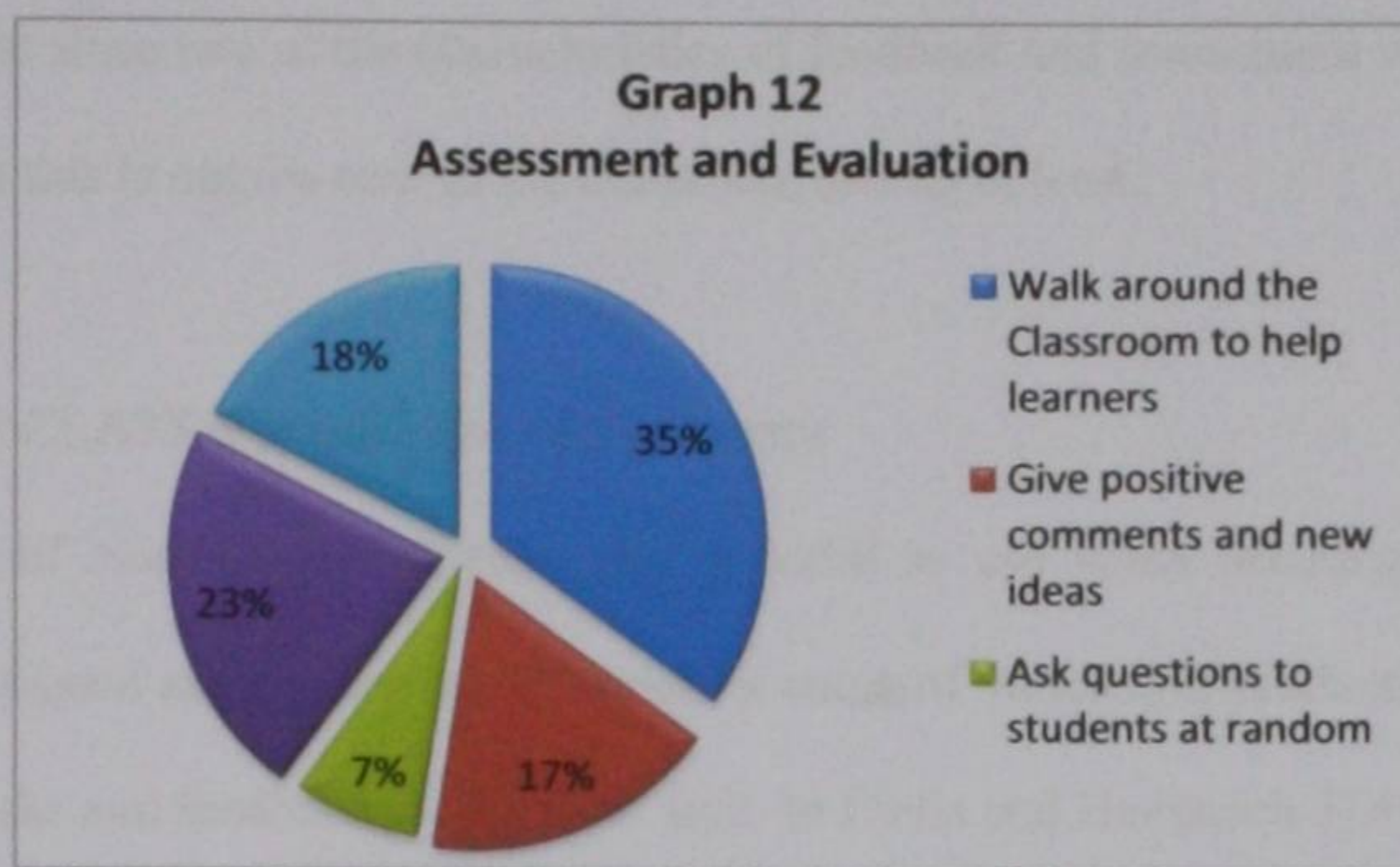


Fig.13. Kinds of Assessment and Evaluations in the Classroom  
Taken from Classroom Observation Report. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

As stated previously, practices that O'Malley and Valdez suggest were not implemented in the different classroom observations. Instructors never used strategies to see students' progress other than checking students' responses to exercises. That revision process employed was an old fashioned way to assess students, for it was the one that prevailed. There is a myriad of new ways to have students working and progressing in the use of the language skills and that may result more meaningful to them. As David Ausubel suggests in his theory of "meaningful language learning", students should learn by making linkages. If the language is presented in isolation, learners will obviously not cope with many objectives set at the beginning of any course. Teacher should take advantage of portfolios, learning logs, dialogue journals (O Malley



and Valdez, 151) and other methods for assessing students that may result very positive and different for students. By using these types of assessment tools, the teacher would have pupils working not only using previous knowledge but also integrate other language skills, which is one of the purposes of integrated English courses, as it is this particular case. One of the good aspects taken from the questionnaire was that teachers sometimes used positive comments. This is a very constructive proposal since one of the characteristics of feedback and assessment was that it was always negative, but this is not the case in the classroom setting at least.

#### WRITING OUT OF CLASS (Formal Task Assignments)

Writing out of class is one strategy that is valid to use when teaching the skill. In addition, "a well-designed assignment can stimulate a range of varied and productive classroom activities, writing tasks and feedback techniques" (qtd. in Ferris and Hedgcock 114). But time in the classroom sometimes is not sufficient to have students writing at all times in that context, especially because it takes too much time for some students to think and come up with the appropriate ideas for their compositions. Besides, editing processes also is time consuming. That is why; many professors preferred to have students writing at home; thus, pupils could also rely on other sources of help such as their classmates, books, internet among others. .

One of the intentions of the questionnaire given to the professors was to see how much writing was taking place out of the classroom context. Questionnaires were created and used with the intention of covering aspects that could not be seen in classroom sessions

In this instrument teachers declared that they assigned written work for the learners to develop at least once a month and only one of them said that students had to write at least once a week. The types of homework included writing reports about readings, writing paragraphs and

even essays for the students at level II integrated English courses IV. Moreover, in every classroom inspected the investigator was alert onto identify if the professors assigned writing as homework. Actually, there was numerous times in which professors assigned students to finish with grammar exercises at home. One professor, named I.G. in this project, assigned writing compositions for students at least three times a month. He told the observer that he did this using the e-mail as a way to send and receive assignments. The observer asked him if he took time to explain to students how to develop the different types of genres, but his answer was negative. "He manifested that there was no time to cover grammar, reading and writing in classroom" (observation # 1, group 80, August 13, 2009). This meant that he assigned work for students to do out of the classroom context and they had to guess what the writing genre consisted of. If he asked learners to write paragraphs how were they supposed to write it if he did not explain how? This was an interesting aspect to analyze ahead in this section.

The following figure shows the number of times students had to perform writing out the class. The percentages demonstrate that in only 37% percent of the times students had to carry out writing assignments and the rest 63% percent of students did not have to do any homework. In addition, this section leaded the researcher to describe the other parts of the writing process which were the environment, the writing genres students were asked to develop and most importantly the way the professors corrected those written works.

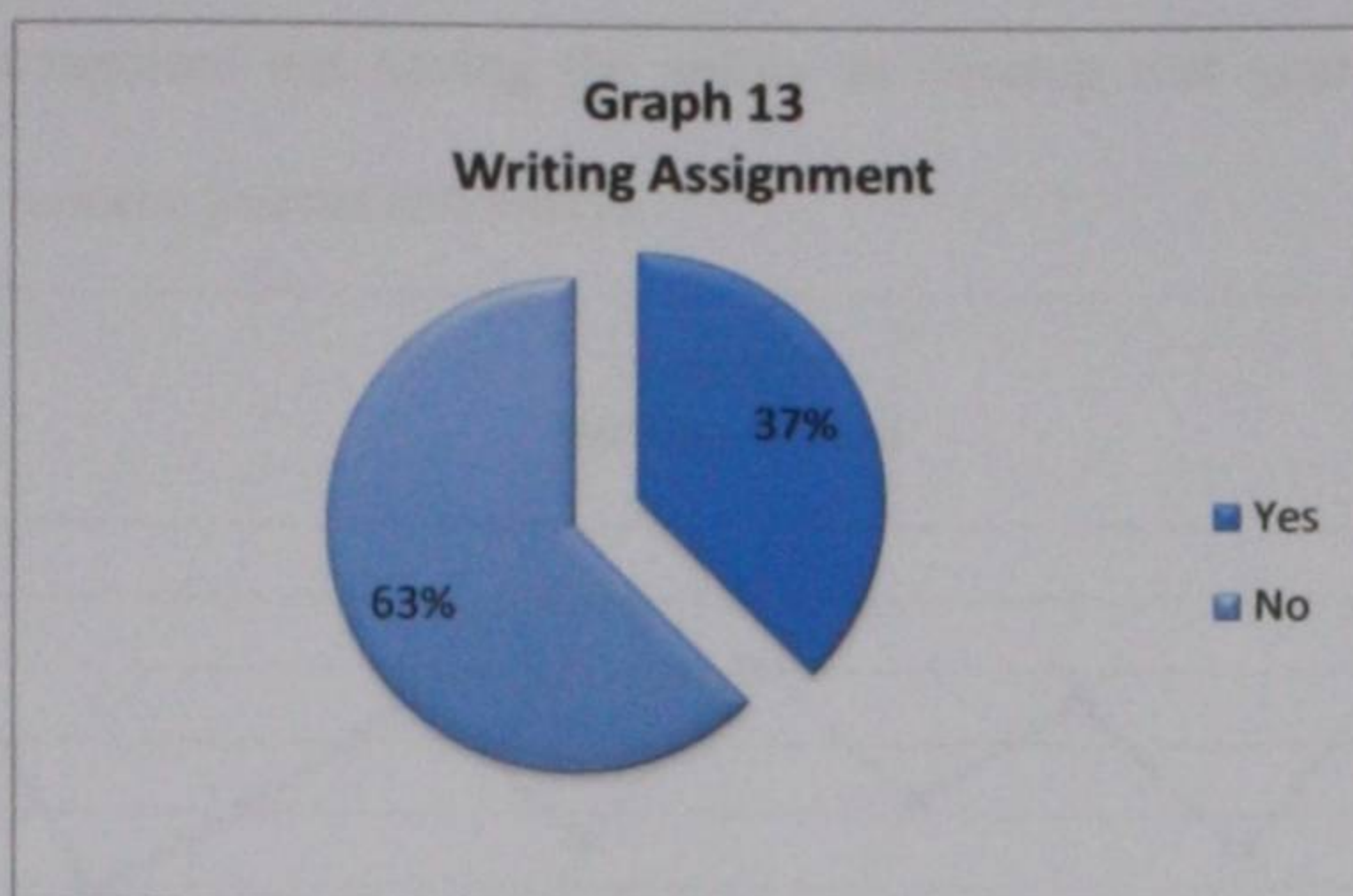


Fig.14. Writing Assignments in 40 Different Sessions  
Taken from Classroom Observation Reports. Sofia Mora Abarca, 2009

### Writing Genres

In addition to writing sometimes in the classroom, professors asked students to develop a series of genres as part of the program's demands (see appendix 3, page 78) as homework. Pupils stated in the questionnaire the types of genres that they could develop. Graph fourteen illustrated the number of students that could develop a determined genre. These results also depended upon the proficiency levels that the learners had, because there were respondents from levels I and II. Obviously the ones at higher level could be able to develop more than one category.

Another genre that students must know how to develop was letters. According to the program of the major it is a fundamental task for students to carry out, for this content was included in most of the courses programs. Students should learn how to write letters of all kinds, especially business letters. In regards to the respondents' answers, not all of them knew how to write them. Students also responded about their knowledge on how to write summaries. In this

case, learners also reported not having the ability to develop that genre. This same pattern happened with the reports, journal and essays.

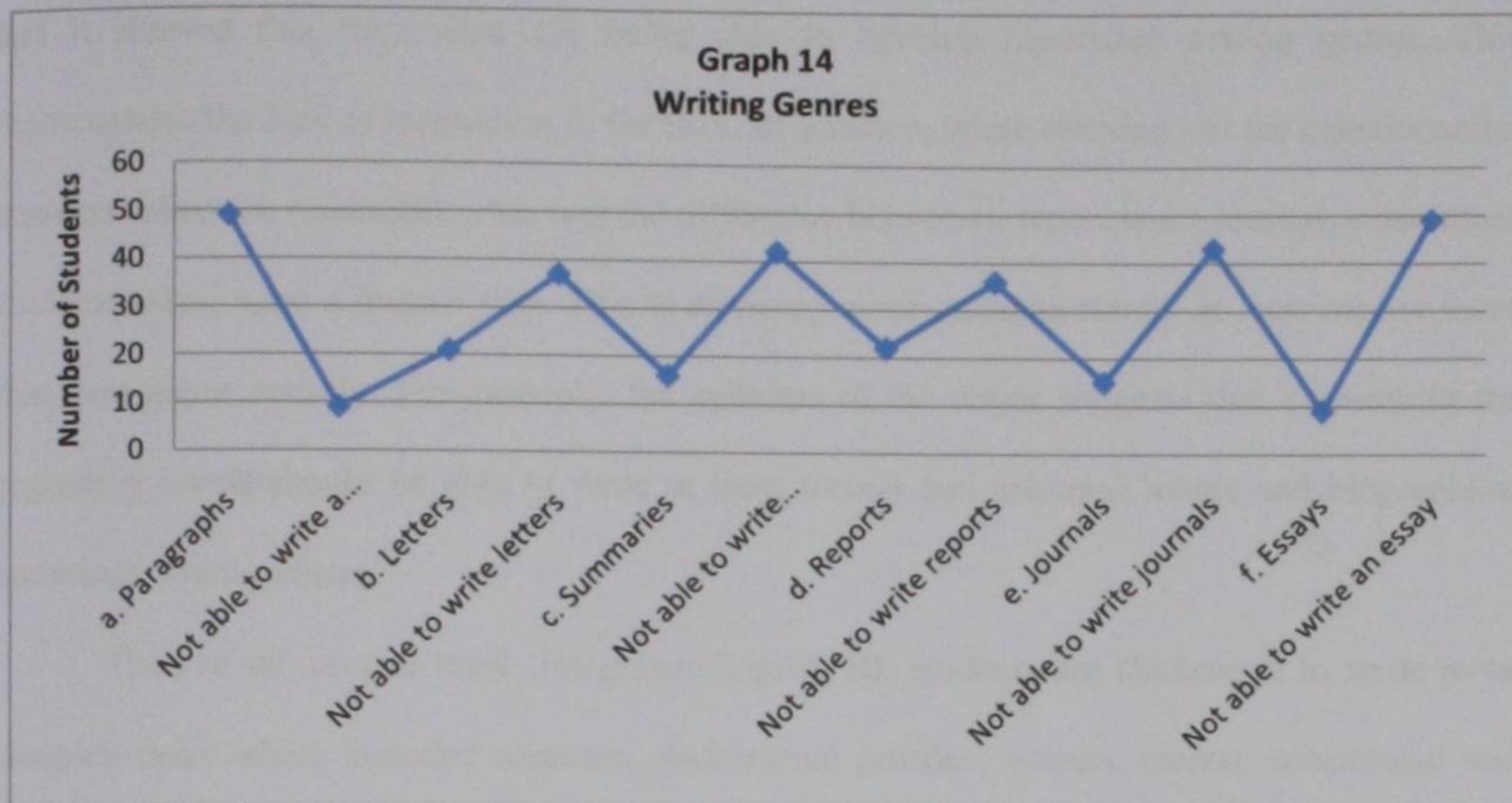


Fig.15. Students' Ability to Develop Writing Genres

Taken from Students' questionnaires. Appendix 2, page 76

According to the answers of the students based on the question "which writing genres they could develop" there were a good number of the learners who already master the paragraphs, showing that fifty students knew how to write them and ten learners who did not. In regards to writing letters, twenty students reported that they could develop letters while thirty eight could not. There were also participants who accepted not having the knowledge on how to write summaries in which forty two pupils said they do not know how and sixteen said yes. Concerning reports, twenty two of the learners considered themselves able to carry out that genre while thirty six were not. In addition, forty three students reported not being able to write reports and twenty two declared that they could do that. Finally, forty nine students responded that they were not able to write essays while the small amount of nine pupils reported being capable of carrying out that task.

This last graph shows that despite the answers of the professors who manifested that they carried out writing activities in most of their classes, students analyzed their abilities in the skills and it showed that they were not being able to develop numerous writing genres. This demonstrates the lack of instruction in the skill. In addition, while carrying out the questionnaire, students asked the researcher what was the difference between a report and a journal, some other students asked what a journal was. This is alarming since students should at least master more than one genre entirely. For example, the syllabus of the major suggests that students in the beginning levels should be able to write at least formal and informal letters and biographies, narrations among others.

Then in the second level integrated English III, students are challenged to write more complex tasks which included resumes, professional profiles, memos, menus, educational and work reports, description of tourist places such as hotels, complaint, apology letters, criticism papers and speeches. Here, there is an example of the exigencies students must cope with in this major. In the fourth English course it gets more complicated because learners have to write genres such as summaries based on notes, all types of letters, questionnaires, brochures and leaflets, news, e-mails, designs for tourist projects and even essays of topics related to their field (Ajustes en la Instrucción del Idioma Inglés Carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible 23-31) More about this topic was discussed in the analysis of artifacts section.

#### Environment to Carry out Writing Tasks

The environment is one of the various elements that help learners learn. Students need relaxing atmospheres to carry out those tasks that cause trouble to them. For many people writing is a matter of inspiration, for that not all environments help them to get started and face the blank

paper. In the questionnaire given to students, learners responded the question “Where do you prefer to write (in English)?” and they favored their home because these pupils pointed out that there was more time to think and the environment was more relaxing. A similar amount of students responded that the classroom would be the best place for them to develop compositions since they could compare their work to their classmates’ and also ask the teacher about vocabulary and make things clear as well. For a smaller number of students, it is the same for them to write either in the classroom or at home. Figure 16 exemplified the environment the students prefer for writing.

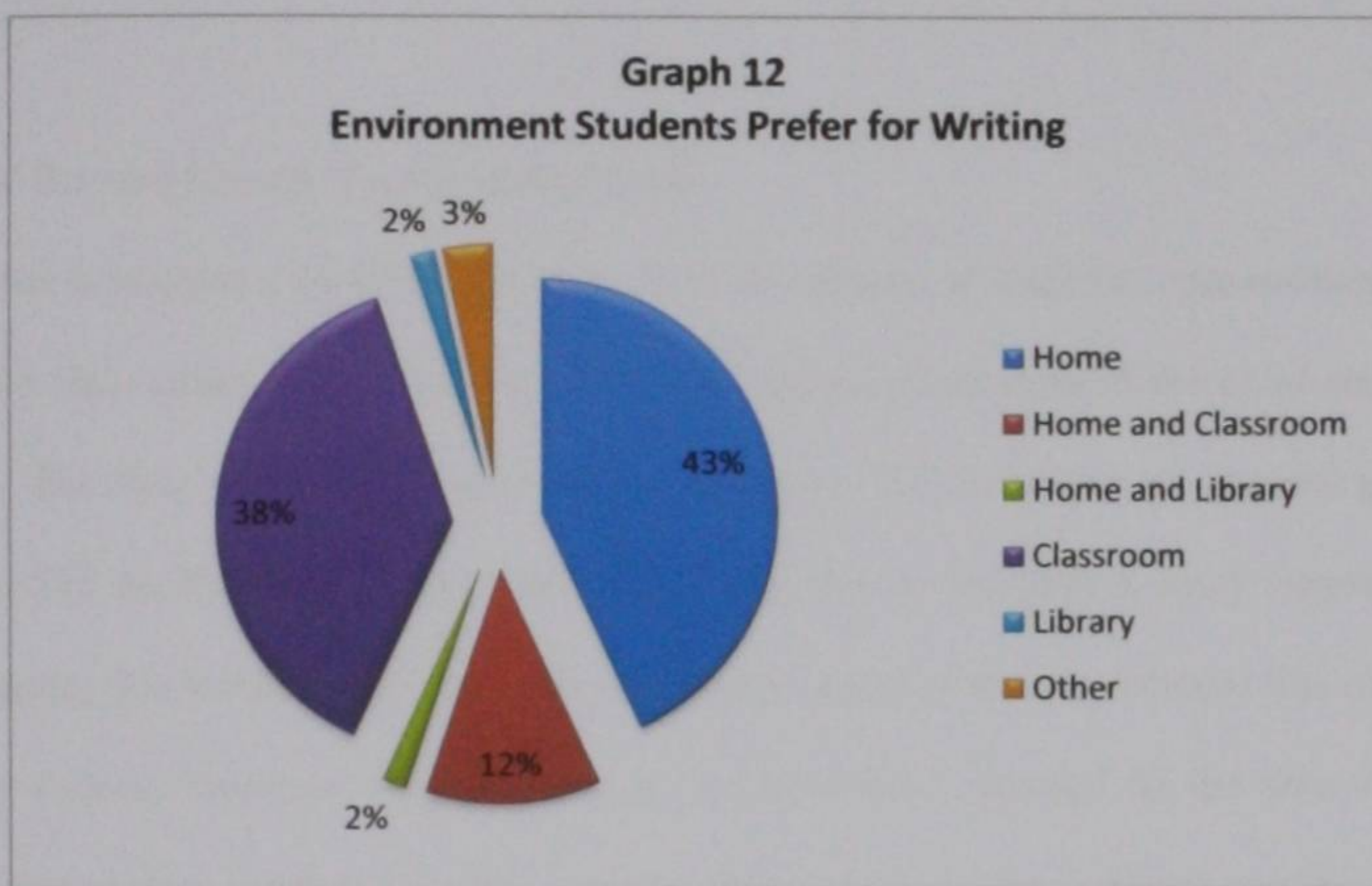


Fig.16. Place where Students to Prefer to Write  
Taken from Students’ questionnaire. Appendix 2, page 76

#### *Qualitative Comments*

1. *At home one gets more relaxed and there is more time to think*
2. *In class I can compare my work to my classmates’ work and I also can ask the teacher about words I don’t know.*
3. *In the Library it is peaceful*
4. *Others answered “I love to write in the messenger with friends”.*

Based on these qualitative comments the researcher was able to draw the conclusion that students really worry about the time they have to carry out the writing task and where do they have to work on that. It is a fact that the environment does an effect on students' elaboration of ideas. It was surprising to find out about learners who liked to write in the classroom, but for many of them it is the time they have to guide themselves by working as a group and also because the professor may provide ideas and make things clear for them as well.

## ARTIFACTS

### Students' Revised Formal Writing Assignments

The investigator could collect more than 27 samples of students' compositions that were revised by their respective instructors. All of the compositions showed the exact same revision patterns. The four professors employed the technique that is known as the red pen method (Slamani 53). As discussed in the framework of reference in this project, many experts refuse the idea of using this method to assist students in the process of writing because this method does not help learners improve. Experts such as Truscott have opposed to the idea of checking compositions using comments on the margins. New trends in the feedback area have proposed more innovative techniques to have students moving on in the writing process. One of the methods that favor students is the conferencing method. In Fact, this method was one of the ones students were inclined for when they responded to this in the questionnaire. The criticism here is that there are many new ways to treat students errors by giving them tools, awareness of their mistakes and positive feedback to help them really improve and be more open to change and expand their knowledge. Here the so called "banking education" proposed by Paulo Freire takes

place, because teachers are only depositing knowledge to passive recipients instead of having them criticize themselves and other classmates with the use of peer feedback and assessment.

According to the revised formal writing tasks, the revision processes provided students with the common comments of the margins. In some occasions, the professors just circled or underlined students' mistakes and this could be a confusing aspect, since the students could not guess what was wrong unless oral feedback was provided along with those corrections but this type of conferencing almost never happened in these kinds of tasks since the professor checked formal assignments at home and handed them back to students and gave no further explanation of the learners' flaws. In this manner, the students had very few opportunities to improve from one composition to the other since they were not prompted to criticize their own texts so the improvements in regards to content were not significant and the students' vocabulary was not enhanced.

### Syllabus of the Program

The syllabus of the program was a very important artifact to analyze since this document is the guide for every teacher to follow in the major of Tourism. It also helped the researcher gain knowledge about the objectives of each course analyzed and also the tasks that students were supposed to master in the learning process. This artifact was also useful to compare the level of the students and what they knew in the writing skill to see if all this matched with the objectives and content proposed in the syllabus.

As it was mentioned above, students enrolled in the Tourism major had to meet with a lot of expectations in all language skills. Even though the program emphasized the development of



speaking skills, writing could not be set aside since it is a fundamental skill to learn in the course. In addition, professor had to make sure that learners write flawless letters, summaries, brochures, leaflets because those are skills that they will have to carry out in their future field of work. After having analyzed all these categories developed in this section and the syllabus of the major, the researcher reached the conclusion that the syllabus is well designed because the contents were appropriately set and had a lot to do with the area of Tourism, the tasks were accessible for students to accomplish but the objectives could not be completed in 18 weeks of instruction. But the achievement of objectives is not a matter of the design of the program, that aspect has more to do with the way the professors managed to reach them in a semester.

#### Unstructured Interviews

These instruments served to refer and support some of the statements mentioned in the last section for the analysis and understanding of the events. The researcher carried out two of this type of interview and permitted see the opinions from one student and one professor. These instruments were not analyzed deeply because the researcher heavily relied on the questionnaires because students had the chance not only to give a close answer but in some other cases they could write opinions and insights about what was going on in the courses.

## CHAPTER V

## GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS OF THE FINDINGS

There were numerous findings that emerged from the analysis of the different categories that were supported by very reliable evidence obtained from the data collection instruments abovementioned. One of the research questions was formulated with the intention of gaining knowledge on where in the process of the writing instruction students were failing. Based on the analysis, there is not a particular punctual point in the process where students failed. Students simply went about the process of writing instruction without being successful because of many aspects that were highlighted in the analysis. To mention some of them, the researcher pointed out that classroom sessions rarely provided the learner the proper methodology to prepare them mentally for the main practice in class. Furthermore, the review of the literature and the concept map illustrated that the writing process should be composed of basic elements that allow the professor to present any skill in an orderly manner so that students can progressively learn a language. The learners should experience a class that starts from the specific to the general aspects of the skills treated in this specific part of the integrated English course in which students were enrolled.

In addition, Freire strongly criticized the professors that practiced this old fashioned model known as "Banking Education" in which students are passive recipients of knowledge. It is a shame to demonstrate that this banking education still occur in the university's classroom. The theory of the researcher is that professors teach the way they were taught, for they are not showing their own philosophy of education, in case they have that philosophy. The practices of English classes have changed over time as well as the approaches to error treatment in writing; it is a shame that professionals in education do not renew their own practices in the classrooms.

As it was mentioned in the analysis of the results, the focus and sequence of many classes observed were merely grammatical. Grammar was taught using the same method all the time. Professors usually brought copies to class and students had to carry out fill in the blanks exercises. After this, learners recite the answers mechanically like robots. The observations showed that classes were sometimes away from the ideal writing class.

Likewise, feedback came to be one of the most prominent aspects emphasized in this research project. As it was established in the concept map, the investigator placed this category as the ultimate process in both classroom and outside the classroom setting. In the different classroom sessions, feedback came to play an important role because the context where students were predisposed to learn and be corrected is in the classroom. In addition, the professors could take advantage of this moment to practice different and innovative feedback approaches described in the review of the literature discussed in the framework of reference. According to the records of observations the investigator could identify that professors commonly corrected students in the way that it did not permit them from either use on higher order thinking skills nor strategies for self criticism. These findings are good answers to the related research question proposed before conducting the whole research process. The problem posed was that students were failing to be successful EFL writers; this investigation did not show students' significant improvements in their compositions but they remain at a sentence level. Students have not learned to self correct their compositions at the content level, which is fundamental to do in order to become successful and proficient EFL writers.

Another finding that was a matter of concern is that despite the suggestions of the program of each course in regards to writing genres, This research showed that students were almost illiterate in that part because they demonstrated and recognized their deficiencies in that

specific area. Finally, writing in and out of class took place in just some occasions and it was alarming to see that course after course teachers incorporated so much grammar that later on learners will not know how to incorporate in their own compositions.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many aspects that may be considered after the results of this investigation are presented. The researcher would give authorities at Universidad Nacional Brunca Campus some pieces of advice to improve teaching and learning practices. First, administrators in this campus should organize more seminars, talks, workshops in the area of English teaching so that the professionals in this area can ameliorate their practices in all language areas and skills. Also, professors should take more responsibility about their knowledge and keep informed on new trends in teaching methods, techniques, feedback, and assessment among other aspects that are present in everyday classroom tasks.

The university should use evaluation forms for students to evaluate professors in the specific areas. This means that the institution should design a new instrument to evaluate the capacity for the teachers to instruct in the area they were asked to work. The instrument that is available for students to evaluate instructors is too broad and away from the reality of the specific areas. Experts should also instruct students on how to evaluate critically their instructors and classes in general because this can be a dangerous instrument and damaging for instructors if pupils use them inappropriately.

In addition, professors should be more open to the suggestions of their learners. It would be a good practice to ask students in the beginning of the course what their learning styles are, preferences for writing and likelihood to receive feedback or the method to treat learners' errors

A writing center comes to be a place in the university, it can be a small well lighted room that provides learners with computers and writing materials such as dictionaries, manuals like the *APA* (American psychological Association) and *MLA* (Modern Language Association), and of course the tutor who would help learners improve in writing with the use of collaborative learning techniques and valuable positive feedback that would be according to the student preferences. The writing centers work with timed appointments that students would make beforehand through e mail to the writing center's address or personally with the tutor of the place. In this way, many students would have the opportunity to meet with the expert in dealing with composition concerns. This remedial plan sounds practical but since in Costa Rica it has never been implemented plenty of training on how to administer these centers should be done to avoid the failure of the project.

If the university does not take this recommendation into account, the students of different majors, mainly those enrolled in Tourism, would be affected because it has been demonstrated that time in the English classroom has not been sufficient for them and for professors to provide appropriate feedback to learners. In addition, professors who formally assign students writing tasks would appreciate someone else to guide students into the right process of revision and self revision as well. The researcher strongly believes that university should provide all help possible to students in the process of learning a new language, especially if they try to pursuit post graduate studies abroad in an English speaking setting. Universidad Nacional should not run more risks graduating students with low proficiency in writing skills. For this reason, the remedial plan proposed in this section would be an excellent option to lessen the load of work for teachers and students would also see the results.



in writing. This practice would lead the courses into a successful performance. Furthermore, many professors do not consider the special needs; for example, some students need more time during classroom exercises and tests and it is pertinent to use tools to allow these learners reach the objectives of the course.

One very important aspect that authorities may do if they consider the prominence of this diagnostic part is to implement a project for academic success like learning or writing center. As it was mentioned in the theoretical framework, students need atmospheres or support places where they can go and discuss their assignments with experts in the area. Writing centers provide learners with a relaxing environment to get feedback on their texts. It is known that professors can provide students with individual classes to help them with projects that concern to their assignments, but there are learners that do not get along with their teachers or simply feel intimidated. In order to open projects like this, the university or the researcher of this investigation should carry out a needs assessment to really establish the feasibility of the center. Writing centers are obviously very useful sources in many universities of developed countries and have served to help learners cope with their written assignments and surmount their writing problems little by little.

Higher education institutions should adopt the good practices that have been successfully implemented in other institutions around the world. Even now more that Universidad Nacional offers English courses for specific purposes. It means that the population that is in the process of the learning of a foreign language has grown considerably. Since not all students have equal abilities for learning languages, places like writing centers should be implemented in every public university of this country in order to aid students that have difficulties dealing with writing aspects

The contribution to the field of Applied Linguistics is worthwhile since the researcher marked recommendations that brought about innovative application of support centers to enhance pedagogical practices in higher education institutions. Additionally, one area that was considered as untouched by some expert in Applied Linguistics was explored giving more premises for further studies in the area of linguistics in Costa Rica.

## LIMITATIONS AND SOLUTIONS

In all kind of research studies there are plenty of limitations that sometimes prevent those investigations go beyond their real purposes. Those limitations commonly consist of the level of generizability of the studies. The results of this study are limited to the people studied. This means that results can obviously be generalized to other similar learning communities that take ESP courses comparable to the ones observed. But if the researcher would like to take a broader view of this diagnosis, she would have to carry out an independent study on the other majors that offer writing courses at the University to establish more valid reasons for the implementation of the remedial plan proposed in the recommendations of this particular research project. Of course, writing centers are a good option to all foreign language learners; but it would be ideal to know students sources of errors of students from other majors in order to offer other recommendations that may not point out to the training of tutors and maybe solve the writing problems at the classroom level.

The solution to the limitations pointed out in this section is to broaden the population studied. This means that for a future diagnosis the researcher would also consider groups enrolled in writing courses in the English teaching major and Diplomado in English, in order to investigate a larger population. As it was mentioned above, writing problems are very common in EFL learning communities, but the sources of the errors or problems to develop a language skill may not pertain to the same reasons described in this project; that is why, the recommendations and conclusions drawn in this project do not work for the unstudied cases of those majors.

The projection of this research task is to investigate other groups taking writing courses that are not integrated. For example, observe classes of paragraph composition, essay,



bibliographical research, academic writing and many others that can result in good evaluation process to improve programs, help teachers and learners gain knowledge of new practices in EFL writing and also validate the opening of the writing center with a lot more supporting material.

## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. OBSERVATION PROTOCOL SAMPLE SHEET

The main objective of this data collection instrument is to observe how the writing classes are being developed in every single reading/writing class for the levels II AND IV of the Tourism Major at Universidad Nacional Brunca Campus.

In addition, the observer needs to identify the different teaching practices in the writing area. These are methodology, materials, order in which the processes are presented to students, feedback as well as work assigned in every class.

Observation Class

Reading and Writing Class

Observation # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Integrated English II and IV

Objectives of the observations

- To observe if the writing task is being incorporated as a fundamental part of the classroom activities.
- To identify and analyze the procedures employed by the professor in order to teach writing.
- To determine the type of feedback provided by the teacher for the writing activity.
- To observe how the writing skill is being evaluated.

Class Started at \_\_\_\_\_

Skill being developed

a. READING

b. WRITING

c. GRAMMAR

Was there a warm up activity or transition from last class topic?

---



---

What was the pre-task activity about?

Description \_\_\_\_\_

---

Materials used

---

What was the main activity about?

Description \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials used \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What was the post- task activity about?  
Description \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials used \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What other skills were used during this class? How were they implemented?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What kind of feedback did the teacher give to students to improve their ability to carry out the determined skill?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How did the teacher assess and evaluate the activities during the class?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Was any writing exercise assigned as homework? If affirmative, what did the homework consist of?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Finished at \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS

## Appendix 2. STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE

1. Do you like to write in English?

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2. How important is it to write in English in your major?

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3. Do you think you have the ability to write in English?

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4. How often do you write in the writing class?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely

Why? 

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5. Where do you prefer to write (in English)?

- a. Home
- b. Classroom
- c. Library
- d. Other

Why? 

---

6. What of the following writing genres can you develop?

- A. Paragraphs
- B. Letters (Business, friendly, apology, complaint etc)
- C. Summaries
- D. Reports
- E. Journals
- F. Essays

7. Which one of the above do you feel more comfortable with?

---

8. Who do you usually ask to help you with your writing work?

- a. Teacher
- b. Classmates
- c. Friends
- d. Other

9. How would you like the teacher to correct your written works?
- Comments on the margins
  - Correcting directly on the composition
  - Face to face (type of conferencing)
  - Using symbols

10. Which one of the above do you think works best for you? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

11. What type of methodology does the professor use to teach writing?
- Theory-practice
  - Example-practice
  - Instruction-practice
  - Practice (alone)

12. Which of the following manuals do know or do you use?
- APA (American psychological Association)
  - MLA (Modern Language Association)?
  - Other
  - I do not use any manual

13. Which ones of the following techniques do you use?
- Paraphrasing
  - Summarizing
  - Quoting other's work in your work
  - Other

14. If you could change something about the course what would it be?

15. What do you think is your level of proficiency in writing?

- Outstanding
- Very good
- Average
- Poor

16. If your level is b, c, or d. How can you solve the problem?

Appendix 3. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PROFESSORS OF READING AND WRITING COURSES

Universidad Nacional  
 Maestría en Segunda Lenguas y Culturas  
 Investigación en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas  
 Researcher: Sofía Mora Abarca

SAMPLE

Dear Professor: Your cooperation in responding to the different questions is prominent. Please try to answer the different questions as fully and honest as possible.

I. Background Information

Name of the course: \_\_\_\_\_

- I. How many times have you taught this course previously, including the present course?

---

II. In regards to teaching of the English language, what do you think is your area of specialization?

---

II PART. Based on the course, please answer the following questions.

1. What skill do you focus the most in the current course you are teaching?
- Grammar
  - Reading
  - Writing

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How often do you ask your students to develop writing exercises?
- Every Session
  - Once a Week
  - At least once a month
  - Never
3. How often do you assign writing as homework to your students?
- After every Session
  - Once a Week
  - At least once a month
  - Never

4. What teaching methodology do you use to teach writing?

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---

5. What of the following genres do you think your students master at this level? (Choose more than one option if necessary)

- a. Paragraphs
- b. Letters (Business, friendly, apology, complaint etc)
- c. Summaries
- d. Reports
- e. Journals
- f. Essays

6. How do you usually correct students' compositions?

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7. What of the following methods do you use assess your students' writing?

- a. Conferencing
- b. Peer assessment
- c. Formative feedback
- d. Teacher's corrections directly on students' mistakes using or red-pen and comments on the margins
- e. Collaborative Writing projects
- f. I do not know any of the above but I use....

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8. Why do you use that or those assessment techniques?

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9. What have been the students' reactions towards the kind of feedback that you provide?

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10. What kind of materials do you use to teach writing?

- a. Copies
- b. A textbook

- c. The internet
- d. Magazines
- e. Songs
- f. Lectures
- g. Other. Specify \_\_\_\_\_

11. What material do you consider as the most appropriate to teach writing to English language learners? Why?

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12. What aspect(s) aspect of the current program of this course specifically the area you are teaching would you change? Justify your answer.

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Thank you for your cooperation!



Appendix 4. DESCRIPTORS AND PROGRAMS OF THE INTEGRATED ENGLISH COURSES I,II,III AND IV PART OF THE MAJOR "GESTIÓN EMPRESARIAL DEL TURISMO SOSTENIBLE"

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL**  
**Sede Regional Chorotega**  
**Facultad de Filosofía y Letras**  
**Escuela de Literatura y Ciencias del Lenguaje**  
**Carrera Gestión Empresarial en Turismo Sostenible.**

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<b>Código:</b>	LIY410
<b>Curso:</b>	<b>Inglês Integrado I para Turismo</b>
<b>Naturaleza:</b>	Teórico-Práctico
<b>Nivel</b>	I
<b>Modalidad</b>	Ciclo de 18 semanas
<b>Créditos</b>	6
<b>Horas semanales</b>	15
<b>Horas presénciales</b>	10 (5T-4P-1hr.Laboratorio A)
<b>Horas estudio independientes:</b>	05
<b>Requisitos:</b>	Ninguno
<b>Correquisitos:</b>	Ninguno

## DESCRIPCIÓN

**Inglés I para Turismo**, es el primero de cuatro cursos intensivos en que se pretende iniciar al estudiante en el desarrollo de las cinco habilidades básicas de la lengua inglesa, las cuales se denominan: *comunicación oral, comprensión auditiva, lectura, comunicación escrita y cultura*; y con las que el estudiante da inicio al proceso del manejo del idioma. Este primer curso conlleva a una aplicación de las cinco habilidades de una manera básica, pero en un contorno de situaciones reales. Así mismo, se le brinda al estudiante sesiones de laboratorio para la práctica de las habilidades antes mencionadas de una manera integrada.

## OBJETIVOS

El estudiante será capaz de:

1. Utilizar técnicas de comprensión y percepción auditiva.
2. Mostrar comprensión auditiva de material en inglés.

3. Mostrar su conocimiento de algunas técnicas básicas de lectura.
4. Comunicarse oralmente en diversas situaciones de la vida cotidiana.
5. Usar formas simples de las funciones del lenguaje para comunicarse apropiadamente.
6. Conocer y utilizar diversas estructuras gramaticales.
7. Utilizar un vocabulario básico y pronunciarlo adecuadamente
8. Usar técnicas básicas de composición para comunicarse en forma escrita.
9. Comunicarse por escrito de modo informal y creativo.
10. Expresarse en forma oral y escrita sobre rasgos fundamentales de su propia cultura y la extranjera.

## **CONTENIDO**

### **Comunicación Oral**

- Como iniciar una conversación,
- Saludos
- Presentaciones
- Entrevistas cortas
- Conversaciones de preferencias
- Hábitos alimenticios
- Como ordenar y rechazar alimentos, comparación de hábitos alimentos
- Dar y solicitar direcciones
- Solicitar y responder a solicitudes
- Disculparse, conversar sobre costumbres

### **Comprensión Auditiva y Pronunciación:**

- Ideas principales
- Percepciones
- Formas reducidas
- Palabras enfatizadas
- Inferencias, diferencia entre "Can y Can't"
- "Vowels"
- "Consonants"

- “Consonants Clusters”
- “Stress and rhythm”

### **Comunicación Escrita:**

- El Verbo Be
- Presente simple
- Pronombres
- “Emphatic Do y Does”.
- “There is/are”
- Preguntas utilizando “whose”.
- Presente continuo
- “Impersonal it”, modales
- Sustantivos y expresiones de cantidad.
- Comparativos y Superlativos.
- Descripción de alimentos (escritura)
- Formas del futuro, preposiciones de lugar y tiempo, artículos.
- La carta informal.
- El tiempo pasado, conectores
- La narración autobiográfica.
- El presente perfecto, con “so, too, either, neither”.

### **Lectura y Cultura**

- Reconocimiento de ideas principales.
- Reconocimiento del tema dentro del párrafo.
- Ideas secundarias, títulos y temas de párrafo.
- Temas generales y específicos, rastreo.
- Párrafos en orden cronológico, detalles de tiempo.
- Comprensión de detalles de opiniones.

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**Universidad Nacional**  
**Facultad de Filosofía y Letras**  
**Escuela de Literatura y Ciencias del Lenguaje**  
**Sede Regional Chorotega**  
**Carrera Gestión Empresarial para Turismo Sostenible**

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<b>Código:</b>	<b>LIX120</b>
<b>Curso:</b>	<b>Inglés Integrado II para Turismo</b>
<b>Créditos:</b>	6
<b>Nivel:</b>	I
<b>Modalidad:</b>	Ciclo de 18 semanas
<b>Naturaleza:</b>	Teórico-Práctico
<b>Horas Semanales:</b>	15
<b>Horas Presenciales:</b>	10 ( 5 t – 4 P – 1hr. Laboratorio A)
<b>Horas de Estudio Independiente:</b>	5
<b>Requisitos:</b>	Inglés Integrado I para Turismo
<b>Correquisitos:</b>	Ninguno

## DESCRIPCION

**Inglés II para Turismo**, es el segundo de los cursos de la carrera de Turismo, en el cual se le da seguimiento al estudiante en el proceso de aprendizaje de las cinco habilidades de la lengua inglesa las cuales comprende; comunicación oral, comprensión auditiva, lectura, escritura y cultura, de manera que el estudiante tenga la oportunidad de expresarse con una mayor precisión. El curso, no solo fomenta el desarrollo de la fluidez oral, sino también la auto corrección en la comunicación oral y escrita. Así mismo, facilita sesiones de laboratorio para la práctica de las cinco habilidades en forma integrada.

## OBJETIVOS

1. Profundizar en el uso de técnicas de comprensión y percepción auditiva.
2. Mostrar comprensión auditiva de material en inglés.
3. Mostrar su conocimiento de algunas técnicas de lectura.
4. Comunicarse oralmente en diversas situaciones de la vida cotidiana.
5. Usar diversas funciones del lenguaje para comunicarse más apropiadamente.
6. Mostrar dominio cognoscitivo y práctico de diversas estructuras gramaticales
7. Ampliar su vocabulario y pronunciarlo adecuadamente.

8. Fortalecer técnicas de composición para comunicarse en forma escrita de manera formal y creativa.
9. Expresarse en forma oral y escrita sobre rasgos fundamentales de su propia cultura y la extranjera.

## CONTENIDO

### Comunicación Oral

- Dar y pedir consejo, pedir citas
- Expresar opiniones, de acuerdo y desacuerdo
- Dar y aceptar cumplidos, discutir formas de entretenimiento
- Hacer y rechazar invitaciones, hablar de días festivos
- Dar y comprender instrucciones
- Crítica de comerciales

### Comunicación Auditiva y Pronunciación:

- Comprensión oral de analogías y opiniones.
- Comprensión de conferencias orales.
- Comprensión opiniones a favor y en contra.
- Comprensión de orden cronológico de eventos.
- "Sounds in connected speech".
- "Intonation".
- "Sounds and grammar".
- "Pronunciation of written words".

### Comunicación Escrita:

- Verbo + objeto+ infinitivo, modales, pronombres.
- Reflexivos, "tag questions", cláusulas adjetivas.
- El pasado continuo en serie.
- Resumen
- El presente perfecto simple (continuación) y continuo, adverbios de grado: so, such, enough, too.
- Narración biográfica.

- Gerundios e infinitivos, participios pasados y presentes en función de adjetivos.
- Voz pasiva
- Clasificación
- Persuasión
- Oraciones complejas y compuestas.
- La carta formal.

### Lectura y Cultura:

- Reconocer esquemas.
- La idea principal.
- Inferencias.
- Usar el contexto para identificar referencias.
- Repaso.
- Reconocer la exageración y el punto de vista.

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**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL**

Sede Regional Chorotega

Facultad de Filosofía y Letras

Escuela de Literatura y Ciencias del Lenguaje

Carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible

<b>Código:</b>	<b>LIY 420</b>
<b>Curso:</b>	<b>Inglés III para Turismo</b>
<b>Naturaleza:</b>	Teórico – Práctico
<b>Nivel:</b>	II
<b>Modalidad:</b>	Ciclo 18 Semanas
<b>Créditos:</b>	06
<b>Horas Semanales:</b>	15
<b>Horas Presenciales:</b>	10 (4 hrs. teoría – 5 hrs. Práctica 1 hrs. Laboratorio A)
<b>Horas de Estudio Independiente:</b>	05
<b>Requisitos:</b>	Inglés Integrado II para Turismo.
<b>Correquisitos:</b>	Ninguno

**DESCRIPCIÓN**

**Inglés III para Turismo** es el primero de dos cursos en el cual el estudiante adquiere el idioma extranjero a la vez que aprende contenidos específicos de su carrera (E.S.P). Es decir, el estudiante tendrá la oportunidad de comprender y producir el lenguaje de forma significativa a través de situaciones reales de la vida cotidiana y las relacionadas directamente con la actividad turística. Lo anterior, desde contextos controlados y también espontáneos como por ejemplo, las giras de campo propias de la carrera, entre otras actividades. Todo desde una perspectiva propia del área turística, tomando en cuenta el vocabulario preciso que se requiere para poder comunicarse adecuadamente en un futuro ambiente laboral. Se fortalece la habilidad oral para comunicarse en Inglés, integrando a la vez, la comprensión auditiva, la lectura y la escritura. De igual forma, este curso permite progresar en el desarrollo de la pronunciación y las estructuras gramaticales. Se utiliza el laboratorio de idiomas, para practicar la comprensión auditiva y los conceptos gramaticales.



## OBJETIVOS

1. Mantener una conversación sobre temas relacionados con el medio ambiente, la cultura, recreación y economía, además de todas las actividades que directa o indirectamente, se relacionan con la actividad turística.
2. Utilizar técnicas de comprensión y percepción auditivas.
3. Comunicarse oralmente en diversas situaciones de la vida cotidiana y en el ambiente turístico.
4. Conocer y utilizar diversas estructuras gramaticales.
5. Utilizar vocabulario general y también el relacionado a las actividades y empresas turísticas.
6. Mostrar comprensión auditiva de ideas generales en una conversación en inglés.
7. Mostrar su conocimiento de técnicas de lectura y escritura.
8. Desarrollar estrategias que le permitan auto controlar su producción oral para mejorar su pronunciación.

## CONTENIDO

### Funciones

Solicitar indagaciones y reportes

Atender entrevistas de trabajo.

Tomar y enviar mensajes.

Tomar reservaciones turísticas y resolver problemas relacionados.

Organizar, describir y promover paquetes turísticos, dando recomendaciones al respecto.

Dar y recibir consejos.

Recomendar restaurantes, tomar órdenes y describir platos.

Tomar y dar direcciones.

Intercambiar datos sobre hechos históricos y culturales concernientes a destinos turísticos.

Interrumpir adecuadamente.

Dar detalles y explicaciones.

Identificar y aplicar términos de negocios.

Preparar un menú.

Expresar opiniones, discutir y persuadir.

Expresar sorpresa, agradecimiento y arrepentimiento.

Tomar decisiones.

### **Comprensión Auditiva y Pronunciación**

Comprensión de entrevistas, instrucciones, diálogos, conferencias y convenciones, descripciones, noticias.

#### Pronunciación

Stress avanzado: stress en reducción de vocales, verbos compuestos, "disapperaring syllables", "noun verb word pairs".

Ritmo avanzado: "stressing function words", "words with variable stress", lectura de pasajes.

### **Estructura**

Pasado simple y presente continuo.

Pasado simple y perfecto.

Presente Perfecto y presente perfecto continuo.

Artículos y formas futuras. (Repaso)

"Would vrs. Used to".

Sustantivos contables y no contables (repaso)

Modales de probabilidad y obligación (repaso).

Verbos compuestos.

Condicionales

Preguntas indirectas

"Reported Speech"

Voz Pasiva (repaso)

Conectores (repaso)

"Relative clauses & vague language

Pronombres relativos de objeto y sujeto.

Presente narrativo

"Regrets with wish".

**Lectura**

Inferencias  
 Lugares de interés.  
 Intercambio de hechos históricos y culturales  
 Intereses especiales en turismo  
 Manejo de hoteles.  
 Identificación de diferencias y similitudes  
 Comprensión de detalles de opiniones.  
 Feriados públicos.

**Escritura**

Hoja de vida (resume)  
 La carta formal  
 Perfiles profesionales.  
 Memos.  
 Correos electrónicos, faxes y memos.  
 Menús.  
 Reportes educativos y de trabajo.  
 Descripciones de lugares turísticos y hoteles.  
 Cartas de Solicitud, queja o disculpa.  
 Cotizaciones  
 Crítica  
 Speech

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**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL**

Sede Regional Chorotega

Facultad de Filosofía y Letras

Escuela de Literatura y Ciencias del Lenguaje

Carrera de Gestión Empresarial del Turismo Sostenible

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**Código:**

**Curso:** Inglés IV para Turismo

**Naturaleza:** Teórico – Práctico

**Nivel:** II

**Modalidad:** Ciclo 18 Semanas

**Créditos:** 06

**Horas Semanales:** 15

**Horas Presenciales:** 10 (5 hrs. teoría – 4 hrs. Práctica –  
1 hrs. Laboratorio A)

**Horas de Estudio Independiente:** 05

**Requisitos:** Inglés III para Turismo.

**Correquisitos:** Ninguno

**DESCRIPCIÓN**

**Inglés IV para Turismo** es un curso con propósitos específicos (E.S.P) que continúa el proceso de mejoramiento en la adquisición de la lengua con la manipulación correcta de las cuatro habilidades. El curso se desarrolla a través de tópicos relacionados especialmente con el ambiente laboral turístico en sus diferentes aplicaciones, tanto en el sector empresarial como en el medio ambiente, cultura, recreación y entretenimiento. Se aplica y perfecciona así, las diversas estructuras gramaticales en la comunicación escrita pero dando un mayor énfasis a la comunicación oral. Así mismo, el estudiante practica la comprensión auditiva y la pronunciación en el laboratorio de idiomas mediante videos, conferencias, documentales, entre otros. Además, se le brinda la oportunidad al estudiante de comprender y producir el lenguaje

oral en contextos significativos, o sea, de su propio interés y necesidad a través de la práctica integral del idioma dentro del desarrollo de diversas actividades como las giras de campo propias de la carrera y proyectos específicos.

## **OBJETIVOS**

1. Mantener una conversación sobre temas relacionados a la actividad turística y los temas derivados de la misma tales como el medio ambiente, la industria turística, la recreación, el entretenimiento y aspectos fundamentales de la propia cultura y la extranjera.
2. Comprender las ideas generales y detalles importantes de una conversación u otro tipo de contexto oral sobre diversos temas, pero en especial el relacionado con Turismo.
3. Comunicarse oralmente en diversas situaciones de la vida cotidiana y en ambientes turísticos.
4. Conocer y utilizar diversas estructuras gramaticales.
5. Utilizar adecuadamente el vocabulario general y también el relacionado a la rama turística.
6. Formular y contestar preguntas sobre los diferentes temas de interés.
7. Mostrar conocimiento de técnicas de lectura y escritura.
8. Desarrollar estrategias que permitan auto controlar la producción oral para mejorar la pronunciación.
9. Intercambiar opiniones y recomendaciones sobre la viabilidad de proyectos turísticos.

## **CONTENIDO**

### **Funciones**

Brindar información acerca de días festivos, museos, monumentos y lugares histórico- culturales, entre otros atractivos turísticos, así como comidas típicas y platillos internacionales.

Realizar presentaciones orales.

Conversar sobre desarrollos turísticos existentes.

Realizar encuestas.

Preguntar y confirmar información.

Dar recomendaciones.

Negociar reservaciones para conferencias y grupos

Recomendar formas de promocionar lugares de interés e itinerario de actividades.

Describir y discutir sobre las fortalezas y debilidades de un país en el área del turismo.

Manejar quejas

Describir facilidades de servicios turísticos como hoteles, aeropuertos, transporte, entre otros.

Dar opiniones acerca de la viabilidad de proyectos turísticos.

Dar un tour guiado.

Conversar sobre la protección del medio ambiente, actividades en el tiempo libre, arte y entretenimiento, deportes y la vida en las grandes ciudades.

Externar opiniones sobre relaciones personales, profesiones, inventos modernos, eventos noticiosos actuales y hechos históricos.

### **Comprensión Auditiva y Pronunciación**

Comprensión de entrevistas, instrucciones, diálogos, conferencias, lecturas, descripciones, noticias, convenciones.

#### Pronunciación

Vocales en detalle.

Consonantes en detalle.

Diferencias entre “voiced and voiceless consonants”.

“<ed> and <s> Endings”.

Entonación en oraciones, diálogos, preguntas, “tag questions” and “pitch patterns”.

### **Estructura**

Pasado simple y presente perfecto simple (repaso).

Presente perfecto y presente perfecto continuo (repaso).

Pasado perfecto y pasado perfecto continuo (repaso)

Futuro perfecto y futuro perfecto continuo.

Verbos compuestos para propósitos específicos.

“Tag questions” (repaso).

“Adjective clauses with object relative pronouns” (when & where).

Prefijos

Conjunciones.

Tipos y orden de los adjetivos.

“Reporting verbs”.

La voz pasiva (repaso).

“Relative Clauses”

Condicionales reales en presente futuro y pasado.

Condicionales no reales en presente, futuro y pasado.

Gerundios e infinitivos (repaso).

**Lectura**

Definiciones de Turismo e intereses especiales del área.

Lugares de interés

Intercambio de hechos históricos y culturales.

Manejo de hoteles y demás servicios turísticos.

Identificación de diferencias y similitudes.

Comprensión de detalles de opiniones.

Promociones

Cuestionarios

Itinerarios

Cotizaciones

**Escritura**

Cartas de recomendación, de solicitudes específicas, de disculpa, de acuerdos, de promoción y de confirmación de reservaciones.

Resúmenes basados en notas.

Cuestionarios.

Reportes educativos y empresariales.

Material promocional (brochures & leaflets).

Noticias.

Fax, memos y mensajes electrónicos.

Itinerarios.

Diseños para proyectos turísticos.

Ensayos sobre temas relacionados.

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## Appendix 5. SCRIPTS OF UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

## Unstructured Interview #1 with professor I.C.

This interview was held in class while students were working on some exercises and both the professor and the observer engaged in this conversation that is briefly described in the observation of that day.

## Transcription

Professor: This is the material that I am going to send to the students by mail and they have to read and answer some questions. You can take a look at this but I cannot give you a copy right now.

Observer: That is Ok. Thank you.

## 10 Minutes Later

Observer: Professor, It says that they have to write a summary.

Professor: Oh yes. It is a long reading they must know how to narrow that down.

Observer: Have you taught them how to write a summary. I don't know, giving them theory on how to do it.

Professor: Oh no. I have told them orally.

Observer: Do you usually assign writing, you know, as homework?

Professor: Yes, always. There is no time in class to write and cover all grammar that they have to study.

Observer: when do you teach them how to write?

Professor: That is implicit. At this level they have to write summaries or reports. That is easy.

Observer: Oh yes class time sometimes flies ha, ha.

Professor: Yes especially if groups are as slow as this one. They are good kids but work very slowly.

Oh I have to check the work.

Observer: ok

## Unstructured Interview #2

M.C. Student of group 80.

Date: October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Time: 11:30 a.m

Place: University hallway.

Method: No method was used. It was a natural conversation that the researcher considered useful to incorporate. Once the conversation finished the observer wrote the conversation. The professor could not record because it was an unexpected situation.

Researcher: Hola MC. Como le va aquí en la U?

MC: Bien, me cuesta un poquillo gramática en los cursos de Inglés pero ahí voy.

Researcher: En serio, quien es su profesor?

MC: Es I.C.

Researcher: Y como siente las clases con el es difícil?

MC: No tanto pero por lo menos mas que E.F. ese profe si era como dormido. A mí me dio solo el semestre pasado y ni lo sentí. Fue como si no hubiera llevado ese curso. No aprendí nada.

Researcher: No diga eso algo tuvo que haber aprendido.

MC: Si pero muy poco.

Researcher: Y ahora si está aprendiendo”?”

MC: Ahí voy, por lo menos el profe da mucha gramática pero las clases son medio aburridillas.

Researcher: Si me imagino y es que esa habilidad no es fácil de enseñar porque es mucha materia poco tiempo y casi no es divertido para ustedes.

MC: Si profe pero uno aquí esta para lo que vino.

Researcher: A bueno, ojala todos pensaran como usted. Aquí hay muchas personas que vienen a divertirse.

MC: Ah si aquí hay muchas chiquillas y maes que solo vienen a ver como pierden el rato o no estar en la casa.

Researcher: Ja, ja, ja

MC: Bueno, ya me tengo que ir creo que ya la profe de ética vino.

Researcher: Bueno toros día hablamos.

### The tourism and the people with disabilities

People with some disabilities face many problems like access to recreational sites because the tourism industry has not being developed considering the handicapped. This is a form of showing the discrimination that those people are experiencing today. People do not understand that everybody has the same rights. Companies, especially tourism businesses, do not consider the law 7600 when they are building their enterprises. The law 7600 is the norm that defends and protects people with disabilities and it tries to eliminate the obstacles that these persons face every day. There are many things that tourism can do to give those people the opportunity to have a better life; for example, building more appropriate places where they can have a good recreation, give them more jobs in the tourism areas and train the staff to treat them appropriately.

It is incredible that ten years after the creation of the law 7600 many companies do not have the appropriate infrastructure to attend people with disabilities. In tourism the problems are more serious than in other industries, because those industries do not have what handicapped people need to enjoy the activities they offer; for example, they have not the correct facilities like ramps, adequate doors, parking, bathrooms and public transports. Tourism activities have to be created to attend them; for example, to seek different ways of transportation for persons with motor disabilities by trails inside the forests. We need to think about their participation in leisure and sport as a matter of right. One example about top destination travelers with disabilities is Chicago in the United State according Open Doors Organization in 2006 because it has tourist attractions such as the Lakefront Festivals and Millennium Park to their 100% accessible bus fleet and Chicago offers a wide range of accessible options for residents and visitors with disabilities.

The second form that tourism can contribute with this population is by giving them more jobs, where they can perform in it. Although many mentally disabled people cannot really work because their handicap does not allow them, others are excellent workers. A blind, a deaf or person with motor disability can be a good manager. All persons with disabilities have lot qualities that tourism industries could exploit in their business like paintings, sculptures, music and dance. If we see their abilities instead their impediments we can create a good society in which everybody could have the same opportunity. In the history has famous that had disabilities but managed to get ahead; Vincent Van Gogh was a famous painter and Alan Shepard was the first American in space and fifth person to walk on the moon, both had Meniere's Disease and were people with disabilities.

One of the biggest problems is that the people that are working in tourism are not trained to treat people with disabilities appropriately. The tourism's workers should at least learn sign language, have patience and have knowledge about first aid. There are important things to know for a good service, but it also make people more harmony and human. Maybe employees do not mind this population because they are not traveling all the time. That is why many enterprises think that it is not necessary to be prepared to attend these persons. But, enterprises should be conscious about the rights that those folk have, and give the best they have to bring their services to an important population.

Consequently, we can see that society need to know more about handicapped group because we do not accept their condition. It is necessary that the buildings and staff comply with the law 7600. The tourism industry should construct a new form of tourism, because, it is not giving crippled people what they need, because they could be good customers, because they often do not travel alone. On the other hand, it does not matter what society need to do or spend, to make people feel good, because the most important thing is make this population have rights of live without barriers.

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**SIDUNA**



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