Universidad Pedagógica Nacional
Francisco Morazán
Vicerrectoría de Investigación y Postgrado
Dirección de Postgrado
Master in Teaching of Languages

Master Thesis
Topic:

Two languages, one process; a study on the acquisition of reading and writing in young learners within a bilingual school context.

Thesist
Marlin Francisco Castro Salgado.

Thesis Director:
Dra. Gloria Ester Ulloa Cáceres.
Methodological Advisor:
Dr. Rene A. Noé Martínez

Tegucigalpa M.D.C November 21 2013.

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AUTORIDADES

M.Sc. DAVID ORLANDO MARÍN LÓPEZ

Rector

M.Sc. HERMES ALDUVÍN DÍAZ LUNA

Vicerrector Académico

M.Sc. RAFAEL BARAHONA LÓPEZ

Vicerrector Administrativo

Dra. YENNY AMINDA EGUIGURE TORRES

Vicerrectora de Investigación y Postgrado

M.Sc. GUSTAVO ADOLFO CERRATO PAVÓN

Vicerrector del CUED

M.Sc. CELFA IDALISIS BUESO FLORENTINO

Secretaria General

Dra. JENNY MARGOTH ZELAYA MATAMOROS

Directora de Postgrado

Tegucigalpa M.D.C 21 de Noviembre de 2013.

Terna Examinadora

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M.Sc. Edwin Roldan Medina.
Examinador(a) presidente(a)

Dr. Gloria Esther Ulloa Cáceres.
Examinador (a)

Med. Aleyda Lizeth Linares Calix.
Examinador(a)

Marlin Francisco Castro Salgado.

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Introduction

Everybody acquires a language depending on the geographical area in which they are born; a human being will naturally acquire oral skills such as speaking and listening, whereas, a written language has to be learned through a greater effort; consequently, the written language is a communication skill of privilege, as well as the main tool to access knowledge. Forasmuch as the difficulties are present in the process of learning on how to read and write, we find that the combination of two developmental factors —age and maturity— are necessary to achieve written proficiency**.** Therefore, the aim of this research is to study the processes that Spanish speaking children undergo when learning English at L2, as they learn how to read and write in both languages simultaneously.

Chapter one provides an overview of the study background as well as the framework on the teaching situations that involve first graders who are enrolled in bilingual schools in Honduras and how they learn to read and write both languages, English and Spanish, simultaneously. The chapter closes stating of the objectives which led this study.

Chapter two provides the Literature Review, which gives complete reflections and summarizes the main theories of first and second language teaching, including methodologies, theories, and styles. It ends with a discussion of theories on early literacy in both Spanish and English. Each theory is taken literally as the authors present them in their studies.

Chapter three describes the methodology used in the study. It explains the choice of the paradigm and the design of the study; it describes the techniques that were used for data collection, as well as the context and the participants of the study. It concludes with a matrix of categories taken from Ferreiro & Teberosky's Stage of Writing Acquisition Theories.

Chapter Four explains how the data was analyzed and classified. It closes with presenting the results in a narration about the subjects' experiences, of the process of writing development.

Finally, Chapter Five states the conclusions as well as the recommendations provided by the study. It also provides information on the writing process when developing two languages simultaneously, which was the main goal of the study.

I. Chapter 1

A. Statement of the Problem.

Language is an attribute specific to humans, which is the basic capacity that distinguishes mankind from all other living beings. People acquire a mother tongue according to the geographic area they are born into; this process happens as the result of the interaction between people in the mother tongue combined with biological issues. These two elements become the bases of first language acquisition (O'Grady, Debrovolsky, & Katamba, 1996; Craig, 1997). Since not all regions share the same language, people need to use a second common language or "lingua Franca" for communication purposes, being this

closely related to instruction. As a result, second language teaching has become a worldwide practice (Harmer, 2007).

Harmer (2007) also states that teaching languages is a dynamic scientific practice where new procedures and techniques need to be tested every day. The tendency to use this scientific method can also be found in small countries such as Honduras, where teachers try to stay updated with new teaching methodologies to improve their teaching abilities; however, teachers need special training to apply these methodologies in the classroom setting. In Honduras, Universidad Pedagogica Nacional, UPNFM is the institution in charge of keeping teacher updated in new trends and methods for the teaching at different levels.

To become a teacher, the researcher graduated first from UPN as an ESL teacher, experienced teaching English as a second language; then he was attracted, by the idea of how language is acquired, so he started his own search about the linguistic field, leading him onto enrolling in a Master's teaching program. While the courses were taking place, his perceptions about the importance of language as a means for communication changed. His belief changed from looking at language merely as knowledge, to seeing it as the main cognitive skill used to build the competences and the knowledge required for this changing world.

Consequently, the researcher became interested in how languages help in the construction of meaning; according to the experts in the field (Chomsky 1965; Piaget 1975, Vigotsky 1934,) everything becomes meaningful to users through a language. Therefore, his reflections about language learning in the first grades raised his awareness about

developing advanced competences in reading and writing. Experts such as Ferreiro (1979) believes that acquiring some reading and writing competences in early ages would allow the young learner be a successful reader and writer; reading allows people to discover and understand what has been experienced by others. Also, she believes writing gives people the opportunity to express their own feelings and ideas by making use of a given code. As a result, the researcher considers the development of reading and writing the most relevant process in early school years. However, with these words, he/she is not delaying or setting aside the listening comprehension or oral production, instead, he is considering reading and writing the result of well-developed speaking and listening skills as stated by DesJardin, Ambrose, & Eisenberg (2008).

Since his beliefs about language teaching changed, his concerns about the role of the teachers in the process of language acquisition aroused. Everybody acquires oral language and listening comprehension skills in their mother tongue naturally. However, only a few people learn how to read and write in a comprehensive way, given that, the development of these two skills is the result of a teaching process people have to under-go. Ashworth & Wakefield *(1999)* stated

The main function of the school is broaden Children´s range of experience, introduce new possibilities, systematize the process of learning, help to develop thinking skills and ultimately, empower student to take responsibilities for their own learning (p.1).

This idea highlighted the relevance of empowerment students get when they are given the opportunities to learn to write and read comprehensibly. For example, if teachers

want to empower students, language teachers must be aware of how instruction could help students develop writing and reading skills, in both first and second language. Furthermore, a teacher´s responsibility must, then, be the reflection of one's beliefs and actions, because it does not only takes time and preparation, but also hard work and analysis of their own teaching practice.

Previous the beginning of the study, it was noticed that while most of the students in the languages classes – Spanish and English— were progressing according to the schedule and contents proposed by the school curriculum, some students were falling behind due to several factors as the ones mentioned by Craig(1997): age, cognitive maturity, individual needs, and personalized instruction.

The information researched up to this point was not providing enough input to know reasons why those children were being left behind; therefore, more research on this particular topic was needed. At the same time, a search for successful language teaching experiences was also being done. Such search took the researcher to learn about The Center of Excellence for Teachers Training (CETT-CARD), that at that time, had created a teaching training model to help Spanish language teachers develop early literacy (writing and reading skills in young learners) in the Central America and Caribbean region. Even though this methodology was first intended for the teaching of Spanish as a first language, it is also applicable for any language teaching. CETT program trained teachers on how to improve professional and teaching competences for the teaching of teaching reading and writing from first to third grades in five Central American countries (CETT book, 2010).

The information found, despite being helpful was not enough, the CETT coordinator in Honduras was interviewed for advice on how to help students with low progress in early literacy. She was able to show how CETT material works in the acquisition of reading and writing in the L1 (Spanish) in first to third graders enrolled in public schools. At that moment, this methodology was adopted by the researcher in his classroom to help students in the development of early literacy Skills in English as L2 as well as to embark on this research and to understand the different phases students go through when learning how to read and write. When this methodology was used for the first time in his classroom, there was an amazing response from the children who were behind in the acquisition of reading and writing. It is important to clarify that the school material for the teaching of the language classes at my school has always been based on the communicative approach since it is material developed for English speakers in the USA.

The researcher then realized that, there might be a relationship between learning how to write and read in two languages and the standardization of material and methodology used in the process. This doubt changed from being just the researcher's interest to a formal study that would analyze the process children undergo when learning how to read and write in Spanish (L1) and English (L2) simultaneously during first grade of elementary school and the methodologies employed.

The result of reflecting on the teaching activity and students' performance increased the necessity for a study. Thus, the aim of this research is to find the differences and commonalities in the development of the writing process in young Spanish speaking learners when learning English as L2. The doubt if there is just one process involved requires an answer. Moreover, what goes on with children´s writing level when acquiring

two languages while they develop their writing processes? There are still many questions about early literacy that deserve an answer to then improve teaching practices in second language teaching. This research intends to see if the process is only one, or if there are more than one processes involved.

B. Objetives:

1. General:

- Understand the process of reading and writing acquisition in Spanish speaking children, while they learn how to read and write in two languages simultaneously (L1, means Spanish and L2 means English as a Foreign Language).

2. Specific

- Identify the differences and the similarities that may exist in the development of early writing in two languages in first grade Spanish speaking children learning English as L2.
- Describe in the children´s writing, the writing stages proposed by Ferreiro & Teberosky at different times in first grade Spanish speaking children learning English as L2.
- Define how the developmental writing stages occur in two languages of instruction (Spanish as L1 and English as L2)
- Compare the writing stages of Ferreiro & Teberosky at different times in first grade Spanish speaking children learning English as L2.

C. Questions

- What are the differences and similarities in the development of the writing process in young learners learning Spanish (L1) English (L2) simultaneously?
- What are the general characteristics of emergent literacy shown by students learning Spanish (L1) and English (L2) in a bilingual school in Honduras?
- How writing acquisition from one language affects (positively or negatively) the writing acquisition of a second language?
- How the children's learning reading and writing in two languages at the same time affect the future writing proficiency?

D. Justification

Ever since Marie Clay (1965) coined the term "emergent literacy" to refer to the process children go through when acquiring reading and writing skills, the writing and reading process acquisition has been part of the designs in methodologies to teach young learners how to write and read comprehensibly. In small countries, like Honduras, those teaching trends tend to be imitated from other countries. As a result, public education in Honduras is moving towards the use of constructivist elements and a communicative approach for the teaching of Spanish, the native language. Moreover, research is necessary to see how the new implementation of communicative approaches helps to improve language teaching in Honduras.

Responding to the need of studies in the field of language teaching, this study has been design to understand how early literacy in two languages occurs. Due to the fact that the study provides the theory for developing accurate methodology in ESL and EFL

teaching for adults as well as young learners, we can state that this research belongs to the applied linguistics field. Consequently, a study that compares and contrasts the emergent literacy development in two languages that are learned simultaneously should provide information on the development of early literacy stages.

Furthermore, studies on this trend of thought have shown that, "writing or reading in English develops in stages" (Hudelson, 1999). The importance of this study relies on the need to understand the reading and writing stages and how those competences are developed through specific methodologies in an EFL first-graders environment. Additionally, it is of importance to comprehend how using the same methodology in the teaching the L1 and L2 could provide findings that could potentially help design better curricula for the teaching of reading and writing in a bilingual setting (Spanish and English). This might also arise the interest of linguistic researchers, teachers, education administrators, curricular designers and bilingual schools owners.

Lastly, Hammink (2005), as opposed to most researchers of early literacy who focus on the teaching of one language, studied the differences that occur in early literacy between Spanish and English. This study, as Hammink's, focuses on the development of early writing skills (emergent writing), in two languages. It also pays special attention to the theory developed by linguists such as Ferreiro &Teberosky 1978, Borzone de Manrique, Rosalía Montealegre & Luz Adriana Forero 2006, and Chapman 2004.

II. Literature Review.

Language is an activity specific to humans and the basic capacity that distinguishes humans from all other living beings. Language, therefore, remains potentially a

communicative medium capable of expressing ideas and concepts as well as moods, feelings and attitudes. However, language is not only a vehicle for the expression of thoughts, beliefs, opinions, feelings, and standard characteristics of a community, but it also represents a fundamental expression of social identity. Language cannot be considered as simple knowledge or as a means of communicating thoughts and ideas, because it is a vital tool to fully develop human beings since it forges friendships, cultural ties and economic relationships (Harmer, 2007).

There are various theories that try to explain first language acquisition; however, Chomsky "Language Acquisition Device" (see Chomsky, 1974) and "Developmental Stages" (Piaget, 1970) are the two of the most accepted theories in language acquisition, since they explain how maturity and biological factors influence learning. Even though, they have different views and perspectives on how language is acquired, both agree in the fact that language acquisition and those developmental learning processes take place in the early years.

People acquire languages without any difficulty in normal conditions; they learn to communicate and, in such way, they acquire the Native language (L1). For instance, a child who is born and grows up in China will learn the language of his/her parents and will be able to communicate to any Chinese speaker anywhere in the world. This mother language allows people to communicate with fluent speakers of the same language whether or not they are in the same area. In this new world, where communication is a real need, people from different cultures need to communicate; therefore, the usage of a common language is presented as one of the major concerns in this changing world. Since McLuhan (1965) defined the term ¨global village¨ (to refer to this new world where communication is

faster than ever and information is shared by people from all over the world) the usage of a lingua franca has spread its effects to the entire population. English has become the most important lingua franca. According to Harmer(2007), at least one out of four human beings in the world speaks English as first or second language. Such data acknowledges that English is used around the world for a wide range of purposes such as economy, commerce, exchange of information, tourism and common knowledge (popular culture).

In the case of exchange of information, a significant amount of academic work is written in this [English] language (Harmer, 2007). Hence, being literate in English is an important key for an individual to succeed in a globalized the world. Thus, many people enroll in immersion schools to learn English as a second language. Our country, Honduras, has followed this tendency, and now, people send their children to bilingual schools as a way of providing their offsprings with better opportunities for success.

A. Acquisition of language

1. First Language Acquisition.

Many theories approach the topic of how L1 is acquired; the discussion between nativists and cognitivists grows every moment, but we cannot discredit any of their theories because they complement each other. In the first case, nativists are led by Noam Chomsky who is possibly the best known and one of the most influential linguists of the Twentieth Century. He has made a number of strong claims about language; in particular, he suggests that language is an innate faculty. Since human beings are the only species that are able to use a structured language to communicate, then language is seen as a set of learning tools; that is provided at birth, and it is referred as the “Language Acquisition Device” or LAD.

According to Chomsky (1965), LAD grants children with the capacity to develop the syntactic structure and rules of their native language rapidly and precisely from the poor input provided by adult language users. The device consists of a limited set of dimensions which are independent from language and are set at different levels for different languages on the basis of language exposure. This means that we are born with a set of rules about language in our heads known as Chomsky´s "The Universal Grammar" (Chomsky, 1965).

The universal grammar is considered the basis upon which all human languages build their unique principles, systems, and categories. According to Chomsky this basis is innate and gives a number of reasons why this should be so; among the most important of these reasons is the ease with which children acquire their mother tongue and how they make some assumptions about the way language works. Chomsky claims that it would be, sort of a miracle, if, children learned their language in the same way as they learn mathematics or to ride a bicycle. Even though he proposes the Universal Grammar as the most important issue in language acquisition, he also makes some claims relying on the importance of the input children receive in their early years. He calls this input stimulus.

The theory or hypothesis related to input is called "poverty of the stimulus" (Chomsky, 1988). It states that children receive very little correct formed language from the people around them. This is so, because people constantly interrupt themselves, change their minds, and make 'slips of the tongue' when they speak. Even under such circumstances, children manage to learn their language all the same. A critique made to this hypothesis states that the language input received by children is not limited to simple listening instruction and language produced by others, nor it is just following orders. It is

not limited to this because children also receive input from their surroundings, when they listen to others talking or when they see people interacting one-on-one.

All the factors present in Chomsky´s theories are part of the real use of language itself, and as complete as Chomsky´s theory might be, it does not take into account the meaning of the grammar formations taking place in the children´s minds. This is not yet fully understood by linguists and researchers; they are still studying this complex and unknown mental process. In fact, Chomsky´s layout might just be the tip of the iceberg as we may yet discover in this complex process.

Other important aspects of Chomsky´s theories are Deep Structure (meaning) and Surface Structure (syntax). The main focus of these theories is meaning; as a result, it takes the main role in the sentences without giving too much emphasis to the grammatical form the utterance is presented. The notion of Deep Structure started to emerge into the Generative Grammar Model of Transformations. Chomsky's aimed in regard of the Theory of Syntax (1965) became more ambitious in order to explain all the linguistic relationships between the sound system and the meaning system of the language.

Chomsky's Transformational Grammar has three main components: syntactic, semantic, and phonological; the semantic and phonological components have access to the output of the syntactic component, but not vice versa. This structure is closely related to semantics because the only changes that occur are in the arrangement, in the word choice or in both. In other words, deep structure is an abstract representation that identifies the ways in which a sentence can be both, analyzed and interpreted (Chomsky, 1965).

The other component of Chomsky's Transformational Grammar is the surface structure which corresponds to the version of a sentence that can be spoken and heard. In other words, the surface structure of a sentence is the final stage in the syntactic representation of it. This provides the input to the phonological component of the grammar, and which most closely corresponds to the structure of the sentence we articulate and hear. In other words, it includes all the aspects of grammar because it can also be seen as a phonetic representation of semantics. (Chomsky, 1965)

The previous two concepts are the basis of the generative grammar proposed by Chomsky. Deep structure provides the grammatical relations of predication, modification, and other such grammatical relations that enter into the determination of meaning. On the other hand, the matters of focus and presupposition, topic and comment, the scope of logical elements, and pronominal reference are determined, in part at least, by surface structure (Chomsky, 1965).

The rules that relate syntactic structures to representations of meaning are by no means well understood. In fact, the notion of "representation of meaning" or "semantic representation" is itself highly controversial. It is not clear, how it is possible to distinguish between the contribution of grammar to the determination of meaning, and the contribution of so-called "pragmatic considerations" (questions of fact and belief), and "context of utterance" (Chomsky, 1965).

In opposition to Chomsky´s theories, we have the viewpoint presented by Jean Piaget who distinguishes between stages in the development of cognitive skills as cited in Craig (1997). These stages are related to language acquisition, because language

acquisition is a process that occurs as a result of development and maturing. Therefore, it is important to consider every aspect of child development in order to have a better understanding of the true complexity of the language acquisition process.

According to Piaget (1977), there are four different stages in the cognitive development of children. The first is the sensorimotor stage, which occurs in children from birth to approximately two years of age. The Pre-operational Stage follows the sensorimotor stage; this occurs in children aged between two to seven. Next, children from seven to around eleven or twelve go through the Concrete Operational stage. Finally, adolescents go through the Formal Operations Stage, from the age of around eleven to sixteen or even older (Craig, 1997).

a) The Sensorimotor Stage

From birth to approximately age two, a child has relatively little competence in representing the environment using images, language, or symbols. An infant has no awareness of objects or people that are not immediately present at a given moment. Piaget called this a lack of object permanence. Object permanence is the awareness that objects and people continue to exist even if they are out of sight. In infants, when a person hides, the infant has no knowledge that they are just out of sight. According to Piaget, this person or object that has disappeared is gone forever to the infant.

During this stage, babbling, receptive vocabulary and social communication appear. Babblings are isolated sounds close to standard letters which become syllables later on during this stage; they are also considered the basis of word articulations (O'Grady, et al, 1996; Craig, 1997). In addition, during this stage we can observe the receptive vocabulary;

this is the stage in which children are able to recognize some patterns about language. The main characteristic of this stage is that children can understand more than what they produce (Craig, 1997). This is because in the social communication, children learn gestures and signals belonging to the L1. Later, these gestures will serve to help in some of the semiotic aspects of language, which cannot be learnt but can be acquired. Even though this stage starts at birth, its ending is not defined by a specific period of time because it ends with the emergent of first words.

b) The Preoperational Stage.

The Preoperational stage can appear from two to seven years of age. The most important development process at this time is oral language. Children develop an internal representation of the world that allows them to describe people, events, and feelings. Children at this stage begin using symbols, and also develop their first grammatical structures. This is the emergence of the two word-stage, where children are able to communicate using two or more words together. After the two word-stage, children go to more complex grammatical structures. For example, the telegraphic speech emerges when the children select the meaning words such as verbs and nouns, and they tend to eliminate the other words like articles, prepositions and even adjectives. (O'Grady et al, 1996; Craig, 1997).

During the preoperational stage, we are able to observe many events which can affect written language acquisition; For example, a three-year-old will generally hide their face when they are in trouble (even though they can be seen by every person in their surrounding). This happens because a three-year-old believes that their inability to see others results in others inability to see them.

At the end of the preoperational stage, children develop the ability to think in a more logical manner and they begin to overcome some of the egocentric characteristics of this period. An example of this egocentric characteristic is children´s belief that everybody is able to see the world as they see it (the assumption that everyone else loves the child's parents in the exact same way in that he loves them). A child at this stage also lacks the principles of conservation, however, they will have overcome this deficit by the end of this stage. For instance, when they see two litters of any liquid in two different containers (one big and the other small), they think the smaller one which appears to be fuller than the bigger container has more liquid than the other.

One of the major ideas learned during this stage, is the idea of reversibility (reversibility is the idea that some changes can be undone by reversing an earlier action). In the latest part of this stage, we can see children moving to a higher stage, it is known as the concrete operational stage. Here children have a better understanding of time and space. According to Piaget children at this stage have limits in their abstract thinking (Craig, 1997).

c) The Formal Operational Stage

The formal operational stage begins in most people at the age twelve, continues all the way through to adulthood, and lasts a lifetime. This stage produces a new kind of abstract where formal and logical thinking happen. In other words, people become cognitively mature enough to learn and perform all their capacities as human beings, and in this way, they succeed in adulthood. Thinking is no longer tied to events that can be observed; instead, it is a combination of both observed and abstract concepts. In fact, a child at this stage can think hypothetically and use logic to solve problems. During this

time, children will still be attending school, where they will improve and increase their vocabulary. Schooling provides the usage of more complex grammar and semantic structures that become their standard and higher writing levels (Craig, 1997).

Vygotsky also approaches the development of language in his theory of learning, where he describes four main stages in such development: primitive, naive, external and ingrowth stage. The main input receive with the theories developed by Vygotsky is the influence that the surrounding environment has in the acquisition of the native langue. Even though Vygotskyan theory gives special attention to the native language, such theory is applied to the learning of an L2; the first two stages are linked to infants developing the L1, the remaining stages can be related to the process the second language learner goes through.

The External Stage, also called the egocentric speech, describes the ways in which the language learner makes use of resources in his/her surroundings to find meaning in language, as well as to reinforce knowledge of objects and sounds stored in the memory. It is also represented by the interaction with other individuals as well as speaking; meaning that, the learner is beginning to "verbalize thought" (M. Dahms, K., 2012).

The other stage related to formal learning of language is the prediction stage, also known as predication stage. This stage describes the learning [acquisition] of the language as a phase in which previous knowledge is used in the development of more advanced language events. Once again, the context plays an important role in the development of language since the interaction with other speakers improves facility for internalization of thoughts and actions (Preston D. Feden & Robert M. Vogel, 2003).

B. Second language acquisition

In regard to second language acquisition, there are also many theories that talk about it. One of the most relevant theories— the Natural approach— is presented by Stephen Krashen. According to Krashen (1987), there are two determinant factors needed to acquired a second language: motivation and comprehensible input. He divides his theory into five main hypotheses: the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, Monitor Hypothesis, Natural Order Hypothesis, Input Hypothesis, and the Affective Filter Hypothesis. In this hypothesis input and affective filter are the ones related to the two factors mentioned by Krashen (1987).

In the Acquisition- Learning Hypothesis, Krashen (1987) makes a distinction between acquisition and Learning. Acquisition is the product of a subconscious process. It is very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. According to Krashen, acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language (comprehensible input), and natural communication (speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in the communicative act). These two factors enable language acquisition to take place. It is necessary to clarify that language cannot be learnt, it has to be acquired. Learning on the other hand, is conceived by Krashen as the product of formal instruction. Learning also comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the language as in the knowledge of grammar rules.

As cited by (Schütz, 2007), when Krashen says that "learning is less important than acquisition", the major reason of this relies on the fact that knowledge about a language does not assure the right performance of it. Therefore, language can be viewed as a body of knowledge such as lexis or grammar. This perception about language is too narrow since

language is a group of skills, and skills have to be developed, not learned (Thormbury, 1999). The knowledge about a language helps in the acquisition process because it provides a framework for the learner, however, such knowledge is useful if the user is not able to produce clear ideas in order to communicate in the target language. In other words, a person can know all the grammatical patterns of a language, but if he cannot use this pattern to communicate languages is incomplete and useless.

The Monitor Hypothesis explains how L2 learners make sense of the new language. This enables them to self-correct and edit their own production in the L2 (Krashen, 1988). This auto regulatory device helps learners monitor to their own process in the language acquisition. This can be considered as meta-language. Even though it is impossible to test this hypothesis empirically, it has an intuitive appeal which cannot be ignored. (Tragant & Muñoz, 2004).

After that, the Natural Order Acquisition Hypothesis states a specific order in the acquisition of morphemes and lexemes. It relies on the fact that target language and some of the language features are the same in L1 and L2. For instance, the use of the "s" plural marker that is first acquired in L1 and then in L2 (Krashen, 1987). It seems that everyone acquires grammatical items in a fairly predictable order in their mother tongue. In the case of second language, these traits can also be observed, but does not mean that a student needs only to be exposed to these structures, since a learner must be exposed to a variety and diversity of inputs (Thormbury, 1999).

The hypothesis that follows is the Input Hypothesis also known as I+1. Here the L2 learner moves through one stage of language acquisition receiving comprehensible input for an

interlocutor. The main explanation relies on “I” which is the current L2 stage. The 1 refers to input used as they move from one stage to another (Krashen, 1987). Krashen also highlights the importance of the input comprehensibility since the language children are exposed to must be easy to understand and assimilate.

Finally, Krashen in his Affective Filter Hypothesis, refers to the interaction environment of the classroom. Schütz (2007) states that when Krashen claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. This hypothesis is closely related to the rapport between student and teacher. Since a close and harmonious relationship will always help to keep affective filters low, a positive environment in the classroom will greatly help in keeping not only a good rapport, but also a low affective filter.

1. Input and Language acquisition.

First and second language acquisition depends on biological factors (Chomsky (1965), developmental factors Piaget (1954) and external factors Krashen (1984). These factors include the conditions in which the learner operates. It also includes the time and frequency available to exposure to the target language. Not only are the time in contact with the language, but also the quality of the samples of the target language, which the learners are exposed to, important in the process of acquiring a language (Harmer (2004). Such process is described by Krashen (1984) as *input*.

According to Krashen (1984), input plays a fundamental role in language acquisition. Learners need to be given the opportunity to make sense of what they hear or see to be aware of the contexts in which the samples of the language are used to interact with them as well as to compensate for the insufficiency of correct language. Krashen also assumes that the success in the acquisition process requires a "comprehensible input", i.e. the input goes beyond the current level of the learner's comprehensibility. This input should be meaningful and interesting to the children, although, it does not necessarily have to be grammatically sequenced. This means that the input should be picked so that the learner finds it attractive, understandable and meaningful— being neither too easy nor too difficult. Krashen refers as comprehensible input the theory of “i+1”; the “i” meaning the current level of proficiency or Schemata, while the “1” represents the new structures or the new language features a learner is exposed to (Harmer, 2004).

Input is present in every receptive and productive skill; “what we say or write is heavily influenced by what hear and see” (Harmer, 2004 p.266). As a result, the input a learner receives is the most important information about language. Therefore, the more we see, listen, and read to comprehensible input, the more language we acquire, notice, or learn.

Additionally, the language produced by the learners (children) also becomes input; when he/she sees his own output and the information uttered receives the expected answer, this language becomes input. In other words, feedback becomes input, and takes various forms. Some come from ourselves; we modify what we say or write depending on how effective we think we are communicating. Likewise, this input comes from face to face interaction or when someone listens to or reads what we say (Tomasello, 2004).

In the case of writing, a comprehensible input benefits learners' productions because, as it is stated before, the more comprehensible input we received, the better the language we acquire. Thus, the quality and quantity of input a learner receives during the acquisition process will benefit the language he will produce (Tomasello, 2004).

2. Interlanguage and Transfer

Larry Selinker proposed the theory of interlanguage (1972); which can be defined as the developing "idea of how the other languages work." At the very beginning of language learning, the learner has some idea of what the foreign language is like, and how it works. According to these ideas, the learner produces utterances, some of which may be correct, and others which may be wrong; this system can be observed when studying the utterances of the learner who attempts to produce meaning in using the target language (Selinker, 1972). Also, this system has its own grammar and it varies from one learner to another.

In relation with interlanguage, language transfer is also known as L1 interference, linguistic interference, and cross meaning. It refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second language. The learner it is likely to use structures from L1 to L2 which may result in positive or negative transfer depending on the L1 and L2 closeness.

When the relevant unit or structure of both languages is the same, linguistic interference can result in correct language production called *positive transfer*. "The effects of positive transfer are only determinable through comparisons of the success of the group with different native languages" (Odlin, 1989, p. 36); these comparisons may show how cross linguistic similarities can produce positive transfer in several ways. Similarities such

as vocabulary, vowel system, and writing system can give learners a head start in reading and writing in the target language. Finally, similarities in syntactic structures can facilitate the acquisition of grammar.

Negative transfer occurs when speakers and writers transfer items and structures that are not the same in both languages (Porter & Duncan, 1953; Postman, 1962). "Since negative transfer involves divergences from norms in the target language it is relatively easy to identify" (Odlin, 1989, p. 36). Negative transfers are easy to identify because the differences in the performance between native speakers and second language learners are clear most of the times. For instance, many people use "false friends" (words that look similar from one language to another but they have totally different meanings) to represent inaccurate ideas in second language or use structures that are not the same in the two languages of instruction.

C. Role of school

Most people learn English as second language or as a foreign language in elementary or middle school, and have not chosen to do this by themselves. They learn it because English is part of compulsory curriculum or because they were enrolled in an immersion program by their parents (Harmer, 2007). The school as an institution provides the opportunity for children to interact with peers. School also broadens a child's range of experience, exposing them to real environments, introducing new possibilities, systematizing the process of learning, helping to develop thinking skills and finally, empowering students to take responsibility for their own learning (Ashworth & Wakefield, 1999).

School provides new experiences and knowledge about the world. It is the entity in charge of providing experiences in which children develop the skills needed to succeed in life; it is not merely a place to go. The school's main aim should be to empower its learners to develop their full potential. Therefore, two of the most important skills required to succeed in life are reading and writing. As it has been stated previously, oral language is acquired, but written language must be developed through great effort. In fact written language must be taught in order to be developed because everybody learns how to speak and understand oral language, but just those who are taught, learn how to read and write. (Ashworth & Wakefield, 1999)

The great responsibility of teaching children how to read and write is not present solely on the shoulders of the school as an institution, but it is also the responsibility of the teachers. Teachers must apply both technology and techniques in order to give students the best chance of succeeding during this process. Teachers are also in charge of planning and executing classes following the approaches, methods and techniques based on linguistics.

D. Parents and their role in language acquisition.

Parents have a determinant role in the acquisition of mother tongue because they can share native language pattern in books, song, stories, rhymes, skills, and artifacts which result in L1 acquisition. Parents are the most important influence in the development of L1 (Restrepo & Towle-Harmon, 2009) because they not only represent the source of lexicon, but also the gestures needed for communication in any language. In addition, first language is the frame of the L2 as it is stated by (O'Grady et al, 1996) when they refer

> "Unlike the first language learners, the second language learner has an established language system for communicating cognitively more mature, L2 learners do not approach a second language in the same manner as they do at first" (P.47)

As a result, L1 provides a frame for developing competences in the L2 when children have a well-established language system; they tend to learn a second language in an easier way, however while children are surrounded by input from television and other sources, the parents and close relatives are the greatest source of language input in both spoken and gestural communication.

E. Teaching Methodology.

Methodology can be defined as "the collection of method and techniques used in different fields." (Cambridge, 2010). According to Cambridge, (2010) a method is "a particular procedure for accomplishing or approaching something" this leads to defined teaching methodology as the collection of method and techniques to accurately teach a subject. During history there have been a great number of methodologies in language teaching. This section provides a brief explanation of them. Such explanations include the main points and theories, as well as the main purposes of each of the most relevant teaching methodologies.

1. Grammar-translation:

Grammar-translation method of foreign language teaching is one of the most traditional methods. It dates back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It was originally used to teach 'dead' languages (and literatures) such as Latin and Greek. This may account for its heavy bias towards written work to the virtual exclusion of oral production. Learning is largely by translation to and from the target language. Grammar

rules are to be memorized and long lists of vocabulary learned by heart. There is little or no emphasis placed on developing oral ability (Harmer, 2007).

This method is based on translation; classes are taught in the mother tongue which makes it easier for the learner to understand the lesson. In fact, this method is based on the structure of the language and not on its usage. This makes language teaching isolated (far from real usage), structures and vocabulary are seen as merely knowledge; therefore, students learn about the language, but they do not learn the language. This method does not develop communicative skills because there is no connection between language, content, and the learner (Thormbury, 1999).

2. The Direct Method

The Direct Method appears as an option to grammar translation. It is a method for teaching foreign languages. It uses the target language, discarding any use of the mother tongue in the classroom. As teachers became frustrated with the students inability to communicate orally, they began to experiment with new techniques. The idea was that foreign language teaching must be carried out in the same way people learn their mother tongue. The learner is not allowed to use his or her mother tongue.

Direct explanation of grammar rules is avoided, instead they are taught inductively (the students deduce the rules from accurate examples provide in the classroom). An important characteristic of this method is the use of realia to teach concrete vocabulary. On the other hand abstract vocabulary is taught through association of ideas. The method also emphasizes on correct pronunciation and the correct use of grammar. Finally, the most used teaching technique is modeling and practice.

In spite of its achievements, the direct method fell short of fulfilling the needs of the educational system. One of its major shortcomings was that it was hard for public schools to integrate it; this is because it requires a lot of preparation, plenty of resources and a high student to teacher ratio. These factors combined are difficult for teachers to use (Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

3. Audio-lingual:

The belief behind this method is that learning a language means acquiring habits. In this method, there is as much practice as possible of dialogues and every day situation. New language is first heard and extensively drilled before it is seen in its written form. The Structural view of language is behind the audio-lingual method, in which particular emphasis is laid on mastering the building blocks of language and learning the rules for combining them (Thormbury, 1999).

The theory behind this method is behaviorism and the theories proposed by B.F Skinner. This method views language as an oral behavior and not as the product of human thoughts. In fact language learning is seen as habit-formation. According to this conception language skills are learned more effectively if they are presented orally first, and then in written form. Mistakes are bad and should be avoided, as they make bad habits in the target language.

This method did not succeed because of its narrow vision of language. It sees language as something that can be programmed in people's mind and not something that is generated for by one´s own creativity. Even though this method is not widely accepted, it is still used in some programs because it has great impact in structure repetitions (drills)

which make language learners more accurate in pronunciation and form (Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

4. The structural approach:

This method sees language as a complex group of grammatical rules which are to be learned one at a time in a set order. The arrangement of words in English is very important. The meaning of an utterance changes with a change in the word order. For instance: three words can be combined to form different sentences depending on the word arrangement or sequences. These two (Word arrangement or sequences) are called structures.

Structures may consist of full utterances or they may fall on a part of a large pattern. Sentence Structure can be defined as "the grammatical arrangement of words in sentences" (Cambridge, 2010). A sentence structure is, therefore, a model for sentences, which have the same form although made up of different words. For instance, the formula for an English sentence is Subject – Verb – Object (SVO). This SVO formula can frame innumerate sentence on this pattern using the same words in different order (Thormbury, 1999).

The structure approach is based on the following principles: in first place, the speech is important as the necessary means of generating language learning. Secondly, the importance of forming language habits, particularly the habit of arranging words in English sentence patterns to replace the sentence patterns from learners L1.Finally, the pupils own activities rather than the activities of the teacher (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

This method is an effective way to promote grammar development because it generates the habit of using language accurately, and little by little changes interlanguage

into standard language. Because this method is useful in second language learning and in acquisition, it is still widely used around the world.

5. Sugestopedia:

The name of Sugestopedia is from the words "suggestion" and "pedagogy." It is a set of learning recommendations derived from Suggestology. Lozanov describes it as "a science concerned with the systematic study of the no rational and/or non-conscience influences" that human beings are constantly responding to (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 100).

The method also draws insights from yoga and the Soviet psychology. From yoga it draws the importance of relaxation of mind for maximum retention of material. The theory underlying this method is that a language can be acquired only when the learner is receptive and has no mental blocks. Various methods suggest to students that language is easy, and in this way, the mental blocks to learning are removed (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

A relevant aspect of this method is its centrality of music and musical rhythm as starters for learning. According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), there are three main functions of music within this method. Such functions include: "Facilitating the establishment and maintenance of personal relations; to bring about increased self-esteem through increased self-satisfaction in musical performance; and to use the unique potential or rhythm to energize and bring order" (p. 100).

Sugestopedia can be considered as an alternative or complementary method, since it only focuses on the environment and rapport within the classroom. It creates a positive environment which is a key factor in second language acquisition; unfortunately, it is not

the whole process because a good environment does not assure the accomplishment of learning objectives.

6. Total Physical Response (TPR):

TPR is based on the principle that the human brain has a biological program or device for acquiring any language on earth. This even includes sign language. This process is visible when first language acquisition takes places due to the interaction between parents and children. The main premise relies on the fact that communication between family members is a combination of both, verbal and physical interaction (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

TPR works by having the learner respond to simple commands such as "Stand up", "Close your book", "Go to the window and open it." This method is widely used for teaching structures such as imperatives. However, this method is not just about mimicking, instead, it is a method that works in oral comprehension rather than in oral production. It's mainly used in lower grades such as pre-K, first grade or in ESL courses for beginners. It is also used to teach basic structures to dyslexic people or to other special language disabilities.

7. Communicative language teaching (CLT):

"Communicative Language Teaching approach is a new coherent conception for language teaching which main objective is students developing an accurate performance in any communicative situation they face" (Fiolla, 2008, p. 81).

The focus of this method is to enable the learner to communicate effectively and appropriately in the various situations they would be likely to find themselves in. The CLT

courses contain language functions such as inviting, suggesting, complaining or notions such as the expression of time, quantity and location.

"One of the things that CLT embraces within its family is the concept of how language is used" (Harmer, 2007, p. 69). CLT is an approach used to teach students how to use language rather than simply how language is structured; consequently, its view about grammar relies in the perception of how grammar is used to communicate instead of how grammar articulates language. Even though this method views grammar as an instrument for communication CLT does not delay it because during instruction, grammar focuses in meaning not in form. Also corrections are delayed when learners have a relative high level of proficiency. The methodology based in CLT is rich in activities that enhance communicative performance in learners.

8. The Silent Way:

The Silent Way is a language teaching method created by Caleb Gattegno that makes extensive use of silence as a teaching technique. It is based on the premise that the teacher should be silent as much as possible in the classroom and the learner should be encouraged to produce as much language as possible (Gattegno, 1963).

"The Silent Way is also related to a set of premises that we called 'problem-solving approaches to learning'" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 81). It is a student centered method which emphasizes the autonomy of the learner; the teacher´s role is to monitor the students' efforts, and the students are encouraged to have an active role in learning the language. Pronunciation is seen as fundamental; beginning students start their study with pronunciation, and much time is spent practicing it during each lesson.

9. Communicative Language Learning (CLL)

Communicative language learning is a method developed by Charles A. Curran and his associates. The main concern of this method is relayed in the technique known as counseling learning. In fact, community learning can be seen as a method based on counseling learning. As it is stated by Richards & Rodgers (2001),

> "Community Language Learning draws on the counseling metaphor to redefine the roles of the teacher (the counselor) and learners (the clients) in the language classroom. The basic procedures of CLL can thus be seen as derived from the counselor-client relationship" (p.90).

Finally, through this method, attempts are made to build strong personal links between the teacher and the student so that there are no blocks to learning. There is plenty of talk in the mother tongue, which is then translated by the teacher for repetition by the student.

10. Task-based Language Learning (TBL)

"Task –based learning makes the performances of meaningful task central to the learning process" (Harmer, 2007, p. 71). Teaching focuses on the completion of a task which in itself is interesting to the learners. Learners use the language they already have to complete the task and there is little correction of errors during the task because this method has the premise of language use instead of language accuracy. The role of the teacher appears at the end of the task when the task has been completed; the teacher discusses the language, in the language that was used. The teacher then is able to make corrections and adjustments on the students' performance.

A well designed task has three stages Pre-task, Task Cycle, and Language Focus. “In the pre-task stage, the teacher explores the topic with the class and may highlight useful words and phrases” (Harmer, 2007, p. 71). This stage consists of an introduction to topic and task. The instructions are given during this stage; in fact instructions are the key factor in any task use in language teaching classroom.

During the task cycle stage, the students perform the task in any seated classroom arrangement; depending on the task that the students are asked to perform, the function of the teacher is to monitor from a distance, but also to help students when needed. The expected output from this stage is a presentation of a report which tells the class about the activities done as well as how they run. This report can be oral or written (Harmer, 2007).

In the Language Focus Stage, students examine and discuss specific features of the task; here students can express and share any good or bad experience they went through while performing the task. They can also share any reading or listening text they observed during the task. Then the teacher may conduct some kind of practice of specific language features which have arisen during the activity. This method is student-centered since it prompts the students as the main protagonist of their leaning.

11. The Natural Approach:

This approach propounded by Professors T. Terrell & S. Krashen stresses the similarities between learning the first and second languages. This approach is different from the Natural Method that appeared by 1900 and later become known as the direct method. The main difference is stated by Richards & Rodgers (2001) when he states that

> "in the natural approach there is an emphasis on exposure, or input, rather than practice; optimizing emotional preparedness for learning; a prolonged period of attention to what the language learner hear before they try to produce language" (P. 179).

Even though the two methods use real language in context for teaching purposes, their views on teaching techniques are different, because in Natural Approach the language has to be comprehensible before it is acquired whereas in the Direct Method the output has to be accurate before it can be considered language.

In the Natural Approach there is no correction of mistakes; they are delayed until the learner has a considerably level of accuracy in the language. Learning takes place when the students is exposed to comprehensible language. Here the combination of I+1 hypothesis which was explained previously in this chapter is seen.

12. Immersion:

Immersion is a program designed with the intention of maximizing the opportunity students have to be exposed to L2 (Tedick et al, 2011); this corresponds to a great extent with the current situation we have at our school. ESL students are immersed in the English language for the entire school day and expected to learn (math, science, humanities etc.) through the medium of the target language.

According to Tedick, et al (2011), there are three different kinds of immersion programs including; one way immersion (foreign language), two ways immersion (bilingual) and indigenous language immersion. One way immersion, originated in Canada in 1965, and now it is found throughout the world, linguistically homogeneous students

who are typically dominant in the majority language are found. One way immersion is designed to create language and cultural knowledge in the learner.

Two ways immersion programs initiated in the 60's; it is predominantly found in the USA; it differs from one way immersion primarily with the difference in the population of students assisted. These methods bring together language minority and language majority language learners to be instructed in and to each other's language. Two ways immersion also has the goal of creating bi or multi-literacy, multilingualism academic achievement and cross cultural understanding (Tedick, et all, 2011).

"Indigenous language immersion programs are designed to revitalize endangered indigenous cultures and languages and promote their maintenance and development" (Tedick, et al 2011 p.2). These programs can be either one way or two ways designed depending on the necessity presented for the population.

To conclude, immersion programs are designed to create multilingualism, multiculturalism, academic achievement and cross cultural understanding throughout the use of target language as means of instruction. In other words, all teaching is delivered in the target language. This ensures that the exposing time will be optimum, and the learners are going to gain not only language, but the required communicative skills in the target language.

F. Constructivism

One of the latest theories on teaching is constructivism, which elicits the importance of previous knowledge, as well as the importance of "learner centered teaching" (the learner is the one who creates or constructs his own knowledge the teacher is just a guide in

the process); this theory is not only a new tendency, but has also provided a great contribution for the language teaching field.

There are many definitions of ‘constructivism,’ but one of the most accurate claims that it is a philosophical position that views knowledge as the outcome of experience mediated by one's own prior knowledge and the experience of others (Ryder, 2008). Constructivism is a movement in which the learner constructs his own knowledge rather than acquire it. This approach also is based on tasks and the learner is not considered as a blank slate. Their main contributors were Vigotsky (1925), Piaget (1965), Dewey (1975), and Brunner (1984).

Initially, Vigotsky proposed many theories such as scaffolding which is a temporary structure where the learner steps to move toward next stage of cognitive development, directly related with other important theories that he proposed the ZPD (zone of proximal development), which is a stage where the learner can move to a higher stage with the help of someone more capable (Idoneos.com, 2005). Piaget presented the theory of stages of development, sensorimotor, preoperational, and operational stage (explained early in this document).

Other contributors such as, Dewey (1975) as cited by O'Gradyet al, 1996, who contributed greatly when he stated that people tend to learn things that are directly useful for the learner easily than other things that aren’t immediately or obviously useful. Also he took into consideration the usage of previous knowledge in teaching in the same line, including Vico’s philosophy which relies on the idea that the only truth that can be known is the one related to the one produce by production or creation action.

Brunner (1984) proposed principles that are valuable for education Instruction that must be concerned with the experiences and contexts that make the student to be willing and able to learn (readiness). Instructions must be structured so that they can be easily grasped by the student (spiral organization). Instructions should be designed to facilitate extrapolation and fill in the gaps going beyond the information given (Brunner, 1996), and not just a reproduction of what teachers and others say.

Since reading and writing are processes learned by engaging in constructivism, it is also an ideal approach to use in the teaching of them. As it is stated, “Researchers of young children’s writing have shown that learning genres is part of their literacy development. My own inquiries into children’s writing during writing workshop have demonstrated that learning genres is an emergent process” (Chapman, 1997).

1. The Lexical Syllabus:

The principles of the Lexical Approach have been around since Michael Lewis published 'The Lexical Approach' in 1993. It seems, however, that many teachers and researchers do not have a clear idea of what the Lexical Approach actually looks like in practice. This approach is based on the analysis of language which identifies the most common (and hence most useful) words in the language and their various uses. The lexical syllabus gathers these words in, broadly, the order of their frequency, and great emphasis is placed on the use of authentic materials (Harmer, 2007).

The lexical approach has certainly drawn attention to facts about the composition of language, however, what it has not yet done, is the leap from this information to a set of pedagogical principles or syllabus specification which can be incorporated into a method.

All the methodologies have added something beneficial to the field of teaching languages, especially when all of them are based in many theories. Since the beginning, teaching languages have been influenced by research done in the area of teaching. In the following section some of the most influential theories of language acquisition are presented.

G. Learning Intelligences and Styles

In the early 90´s, Howard Garners proposed his theory of multiple intelligences. At the beginning, he formulated a hypothesis containing seven different intelligences: linguistic intelligence, logical mathematics intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, spatial intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. The first two are part of the ones valued at school; the next three are usually associated with the arts; and the final two are what Howard Gardner called 'personal intelligences' (Gardner, 1993).

Linguistic intelligence involves sensitivity to spoken and written language as well as, the ability to learn languages and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively use language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically; and to use language as a means to remember information.

Logical-mathematical intelligence consists on the capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically. According to Howard Gardner, it entails the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. This intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.

Musical intelligence involves skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns. It encompasses the capacity to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. According to Howard Gardner, musical intelligence runs in an almost structural parallel to linguistic intelligence.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body to solve problems. It is the ability to use mental abilities to coordinate body movements. Howard Gardner sees mental and physical activity as related units instead of isolated ones.

Spatial intelligence involves the potential to recognize and use the patterns of wide space and more confined areas. It also deals with the spatial judgment and the ability to visualize the world with mental eyes. People holding of this intelligence are able to interpret 3D models without having seen them before. It is concerned with all the physical surroundings a person has, as well as all the abilities related with space, such as driving, running exercising, etc.

Interpersonal intelligence is concerned with the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people. It allows people to work effectively with others. Educators, salespeople, religious and political leaders and counselors all need a well-developed interpersonal intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence entails the capacity to understand oneself to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations. In Howard Gardner's view, it involves having an effective working model of ourselves, and to be able to use such information to regulate our lives.(Gardner, 1993).

H. Learning styles

The theory of multiple intelligences was applied later in the observation of the way in which people learn. One of the most common and widely used is Fleming´s VARK theory. The acronym VARK stands for Visual, Aural/Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic sensory modalities that are used for learning information. As a result it classified the learners into the followings categories, visual learner, auditory learners, read/write learners, and tactile kinesthetic learner.

First, visual learners need to see the visual aids presented by the teacher such as charts map, diagrams or arrows as connectors to understand better.

> "This preference includes the depiction of information in maps, spider diagrams, charts, graphs, flow charts, labeled diagrams and all the symbolic arrows. Circles, hierarchies and other devices, which people use to represent what could have been presented in words" (Vark-learn, 2012).

They learn using their senses, mainly the sight spatial intelligence is closely related to this way of learning. This category does not include videos or power points, but it does include designs, white spaces, shapes, and patterns.

Secondly, the auditory learner uses sound as a way to reach experiences, this kind of learner is helped to learn by aids such as, tapes, lectures, tutorials, group discussions, mobile phones, video chats, and talking out loud to others or by themselves (Vark-learn, 2012). This learner is characterized by the preferences of hearing things at the time that they are spoken. Into this category E-mails and other electronic sources are also included

because they are written in an informal way, which allows the learner to feel comfortable as if they were interacting one to another orally.

After that, read-write learners, their preference is for information displayed as words. Not surprisingly, many academics have a strong preference for this modality. This preference emphasizes: text based input and output as well as both reading and writing in all its forms. People who prefer this modality are often addicted to PowerPoint, the Internet, lists, dictionaries, thesauri, quotations and written words. They learn through reading instead of experiencing (Vark-learn, 2012).

Finally, the tactile kinesthetic learners prefer to get in touch with information, they learn better through the perception of reality or a simulation of reality. The simulations like videos, plays, role plays and dramas are related with this learner. "People in this category has a strong preference to learn from the experience of doing something and they value their own background of experiences and less so, the experiences of others." They tend to avoid reading because they like to feel and perform actions from their surroundings (Vark-learn, 2012).

I. Early Literacy

There are many definitions for literacy but the most common is "the ability to read and write" (Cambridge, 2010), but for some linguistic this definition is too narrow to describe this complex skills. Hudelson, (1999) defined literacy as "meaning or construction of meaning." (p. 3); she gave a new perspective to the reading and writing process where the process of encoding and decoding becomes old and loses its usefulness. This vision is more accurate in the sense that reading and writing are not just encoding and decoding print

on written paper; therefore it is a means by which one is able to explore and produce both knowledge and meaning.

On the other hand, emergent literacy is the term used to name the process children go through when they are learning how to read and write. This process starts at birth and last until pre-school years (Roth & Diane R. Paul, (2006) Sulzby and Teale (1996), Ashworth & Wakefield (1999); this period can also be called early literacy which is the beginning of standard literacy. The main components of literacy are reading and writing. These components are closely related to environment and social influences; because they provide a rich source of real experiences that help in the building of literacy (Chapman, 1997).

1. Reading-writing development

The process of learning to read and write is described by Freeman & Freeman (2006) "as finding a balance between invention and convention" (p. 161). When developing literacy, young learners invent spelling, words, punctuation marks, and even letters to express their ideas; however as they start reading they become aware that the community already has an established standard and conventional form of writing.

Since reading and writing are complex processes, they both go through stages (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1979; Hudelson, 1999; Freeman & Freeman, 2006). Ferreiro and Teberosky (1979) were pioneers listing four different stages in the learning of reading and writing in Spanish language; the four stages proposed are cognitive processes and happen in most language teaching programs. They have been taken into account for teachers and people involved in the teaching early instruction. For instance, Buchanan (1989), to show

equivalencies in English language, based his analysis of the phases of acquisition proposed by Ferreiro and Teberosky.

Ferreiro& Teberosky (1979) proposed four stages for Early Literacy, they are pre-syllabic, Syllabic, syllabic-alphabetical, and alphabetical. These stages are also mentioned by many theories and researchers such as Hudelson, 1999, Borzone de Manrique, 2006, and Hammink, 2005.

In the first, place the pre-syllabic stage has three major characteristic. First the writing is egocentric that is to say, children do not realize that they have a responsibility for writing something that can be read by others; most of the time they are aware of what they are writing but, they do not expect others to read it nor do they expect to be able to read what others have written. Secondly, children believe that the word they write has to correspond with the size of the object it represents. And third, children do not make any distinction between writing and drawing (Freeman & Freeman, 2006).

Some of the possible outputs of the pre-syllabic stages are: children draw instead of writing. They do not use letters or numbers, but they use a type of scribbling letters which represent sounds; this scribbling letters emulate the size of the word it represents; for example, they could write the word brother in a physically shorter size than the word dad, because dad represent a bigger person. (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1979, Freeman & Freeman, 2006).

The stage that follows is known as the Syllabic Stage; this stage is divided into two phases. First, we have the early syllabic phase, which is characterized by the awareness of the usage of letters to represent sounds. Children begin to use more defined and

conventional graphic forms. Most of the letters produced during this stage are more recognizable, but some reversing can be observed. According to Ferreiro and Teberosky (1979), children during this stage hypothesize that words may have a certain, fixed number of characters and the characters must be different. Most of the time, they still mismatch the sound and the letter.

Thirdly, the late syllabic phase, at the beginning of this stage; children tend to represent each word with a letter. Later, they will use one letter for each syllable; children represent Spanish words with vowels because there is a consistent correspondence between the five vowel sounds and the five letters used to represent them. Meanwhile, they represent English words with consonants because the correspondence between consonants sounds and letters used to represent them are more consistent in English than with vowel sounds and the letters they represent. At the end of this stage children believe that all the words are formed of four letters.

Also during this stage, children are capable of identifying syllables when reading even though they may follow the sequence of the letters with their fingers. They read one syllable at time, but most of the time they just identify one of the sounds; though they may vary from one language to another as a child will read vowels in the case of Spanish and consonants in the English case.

Next, the syllabic alphabetical stage is represented by the notion that it is necessary to join a consonant and a vowel to represent a sound as result they move from syllabic to alphabetic stage. Also children are made aware of prints, which is when children realize the relation between sound and letter when writing. They notice this relationship when they

realize that both vowels and consonant are used in print environments. During this stage children write words with some complete and incomplete syllables, but most of the words can be read by others.

Finally, the Alphabetic stages starts when children refine their alphabetical hypothesis. This stage is represented by the standard use of letters to read and write words; they are able to construct complete words using both consonants and vowels together, moreover, most of the words are spelt conventionally; errors come from different ways to spell a sound, but they use prints to represent any phoneme with the same sound even thought is not the right one. (Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1979)

These stages proposed by Ferreiro &Teberosky (1979) are equivalent to the ones presented by Buchanan (1989), who adapted Ferreiro and Teberosky's stages to the English Language. They, both, share the same characteristic as well as the same purpose. Their relationship is better represented in the following chart.

Buchanan (1989)	Ferreiro & Teberosky (1979)	Characteristic
Pre-phonetic	Pre-syllabic	There is no conection between letters and sounds. Writing is egocentric. It is not used to transmit information. The size of the letter is directly proportionate to the size of the object.

	Early Syllabic	Writers assume that there is a fixed number of letters in a word and there is a variety of letters (one letter is not repeated) writers use the letters of their names.
Early Phonetic	Late Syllabic	There is a connection between the physical aspect of producing a word and the spelling of the word. Each letter stands for one syllable in the word
Late Phonetic	Syllabic- Alphabetic	Each element of the sound production in the pronunciation of a word should have its own graphic representation. Writers move from syllabic to alphabetic hypothesis.
Phonic	Alphabetic	Sound is the key to spelling, however writers may overgeneralize phonics rules. They realize that one sound may be represented by different letters or groups of letters.
Syntactic Semantic		In the spelling of the words meaning and syntax provide important cues that in many cases take

		precedence over sound cues.

(Freeman & Freeman, 2006, p. 165)

As it can be seen, the stages have the same purpose and characteristic; just the names and some distribution of the traits change on each stage. For instance, Buchanan explains her pre-phonetic stage in the same way Ferreiro's &Teberosky's pre-syllabic and early syllabic stage are presented. In addition to that, Buchanan provides an extra stage which overlaps with the final stage of writing which could be considered as the narrative domain of written language.

In their study about early literacy Justice, McGinty, Beckman, & Kilday (2006) describe four domains in the process of early literacy acquisition, which are also shared by Restrepo & Towle-Harmon (2009). Those domains consist of print knowledge, phonological awareness, vocabulary, and narrative.

Firstly, vocabulary plays an important role in early literacy; this domain describes the children's receptive and expressive repertoire of words, according to Justice, McGinty, Beckman, & Kilday, 2006 at age four, children should have a receptive repertoire of nearly 3,000 words and an expressive repertoire of nearly 2,000 words. This amount of words is directly related to later literacy, especially with regards to reading comprehension.

Next, the narrative expresses the capability of the children to understand logical sequences of events as well as tenses (time when things occur) also this domain requires full integration of whole language skills, which includes grammar, word morphology, pragmatic knowledge, and vocabulary. The narrative has a positive influence in later development by giving coherence to language, this coherence will help students to produce

extended discourse, tolerate events, to share thoughts, to listen to and comprehend various nonfictional and fictional genres. A child's early narrative ability can give a strong prediction to their later abilities in reading comprehension and could even provide a general index of children's overall language ability (Justice, Mc Ginty, Beekman & Kilday, 2006).

Then, phonological awareness can then be observed; phonological awareness is usually defined as the ability to recognize and manipulate sound units as phonemes or syllables, in fact phonological awareness describes the children's sensitivity to the phonological aspect of language, in other words as the division of sounds into units such as syllables and phonemes.

Finally, the print knowledge describes the children's' interest for prints, they may know some names as well as other print features (alphabet letters, words) and how these features are combined to form language. It also describes the children's' sensitivity to the way prints are arrange to form meaning. One important feature of the print knowledge domain is alphabet knowledge, which describes the children's' familiarity with the alphabet as well as its profit in the phonetically and phonological of children.

2. Some common methodology of teaching reading.

The following table summarize the most common method used to teach reading in Spanish.

METHOD	RESOURCES	WHAT	EMPHASIS
Alphabetic	A textbook with the autor selection of lessons	Names of letters are taught thinking that students will be able to write letters later in the process. Children have to memorize letters through writing and repetition. It is assumed that if letters are taught, children will have access to the words.	Emphasis is given to the names of the letters and how to combine them. It is based on letter discrimination and the writing of letters with no communicative purposes. No importance is given to meaning or types of text. The context is not important. Children who learn how to write and read in this way have problems reading comprehensibly.
Phonetic or phonemic	A book with lessons selected by the author.	It believes that the smallest part of the letter is the phoneme. It is interested in having children to isolate sounds to establish the correspondence between the grapheme and the phoneme. The reading activities go from the easiest to the most difficult. It begins with vowels to then establish the relationship is between phoneme and grapheme. It begins with the teaching vowels and then consonants.	Emphasis is given to letter and sound. It does not give importance to meaning, neither to writing for communicative purposes. Children who learned to read using this method have problems in reading and writing.
Syllabic	One texbook with lessons already selected by the author. Usually exercise sheets for repetition of letters	The smallest unit to teach reading and writing is the syllable; then they are combined with words and phrases. The intellectual activity of children is limited to memorization	Emphasis is given to the learning of syllables to then make words. It does not pay attention to meaning and use of language for communication. Words that have no meaning to children are formed. Children who learn with this method have serious problems with reading comprehension.

METHOD	RESOURCES	WHAT	EMPHASIS
Global	Use of complete sentences from where words are taken. They can be taken from books use for the teaching of early literacy or from words given by the students.	It is based on psychology studies that that say that children intelligence is syncretic and global. It assumes that the first contact children have with the written word is from written sources and with complete words. According to this method fist done is recognizing words, then the writing of sentences to end with the analysis of the different components in the written text. The auditory difficulty of the input is not important since reading is a visual activity.	Emphasis is given to how the letters are perceived. Even when meaning is taken into account, the text where communication is based is not important.
Normal words	Charts with pictures related to the lesson	It is a variant of the global method. It provides the words in pictures for the child to associate word with meaning. Understanding of the word comes next to then divide it into the little components. For the first lesson teachers usually uses words that have a vowel and a consonant.	Meaning of syllabic units and the writing system. It does not make emphasis on the verbal aspects that participates in communication, text typology or content.
Methods based on meaning and communication (Communicative Approach)	Text into account txt and context where communication takes place. The written text is important.	The learning of the written language is not only based on how letters are perceived and its relation to sounds, but it is interested in the building concepts about reading, and why and how writing is accuring.	It is interested in having the child become aware of the reasons why writing is happening, as well as of the context, why is important to read and the reason why something is written.

			So that the words used make sense to him. The text is important. The comprehension of the written system is essential.

III. Methodology of the study.

In this section, we explain the methodology used in the study. It describes the broad paradigm, qualitative, that works as the umbrella to justify the use of case study as a way of approaching the in depth study of a phenomenon, subject, object, institution or matter. Furthermore, we describe the scenario and emphasize the criteria used to select the participants for this study, stating clearly that the main purpose of this section is to support the methodological approach, strategies, instruments, and techniques used along the research.

A. Administrative Issues and Ethics.

Prior to the beginning of data collection, the researcher obtained permission from the principal of the school where the study would take place. As responsible researchers, we compromised ethically to keep the anonymity of both, subjects and school so that we used a coding strategy to comply with our endeavor. The Principal of the school granted a written permission on September 20th of 2010, date when we officially started the data collection at the school.

B. Type of study.

Since our research is more concerned with specific information rather than the searching for clues and evidence to generalize the findings through a statistical interpretation of the data, we decided to use a qualitative approach to develop our study; therefore, the emphasis would never be to generalize, but to know in detail the phenomenon studied. In other words, the study intended to describe the process of writing development in young learners when learning how to write and read in two languages simultaneously. Within the qualitative approach, we used a case study since such research methodology would focus on a particular institution and selected grades. This research has as objectives the observation exploration, description, and analysis, of the phenomenon and the collection of data by means of direct observation, documental analysis, the dairy of the researcher, and a constant comparison of the documents produced by the students and the stages described by theories presented by well-known authors.

Based on the chosen methodology, we clearly state that it is not the study's intention to rate or quantify in a numeric way the performance of the participant's under the study, but to observe their writing production and the competences developed during the process of literacy development in Spanish and English simultaneously.

C. Participants

1. Selection of participants

The conducted qualitative case study took place in bilingual school with the students who enrolled in first grade. To select the participants from the subjects, although they were all part of the same grades, they needed to comply with some of the

characteristics stated by different authors from the literature review. Using the studies conducted by Craig (1997) & Fiolla (2008), we defined some additional criteria to select the participants; in that respect, the participants, besides belonging to the grades selected and being part of that specific school, they had to be children: (a) between the ages of five and eight years old, (b) who attended pre-school previuosly and (c) enrolled in first grade at this articular school.

Consequently, all the children from first grade became participants in this study. They were 11 children in total: 9 boys and 2 girls enrolled in the 2010-2011 school year. At this point, we defined a coding system to identify each one of the participants so that their identities and names would be kept in private, as stated in our original commitment. Each of the subjects was assigned a letter "C" plus a random number from 1 to 11 just stating that the girls would appear first and then the boys. This helped us group the participants for the data analysis.

2. Description of the Scenario

This study was conducted in a bilingual (dual immersion) school in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. It took place from September 2010 to June 2011. The criteria used to select this school was the reduced number of students officially registered in the school as a total and in each grade (100 students as a total and 12 children per class) and the advantage the researcher had of being a first grade teacher there. Besides, we valued their openness to implement new methodologies and the appropriateness of their school facilities and teaching resources; this school was the workplace of the researcher.

The school in this research provides instruction in two languages (a dual language school): English and Spanish. Teachers in this school are required to have a teaching degree. Two teachers held university degree and seven a teaching certificate from Normal schools. It used a vast variety of methodologies that belong to the Communicative Teaching Approach; moreover, it encouraged teachers to use principles from the constructivist approach. Due to the fact that the classroom had few students and teachers were required to do individualize instruction, the setting had the right conditions for the collection of the data for this study.

The school teaches classes both in English and Spanish with a greater emphasis in English. Each grade in elementary school takes eleven classes four are taught in Spanish and seven in English. The classes taught in Spanish were Spanish (language), Social Studies, Music, and Physical Education; while the ones taught in English were Spelling, Reading, Language Arts, Phonics, Science, Social Studies, Arts, and Home Economics.

Regarding to their teaching of writing in first grade in both languages, they received instruction on how to write in four classes in English (reading, language arts, phonics, and spelling) and one in Spanish. Teachers used the communicative approach to teach all these classes due to the fact the textbooks used by the school are all for native English speakers. The main strategy used to teach writing in first grade — both languages— are the workshops.

D. Data-Gathering.

In this qualitative research, the data-gathering was orientated to get a better understanding of the meaning and experiences from the subjects when learning how to

write in two languages simultaneously. The process used allowed the observation of the events as they happened in their natural environment and having the researcher act at all times as another instrument to collect the data. As stated earlier in this chapter, there was not an intention to measure or quantify the results in any way, but to describe thoroughly the events as they happened while the collection of the information and evidences. Therefore, the techniques used for data collection in the study included semi-structured direct classroom observations, a researcher's journal, and document-analysis (text-based data produced by the subjects).

1. Semi structured Observation.

We chose a semi-structured observation because it was easier to observe some particular events happening in the classroom than recording everything we saw while observing. This instrument allowed us to collect some data during the study that could not be gathered by means of any others instruments.

The semi-structured observation guide was adapted by the researcher from "the Theoretical and Methodological Principles according to CETT (Center of Excellence in Teaching Training)" (see Annex 2) to identify specific behaviors that might affect the student's writing development. This guide was used to observe traits related to the process of writing. Such rubric was adapted because it is based on all the same relevant traits mentioned by Ferreiro, Teberosky, and Buchanan in writing acquisition studies (CETT, 2004; Freeman & Freeman, 2006). The characteristics presented in this guide became of great support for the definition of the categories used for the study — Pre-syllabic, Syllabic A, Syllabic B, Syllabic-Alphabetical, and the alphabetical (Ferreiro and Teberosky, 1979).

This semi-structured guide aimed to observe specific traits that might affect the development of early literacy in native Spanish speaking children when learning how to read and write in English as a foreign language. The subjects were observed three times: observation one took place in September 2010; observation two in February 2011; and observation three in May 2011. Each particular subject was observed in one English class and one Spanish class during a period of 20 minutes each time. The results gathered with this instrument were arranged in a chart to ease the analysis processes; they were grouped according to the date they were observed. In this way, each chart provided pertinent pieces of information that later was triangulated with the data from text analysis and the researcher's journal.

2. Researcher`s Journal

Another important instrument used was the researcher journal. This tool helped the researchers to keep track of the struggles children went through while in the process of acquiring writing skills in first grade. The researcher's journal provided large amounts of data that, otherwise, could not have been collected by means of the semi-structured observation or the document analysis. Such relevant information helped greatly to support the findings from the analysis of the documents (pieces of written texts) produced by the participants (children).

Research journal observations took place while the children were producing the papers for this study. The main purpose of this kind of observation was to collect more information about the process, which is an advantage when analyzing the data gathered through observation— the more information collected, the better the analysis. Most of the information recorded was analyzed and commented in the dairy at the end of each day;

sometimes the researcher's journal contained many ideas and inferences made at the moment an event happened.

3. The Text Based Data.

One important part of this study was the analysis of children's written documents (written text material). These pieces of writing were collected in order to place each subject in the reading and writing stages he or she belonged to at each moment when the written material was collected. At the beginning of the research, the intention was to collect as many papers as possible from each subject; however, some problems arose during the collection of data and we decided that a number of at least six pieces of writing in English and Spanish from each subject were to be collected during the study.

We, collected the stories or material written by the participants (first grade children)once a month. These stories were extra assignments to reinforce their learning in the class. Every paper was written in one class hour (forty minutes). The subjects were not allowed to see any paper from their book bags, and the flat-board had only the date written on it. Subjects wrote their stories using their own knowledge and teacher did not say any word in English or Spanish (teachers just encouraged subjects to write as much as possible). They were free to choose the topic and the words they used.

After that, these stories went through the discourse analysis process to collect the necessary information needed to support what was observed during the two observation sessions. The main researcher read each piece of text-based data and compared it to the rubric containing the categories of the study. Each Piece was also coded using the first letter of the month they were produced plus the code of each subject (SC1 = paper of C1

from September). McNealy (1999), states the importance of discourse analysis in the process of understanding language "… linguistic scholars use discourse analysis to learn more about language itself and the way this is used" (p.125). As a result, these stories written by the children provided pertinent sources of information for this study.

E. Matrix of Categories.

The following chart summarizes the categories used in the study, as it was mentioned earlier: the two languages of instruction are different, but the categories presented by Ferreiro and Teberosky (1979) for Spanish and Buchanan (1989) for English are similar too. The two theories were summarized and compared; hence, the categories are the same in meaning as the names proposed by Ferreiro and Teberosky (1979).

Categories	Traits
Pre-syllabic stage	There is no difference between letters and drawing.
Syllabic stage level A	Uses letters but they do not fit with words' syllables they try to write
Syllabic stage level B	Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)
syllabic-alphabetical	Writes words with complete and incomplete syllables.
alphabetical stage	Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.

F. Analysis of the Data and results.

This section begins with a summary of the process of how the data was organized and processed, then the result are presented as a narration as the events occurred during the process of writing development children go through when learning two languages simultaneously. It closes triangulating the data collected from the three sources:

observation, researcher's diary and the document analysis (pieces of written text produced by the participants) and the theoretical framework of this study.

G. Analysis.

1. The analysis of Text-based Data

First, each piece of writing was coded as it was explained earlier (first letter meant the month the text was produced and the code which identified each subject); then, the researcher read each piece of writing comparing it to the matrix of defined categories of the study. The first documents (students-text-production from September 2010), were analyzed and placed in the stage each participant was at the moment of the study; therefore, a table was designed for each month the data was collected. Moreover, using such strategy allowed us to analyze the traits and place each piece of text produced at the appropriate stage for each one of the children's productions. Using this technique, made helpful to see the process they went through during the writing acquisition of both languages (see annex 3). At the end, the analyses made previously, from the very first to the last paper produced by the participants, were compared and contrasted in a summary table that shows the subjects´ progress in the development of writing during the length of the study.

2. The researcher journal.

This instrument helped to record differences and similarities, as well as difficulties observed in the subjects during study. The journal was handwritten and later typed to ease the reading and manipulation of the notes recorded. Not all the events that occurred in the classroom during the writing process of the participants were taken into account in this instrument, but those issues and traits that could not be observed in the text written

materials produced by the subjects such as specific difficulties and the answers to oral questions and answers from the subjects. For instance, most of the subjects said, “writing in English or Spanish is the same”. We read each page and then added every important datum to support findings that later helped for the analysis of the writing samples and the triangulation.

3. Observation Guides.

After completing three observation sheets from each subject, we recorded the regularity of traits as they occurred during each observation, and recorded the data in a summary table. After that, the tables completed for each participant were compared with the rest of the participant’s summary table. We intended to find similarities and differences among the subjects as they underwent the same teaching process.

The traits presented in this guide belonged to three higher writing levels; they did not represent neither the pre-syllabic nor the syllabic stages because the intention was to show the point at which the subjects gained awareness about the use of letters and their concordance with sounds that occurred in the syllabic-alphabetic stage. The characteristics, represented in this observation guide, rated the number of letters students could identify as well as the ones they could use. In this way, it was possible to have a better understanding of the writing process of development.

H. The Results

In this section, a detailed view of the process of subjects´ early writing development is described, also some pictures and reflection from writing samples from the subjects are

provided in order to support the findings; furthermore, the results obtained from the research journal and observation guides are summarized.

1. The participants:

The first steep to clearly see the result was to organize the background information of the subjects; in the following table we recorded the most pertinent information about their background.

Subject	Age	Gender	school years attended (previous) first grade	Writing stage at the beginning of the study.
C1	6	Female	3	Syllabic alphabetic stage (Spanish & English)
C2	6	Female	3	Syllabic alphabetic stage (Spanish & English)
C3	6	Male	1	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish & English)
C4	6	Male	2	Syllabic Stage (Spanish level A & English Level B)
C5	6	Male	2	No Data (wast not able to write because an injury.
C6	5	Male	2	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish & English)
C7	6	Male	1	Syllabic stage level A (Spanish & English)
C8	5	Male	3	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish) Syllabic Stage level A (English)
C9	6	Male	2	Syllabic Stage (Spanish & English)
C10	5	Male	3	Pre-syllabic stage (Spanish) Syllabic Stage (English)
C11	5	Male	2	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish) Syllabic Stage level B (English)

Table 1 Background of Students

One of the most important things about their background is its influence on writing. As Piaget (1954) states, children need to develop certain abilities in order to learn how to write, all of them are reached at the end of preoperational stage. Children at this stage begin using symbols, and also develop their first grammatical structures; Since, writing is a developmental ability children need to be in school setting in order to develop writing

skills; indeed, the teaching methodology used during the previous years as well as the input received plays a key role in future writing.

The subjects were placed in any of the stages using the information concerning the reading and writing stage when the study began; this provided an important starting point. According to the table above, not all the subjects began the study at the same level of their writing development. Two factors apparently influenced these differences; these factors are the age of the subjects and the number of school years attended before first grade. This might be related and supported by Piaget's developmental stages. It was stated earlier children need certain kind of maturity as well as other skills developed during early childhood (preoperational stage) to learn how to write and read.

The first column lists the age of the subjects. As it can be observed, four of the eleven subjects were less than six years old at the beginning of the study and they showed the lowest stages in writing development in comparison with the rest of the subjects. According to Piaget, age and maturity influences the readiness of the subjects to learn how to write; taking into account these theories, 7 of the subjects were at the end of their pre-operational stage—most of the time pre-operational stage ends when people reached the age of seven (Craig, 1997). This cognitive maturity allowed subjects to think more critically and acquire of all the structures needed to communicate using oral language in their mother tongue (Piaget, 1954).

As mentioned earlier, there are some requirements needed to acquire writing stages. Among them we find laterality, visual discrimination and general mental aptitude. (Fiolla, 2008). These aptitudes are developed after the Piaget´s preoperational stage or at the

beginning of formal operational stage. Either case occurs between the ages of six and seven. In consequence, the 4 subjects younger than six years old have not mastered all communicative competences, in other words they were not totally ready to learn how to write.

The second column lists the schooling years before first grade. Fiolla (2008) emphasizes the importance of school in developing skills needed to learn how to write; children exposed to activities where they manipulate language units such as letters, syllables and words tend to develop literacy easier than the ones who were not exposed to these activities. For example, C3 and C7 attended school just one year before first grade and they were in a lower level than C1 and C2, who attended three years of school before coming to first grade. The comparison, between these two pairs of subjects is possible since they shared the same age and developmental level.

Also the relationship between age and school years before first grade is observed among C8, C10, and C11 since all three shared the same writing stage and age with the difference relying on school years; this shows the importance of readiness for learning over schooling. As example we have C7 who attended just one year before first grade; above all, he is in a higher level of writing than C8, C10, and C11, but lower than C1 and C2.

As final consideration of this section is age and school years. These factors play a determinant role in literacy development. At least, in this group, children interrelate with other and the two of them are needed to fully develop early literacy in first grade. The combination of these two factors influences the later writing development of children; no one of them is more important than the other, but they are interdependent and equally

important because, as the observation shows, the right teaching at the right age fulfills the entire requirements for children to reach writing competences.

2. The text written from the subjects:

The data collected with this instrument helped place each subject in the different stage of writing acquisition throughout the study; the first document, collected in September 2010, showed traits of writing acquisition. They allowed the placing of each subject at the beginning of the study in their initial point of the writing developmental stage in the two language of instruction. The final text collected from each subject on June 2011 allowed perceiving their final level of proficiency in the two language of instruction. Table 2 summarizes the level of writing reached by children during the study.

Subject	Pre-syllabic stage.				Syllabic stage level A				Syllabic stage level B				Syllabic Alphabetic Stage				Alphabetic Stage			
	English		Spanish		English		Spanish		English		Spanish		English		Spanish		English		Spanish	
C1														x		x		x		X
C2														x		x		x		X
C3		x		X														x		X
C4								x		x								x		x
C5		x		X														x		X
C6																		x		x
C7						x		x						X		x				
C8				X		x												x		X
C9						x		x										x		x
C10				X		x												x		X
C11				X				x										x		X

Table 2 summary of writing levels reached by the subjects during the study.

The marked cells represent the initial point of each subject at the beginning of the study; the shadowed cells represent the data collected with the last paper at the end of the study (It happened either in May or June 2011). It can be seen that most of the subjects reached the final stage (Alphabetic stage) at the end of the study which finished at the end

of first grade. The subjects' written documents provided a view of the events happening during the writing acquisition stage, because all of them could be classified according the stage of writing development.

At the beginning of the data collection, most of the subjects were at different stages of writing development (see table 1). Every single subject went through different paths, but some of them could be grouped in order to simplify the analysis of their experiences. They were grouped according to both, their age and number of school years attended before first grade. Table 3 summarizes the division of the subjects on groups according the two factor mentioned above.

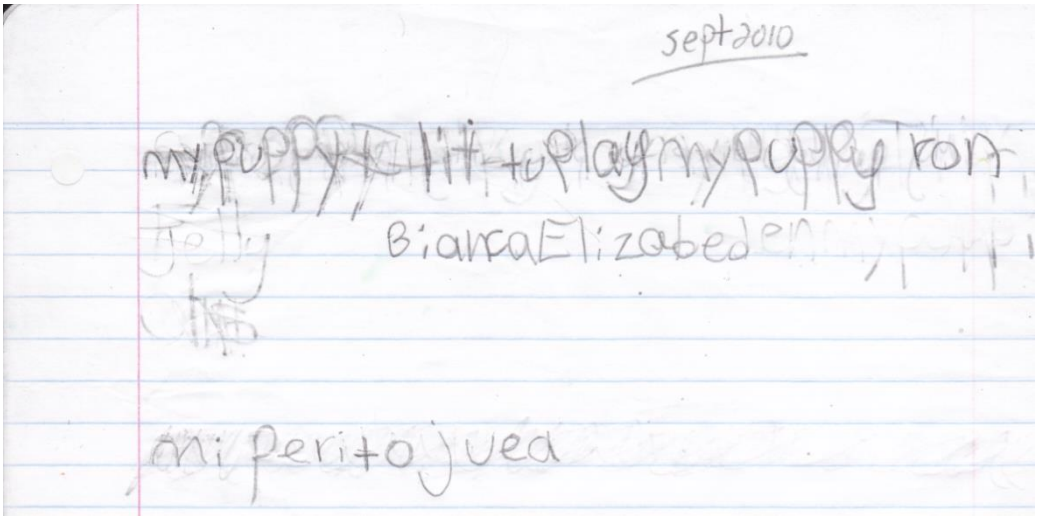
Subject	age	school years attended before first grade	group	Writing stage at the beginning of the study.
C1	6	3	1	Syllabic alphabetic stage (Spanish & English)
C2	6	3	1	Syllabic alphabetic stage (Spanish & English)
C3	6	1	3	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish & English)
C4	6	2	2	Syllabic Stage (Spanish level A & English Level B)
C5	6	2	2	No Data
C6	5	2	4	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish & English)
C7	6	1	3	Syllabic stage level A (Spanish & English)
C8	5	3	4	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish) Syllabic Stage level A (English)
C9	6	2	2	Syllabic Stage (Spanish & English)
C10	5	3	4	Pre-syllabic stage (Spanish) Syllabic Stage (English)
C11	5	2	4	Pre-syllabic Stage (Spanish) Syllabic Stage level B (English)

Table 3 subjects´ division in sub-groups

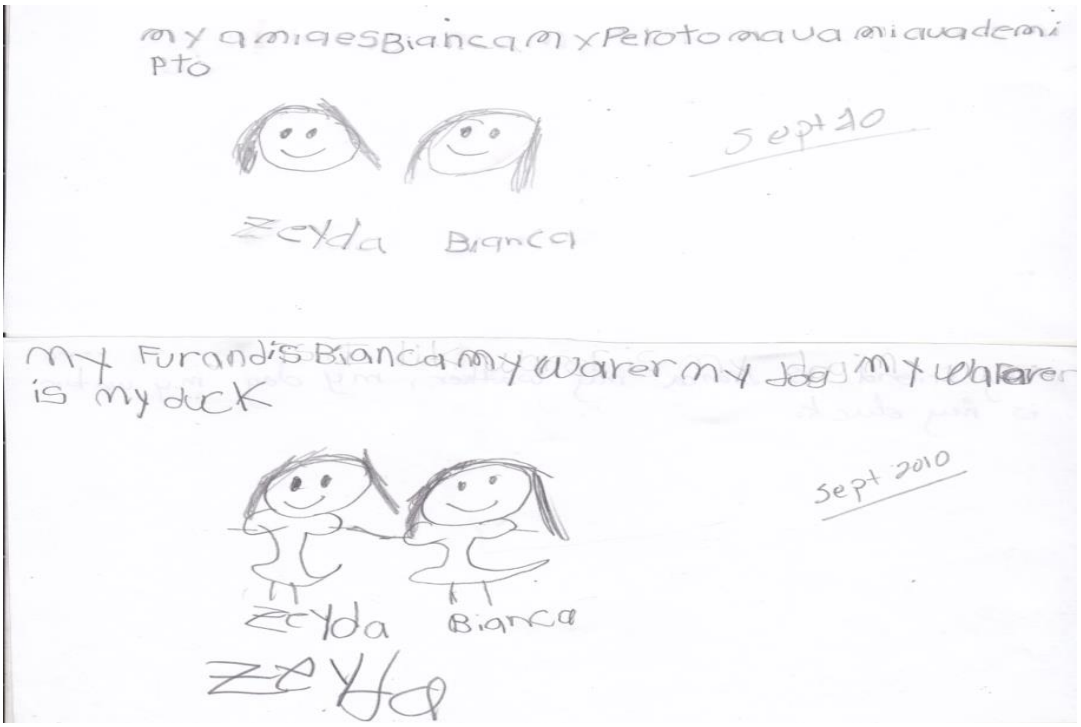
a) Group Number 1

The first group gathered (C1 and C2) shared the same age and the same school years before first grade, since they both attended school three years prior first grade; the two of them were six years old and reached the syllabic alphabetic stage by September, 2010 (see picture number one and two); just one month later (October 2010), C1 reached the

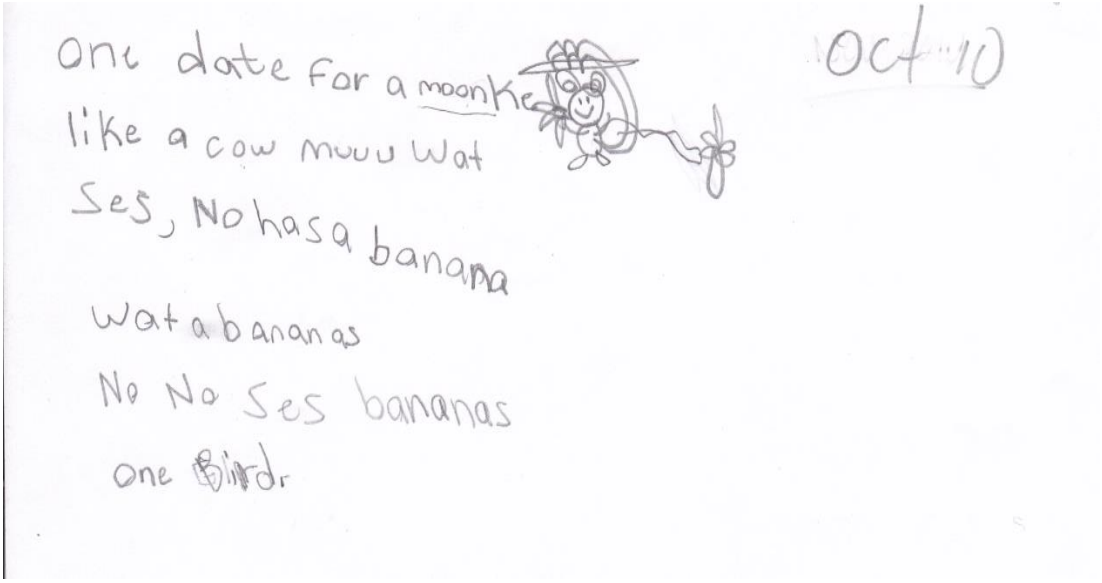
alphabetic stage. Even though C2's text from October 2012 complied with all the requirements necessary to be placed in the syllabic stage, she was not placed there because she did not want to write in Spanish. She said: "this writing is in English and Spanish" (research journal First Entry, see picture 3). This affirmation may happen due to the use of the word *banana* which has the same spelling in both languages. One month later, November of 2010, she showed a little regression, but her message was fully understood in both languages. Such fact, placed her in the Alphabetic stage. During the rest of the study, C1 and C2 showed more progress than the rest of the class because they moved from simple sentences to paragraphs.



Picture 1 C1 Syllabic Alphabetic stage



Picture 2 C2 syllabic alphabetic Writing



Picture 3 C1 two languages Writing

Table four shows the progress of group one

Stage	C1	C2
Pre-Syllabic		
Syllabic A		
Syllabic B		
Syllabic-Alphabetic	September 2010	September 2010
Alphabetic	October 2010	November 2010

Table 4 Group 1 summary.

C1 and C2 started the study at the same stage in writing proficiency, and they also ended at the same stage. Even though they had some differences in the writing acquisition in timing when learning how to write, this time difference was not significant for the purpose of the study.

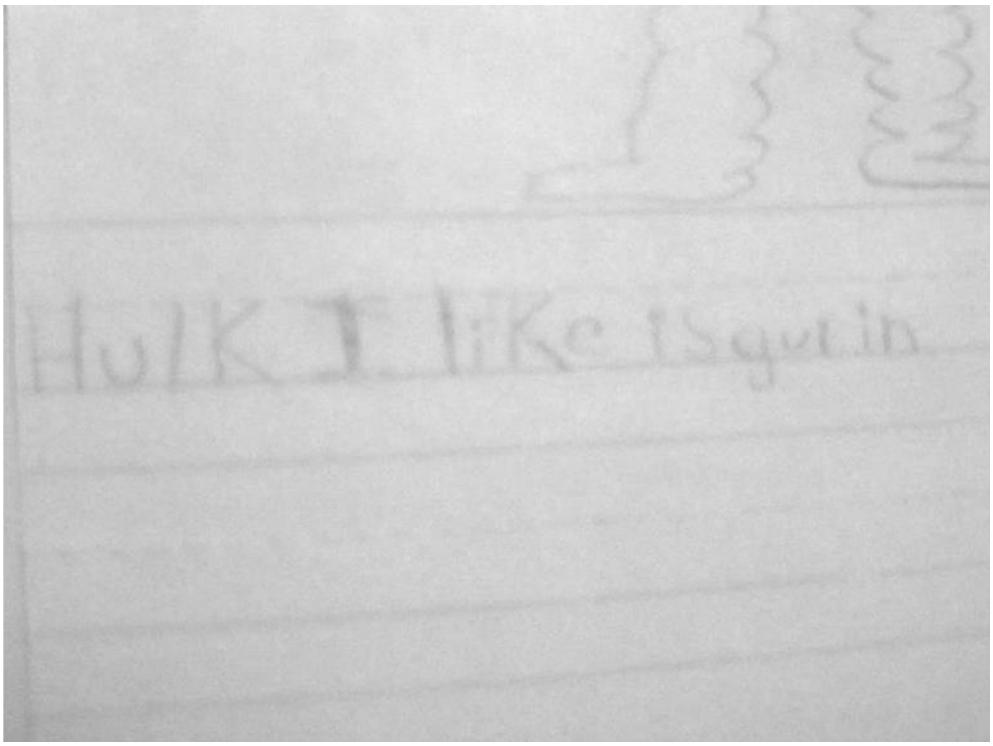
b) Group number two:

The second group included the subjects who were under the age of six and who had attended school just two years prior to first grade; this group included C4 (Syllabic Stage A), C5 (no data in September but syllabic-alphabetic in October), and C9 (Syllabic Stage A). All of them were at the same stage at the beginning of the study on September 2010, including C5 as he was not able to write by September (no data available from him in September due to injuries), but his first paper (October 2010), showed that he was one stage ahead of the rest in the study, the only difference being that he could not write in Spanish. He stated "I cannot write in Spanish". (See annex 2 Research Journal October 2010) English tend to be easier for them because of the greater amount of input in this language.

In October 2010, one month later, C4 remained in the Syllabic Stage, but C9 had moved onto the syllabic alphabetic stage in English while stream lining in the Syllabic

Stage in Spanish. By November, the three subjects had all reached the Syllabic-alphabetic stage; C5 continued writing exclusively in English. Even though his text showed traits that were associated with the Alphabetic Stage, he was not placed in this stage because he stated that the last paper was written in the two languages of instruction. Once again, we can observe a word that has the same spelling in Spanish and English inside of the text: “hulk”. The following month, December 2010, most the subjects remained in the same stage; unfortunately, C5 copied his sentences and as a result of this, the traits from this text were disqualified and placed in the stage of the previous month.

C4 reached the Alphabetic stage in April 2011, but before reaching this stage, he also wrote one paper in English and said, “it is in Spanish and English” as many subjects have declared before. C5 reached the Alphabetic stage in January 2011. Before this month, he wrote solely in English because it seemed to be easier for him. C9 reached the alphabetic stage in February 2011 and also wrote a paper classified by him as both English and Spanish. This group showed a close relationship with group one because the subjects C1, C4, and C9 wrote texts with alphabetic stage traits in English, but all of the subjects classified their texts as Spanish and English writing. This common trait is related to critical thinking due to the association to similar words used in the two languages (“banana” and “Hulk”). At this point, their minds could understand each word; thus, they could not distinguish one language from the other when writing.



Picture 4 C4 writing Spanish and English

Table five shows the progress of the second group.

Stage	C4	C5	C9
Pre-Syllabic			
Syllabic A	September 2010(Spanish)		September 2010
Syllabic B	September 2010 (English) October 2010		October (Spanish)
Syllabic-Alphabetic	November 2010	October 2010	October 2010 (English)
Alphabetic	April 2011	January 2011	February 2011

Table 5 Group 2 literacy progress.

This second group provided one of the most important datum for this research; it can be observed that the three subjects reached each stage at different times (almost an entire month of difference between each other); also, the beginning differences and changes between English and Spanish can be observed. Table 5 shows that of them reached the alphabetic stage in the two languages at the same time. Papers of C4 (April 2011), C5 (January 2011), and C9 (February 2011) complied with the entire requirements to be placed as alphabetic writing in the two languages. Finally, we can say that in this group the writing acquisition process is one, although, they happened in two languages simultaneously.

c) Group Number Three.

The third group of the subjects who were six years old and had attended school one year before first grade were included; C3 started the study in a pre-syllabic stage, while C7 was in a syllabic stage. One month later (October 2010), C3 wrote a text using letters but did not fit with the sounds in the syllabic stage level A; after that, he unfortunately started missing classes; therefore, his progress was delayed moving to the Syllabic stage level B until December 2010. Afterwards, he missed almost half of the year. He was then not able to reach the Syllabic-Alphabetic stage until May 2011 and the alphabetic stage one month later: June 2011. Due to the irregularity of the data collected from C3, for this study, he can only be taken as reference and not as a main source.

On the other hand, C7 had an irregular development in his writing skills and was not able to go as the same pace as his classmates. He was able to move to Alphabetic stage Level B until March 2011, and he only moved to Syllabic alphabetic stage in May 2011; despite the fact that he took the exact same class as the rest of the subjects, he was not able

to reach the Alphabetic Stage. These two subjects underwent an irregular process during their writing development stages; nevertheless, they provided information, such as the one collected from C7 in regards to his struggles with writing. He could not write by himself, he did not plan the writing because he was not able to read the paper back; in fact, he was not able to write a message. Even though he was able to copy, he was incapable of managing writing situations by himself. Researcher's notes from the journal showed that he was able to copy from the board. He could identify the letters from the alphabet, but he was unable to identify the sounds in neither language.

Table six summarizes the progress of the third group.

Stage	C3	C7
Pre-Syllabic	September 2010	
Syllabic A	October 2010	September 2010
Syllabic B	December 2010	March 2011
Syllabic-Alphabetic	May 2011	May 2011
Alphabetic	June 2011	

Table 6 Group 3 summary.

In this group, it can be observed that the subjects reached each stage at the same time in each language with no difference, but an important aspect to consider at this point is that they were not regular subjects because C3 missed a great number of classes during the study, and C7 did not complete or reach the final stage (after the school year, he was diagnosed with learning difficulties in writing)

d) Group Number Four.

The final group included subjects aged five; school years attended before first grade were not considered for this group of subjects. C6, C8, C10 and C11 started the study in a Pre-syllabic stage in Spanish, but just two of them were in Pre-syllabic stage in English (C6, C11). C8 and C10 were in Syllabic Stage. As it is stated earlier in this chapter, they were still in pre-operational stage, and consequently, they had not mastered all the required skills needed to develop writing.

A month later, October 2010, C6 did not move from one stage to the next, because he did not produce any writings during September and October; he simply drew. His answer, when he was questioned why he did not write, was: "I just write if I see the letters". In other words he just copied. C6 moved to the Syllabic Stage, level A in November 2010; even though, he wrote accurate sentences showing traits for Alphabetic Stage, he was placed in the syllabic alphabetic stage, because he copied sentences from his notebook. After a month, in December 2010, he was able to write texts without copying; this text complied with all the characteristics and traits to be placed in the Alphabetic stage.

Meanwhile, C8 moved to Syllabic stage level B in October, and he did not show any progress in his writing development for the next 2 months (November and December 2010). He wrote papers gathering all the characteristics for Syllabic-Alphabetic stage in January 2011. He went under an erratic path on the development of the next stage; consequently, he spent most of the time copying from the board and notebooks; he even copied once from his t-shirt. He finally reached the Alphabetic stage on June 2011, when he stopped copying

Moreover, C10 and C11 follow a similar path on their writing development, reaching the Alphabetic stage at the same time. During October 2010, C10 remained in the Syllabic stage in English and in the pre-syllabic stage in Spanish, while C11 moved to Syllabic-alphabetic stage level A in the two languages. C10 and C11 moved to Syllabic stage level B in November 2010, but they moved only in English. Meanwhile, C10 wrote a text showing traits from Syllabic-alphabetic stage level B in Spanish, C11 said that Spanish is the same as English and he proceeded to write only in Spanish. After that, in December, C10 and C11 moved to Syllabic Alphabetic stage in Spanish. C10 wrote texts in two languages at the same level, but C11 wrote just in English and he also answered "writing in English and Spanish is the same". They remained in these stages until March 2011 when C11 started writing in Spanish and English. Finally they reached the Alphabetic Stage on May 2011.

Insert a picture as example.

Stage	C6	C8	C10	C11
Pre-Syllabic	September 2010	September 2010 (Spanish)	September 2010	September 2010
Syllabic A		September 2010 (English) October 2010 (Spanish)	September 2010 (English)	September 2010 (English)
Syllabic B	November 2010	October 2010 (English)		October 2010

Syllabic-Alphabetic		January 2011	November 2010 (English) December 2010(Spanish)	November 2010 (English) December 2010(Spanish)
Alphabetic	December 2010	June 2011	May 2011	May 2011

Table 7 group number four summary.

This group clearly showed the differences in learning speed between the two languages; C10 and C11 showed a little confusion between English and Spanish since they considered the languages as the same codes, they were not able to move on from one stage to another in any of them until they raised awareness of the differences of the codes. It is observable when subjects' confused one language to other there is always a word that has the same spelling and the same meaning in both languages.

e) Final consideration of this section.

The division of the participants in smaller groups gave a clear view on the importance on readiness, as an example group one composed by C1 and C2 reached the final stage on November; also, all of the subjects in each group followed a similar path and this may be influenced by the two factors related to writing development (age and school years) in the case of the differences on learning speed it is provably influenced by the quantity and quality of the input in both languages.

The main finding in this group is the perception of writing in two languages as the same code; five of the subjects who showed this perception were between Syllabic-Alphabetic Stage and Alphabetic Stage. This may be related to interlanguage since subjects saw writing during this stage as one code, they did not make any difference from one

language to another. Also the use of common words like bananas or names like Hulk which have the same meaning in the two languages influenced the way students saw language during writing development stage. (See pictures 3 and 4)

3. The research journal

The journal entries provided aspects of writing development that were not recorded in the text or observations guides; it yielded aspects such as when copying is used in order to write. As an example "C8 copied the name of a team from his t-shirt even though C8 copied most of the letters, he was able to identify the print environment around him"

The journal complemented the findings on the observation guides as well as the text written by the subjects broadening the information gathered for this study. It yielded information which could be difficult to find using other resources. Some researcher notes from the journal complemented the texts collected from the subjects as well as helped contextualize many of them turning the information more meaningful for the study. Most of the thoughts and ideas coming from the journal were used for the analysis of the result of the writing texts. As an example, C3 wrote e i u p a D e I y d l o "feliz cumpleaños" this factor was recorded in the research journal.

4. The observation guides.

Observation guides were intended to record traits related to higher stages of writing development (Syllabic Alphabetic and Alphabetic Stages). They included six different traits; 1.The child pointed out the letter corresponding to the prompted phoneme (as an example Where is the /s/? where is the /l/? 2. The child represented most of the phonemes in the words they write, even though they don't use conventional letters. (C instead of s, l

instead ll, v instead of b) 3. The child was able to write words and short phrases in writing situations (neither dictation nor copying); they used at least 20 out of the 29 letter of the alphabet. 4. They plan the message before writing it. (They decided the audience, the content, and the purpose) 5. The child took care of the writing neatness. They wrote complete ideas using letters from the alphabet but sometimes they missed some letters. 6. The child wrote complete ideas using the letters in the alphabet; these ideas could be read even though the child did not separate all the words.

This guide provided information about differences and similarities between writing development stages in Spanish and English. During the first observation, it was possible to observe some similarities such as the way in which most of the subjects identified letters by their name in Spanish and English, but they were not able to identify the sounds in any of the language. Even though this letter recognition was shown by all of the subjects, just six of them were able to use letters, in fact it can be inferred; they knew each letter by memory, but were not able to understand their relationship with their sounds.

The second similarity between the two languages during this stage was that they were able to copy, but they were not able to read the words neither in Spanish nor in English. The only letters which were fully understood were the ones forming each subject's name; this is related to the name hypothesis proposed by Ferreiro & Teberosky, (1979) in which letters from the children´s name are the most relavant at the beginning of writing stages.

The only difference observed during the first observation time was the notion presented by some subjects, because they started thinking about the apparent need to use

letters to write in English, whereas they still believed that drawing was enough to represent words in Spanish. For instance, C4 was able to identify 3 out of 7 phonemes in English, but he was not able to use these phonemes in writing. The same happened when he was observed during Spanish writing. This may be related to the time when they were exposed to prints in English because they were immersed in English language.

The second observation yielded little difference on the rate of writing development with some of the subjects showing more progress in English than Spanish even though, they had reached each trait in both languages. They did it in different scales since they produced more complete and structured texts in English classes. After this difference all the traits were reached at the same level. During the second time, the observation guides did not show more differences; therefore, all the subjects showed how close the stages are in both languages.

The final observation did not show any diffference from one language to another since most of the subjects had already reached the Alphabetic Stage by the time this observation took place; only C7 who had not reached the last stage of writing in the two languages of instruction; however, he was at the same stage in the two languages. Finally one of the subjects had not fully developed narrative skills which prevented him from fully organizing and developing his ideas. His ideas however, could be understood by any one who could read either English or Spanish since he was at Alphabetic Stage in both languages.

I. Triangulations.

This important part of the study was done with the purpose of crossing many traits to provide relevant data and answer the research questions as accurately and clearly as possible. The texts produced by the subjects were taken as the base of the analysis; the observation guide and the research journal were taken as support; moreover some details from the literature review enriched, supported and provided information for the instruments used to collect the data.

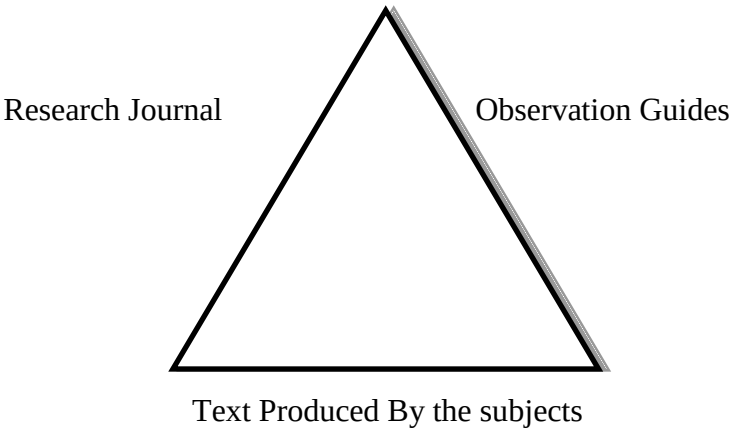


Illustration 1 data analysis schema.

In the following section, each of the questions stated at the beginning of this study are answered based on the data collected.

To answer the question What are the differences and similarities in the development of writing process in young learners learning Spanish (L1) English (L2) simultaneously?

two differences can be observed in the analysis of the text produced by the subjects. First, the amount of writing production in the Syllabic alphabetic stage is different since subjects produced more and precise words in English than in Spanish. This can be observed in the first text collected from the subjects since most of them wrote complete words in incomplete sentences or some sentences with incomplete words. Even though this text could be read by everyone, they were not composed of complete words and they use patterns learned in language classes some of this patterns were simple sentences with subject- verb- objects (SVO from now and on) some of the examples “I lik hou”. (See pictures number 5)

Picture 5 C6 English writing.

Related to the text production, the data collected in the observation guides provided information that help us state that the subjects identified more letters in English than Spanish. Although they associated the letters in the two languages, they named the letters in English; just one of the subjects said the letters in Spanish. The examples observed showed

a relationship between the letters identification and the text production. This difference relied on the fact that the subjects were taught in English during most of the day, they took spelling, language arts, and phonics, reading, and math classes in English daily—five class hour—, but they only received three classes in Spanish during the day, three class hour.

Since most subjects reached the four stages almost at the same time, with some differences in their learning speed, most of the subjects were just one stage behind; this event may have been caused by the influence of the greater exposure (comprehensible input) to prints in one language compared with the other. As a result this cannot be considered as a difference in writing development, but it can be considered as part of normal development caused by the lack of exposure (input) to prints in one language. To conclude, subjects tended to achieve the first four stages with greater easiness in English than in Spanish. This can also be due to the greater exposure to English prints that Spanish ones. However, it can be clearly stated that they reached the final stage (alphabetic Stage) at the same time in the two languages because this stage can be summarized as the capability to communicate a message in written form even though the writing may imply some spelling mistakes; furthermore, subjects wrote complete words representing each phoneme with a letter (none of them was correct).

There are two main similarities shared by the stages of writing development in two languages; the first one, subjects follow a regular path to literacy. Each subject produced texts where traits mentioned in the literature review (the ones used in the study) were observable. Most of the subjects started in pre-syllabic stage and progressed towards the alphabetic stage in a regular way. Even though some subjects perceived the two languages as one, when they said “writing in English and in Spanish is the same”, the statement can

be considered a product of their awareness of sounds. And since Spanish and English have similar sounds, it might be a phonological confusion rather than a written one. This could be since Spanish is a syllabic and English phonetic. So this may not be considered a difference, but more a part of the writing development.

The second similarity is that subjects preferred drawing instead of writing. During the collection of the text, most of the subjects spent more time drawing than the time they spent writing in any of the languages. Subjects were more detailed when they drew compared to their writing. This tendency relies in the simplicity of drawing as they can easily illustrate their ideas with fewer words.

Finally, at least in this group of eleven subjects the process of developing writing stages tends to be very similar, the two differences presented during the study are relevant but not determinant to say that the process developing writing skills varies from one language to another because the stages are reached almost at the same time. In some cases like the case of C8, C10 and C11 who showed some differences in the time they reach the stages (see table 7). Therefore most of the subjects show greater progress in English due to the bigger amount of input receives in this language.

The second question; what are the general characteristics of emergent literacy shown by students learning Spanish (L1) and English (L2) in a bilingual school in Honduras? The first characteristic observed in the two languages occurred in the pre-syllabic stage. An egocentric writing (they wrote for themselves) was observed at the beginning of the study; the text produced by the subject showed that the intention of the

child was not writing to communicate a message instead they wrote to encode a message in a secret code; in some situations they drew and told a full story throughout the drawing.

The second characteristic in the Pre-syllabic stage was that the subjects did not plan the message when writing; the texts were not intended to be read by anyone else, neither did the subjects want to read what others had written; besides, each text was intended to be read just by the author and the teacher. They wrote with any predetermined structure: neither beginning nor ending. They just wrote whatever related to the topic came into their minds. As a result, the subjects focused in the message in the two languages rather than in aspects of a language.

During the syllabic stage, subjects realized the existence of letters in English and Spanish. Even though the literature review supported this finding, it was possible to observe a greater progress in English than Spanish, since subjects were able to identify more letters in English than in Spanish. In some cases, they used the names of the English letters to express the letters in Spanish. Table three summarizes the number of phonemes identified by each subject in both languages during the first observation session in September 2010.

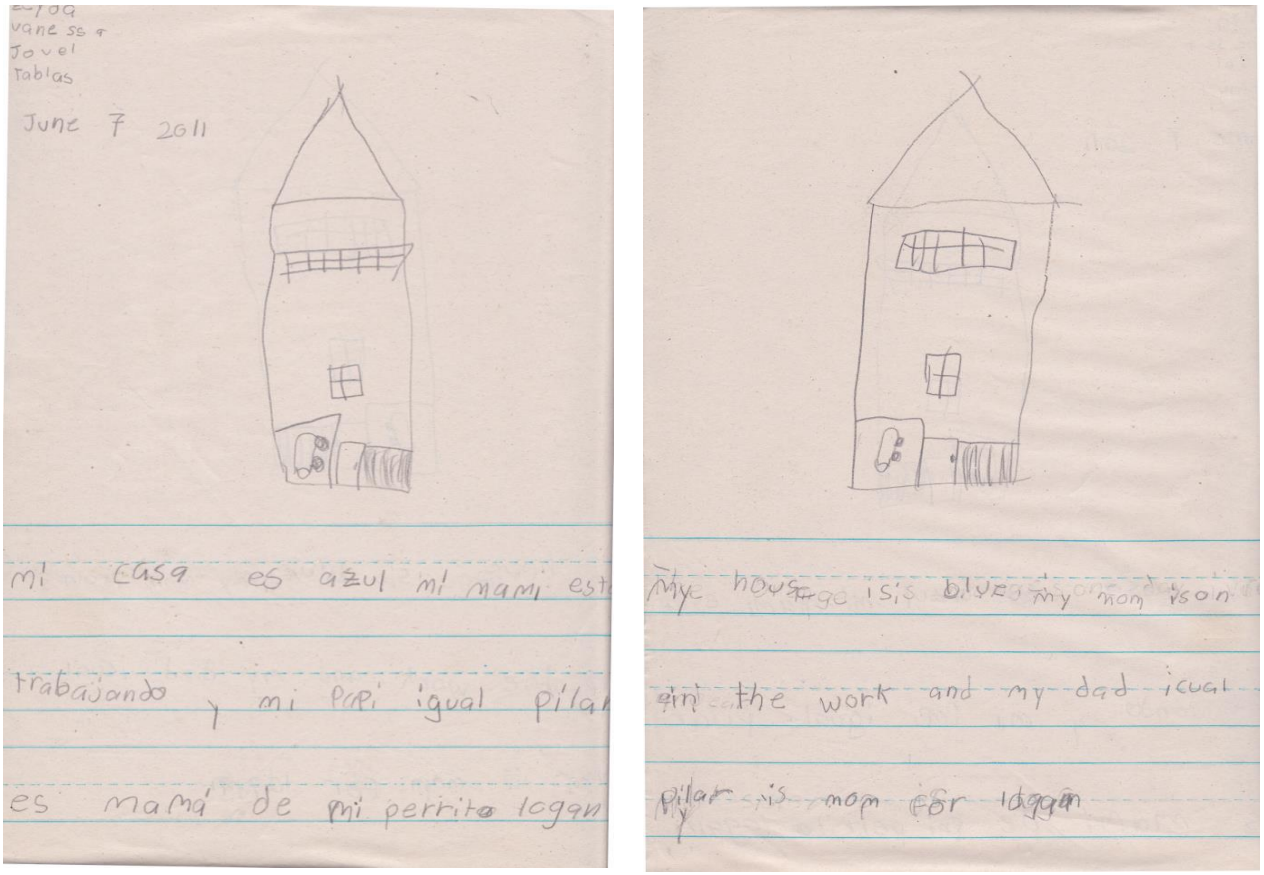
Subject	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11
English	6/7	6/7	3/7	3/7	5/7	2/7	3/7	3/7	6/7	3/7	3/7
Spanish	6/7	6/7	0/7	2/7	4/7	1/7	3/7	0/7	5/7	0/7	0/7

Table 8 summary of letters recognized the first observation time.

It can be observed that the differences between Spanish and English, in the case of letter recognition, students recognize more letters in English than Spanish. Some of the subjects who scored 0/7 in Spanish named some of the letters in English. This is also related to the time subjects were taught in English.

Moving to the Syllabic Alphabetic Stage “level A” the subject showed in their texts the perception that sentences must have a minimum number of letters or words. Also, they started to use more letters, not just the ones from their names. Moving to the syllabic alphabetic stage “level B”, subjects showed according to the data collected through observation and the written papers, the beginning of letter combinations in the two languages. The main characteristic in this stage is that the Subjects used syllables from Spanish to represent English words and English sounds to represent Spanish words.

The general characteristics observed in the Syllabic stage are the ones that follows: the subjects discovered that one sound can be represented by two or more letters since they started to used even three letters to represent a syllable; they realized that there is more than one way to spell a sound (syllable or letter). This awareness of letters and their relationship with sounds lead the students to spell most of the words in a standard way.



Picture 6 Spanish and English Writing from C2

As it can be observed, C2 wrote the same in the two languages which can be considered as direct translations or language transfer, but it can be stated that she did not misspelled any word in Spanish and just one in English. Also, she used standard writing in both languages with little interference from English into Spanish and vice versa. This can be interpreted as mastering all the required abilities to fully write her ideas for others to read. In fact, she became a standard writer in both languages.

The third question, how writing acquisition coming from one language affects (positively or negatively) writing development of the second language? The study did not provide any substantial information about the influence from one language to another in the

writing development. A relationship between English and Spanish writing was observed since subjects used sounds in one language to represent the letters in the other language. This is not significant for writing stages because these stages do not pursue the standard spelling, but the accurate representation of sound into letters. In this way, they were able to represent ideas as clearly as possible.

The fourth question how the subjects' learning of reading and writing in two languages at the same time affect the future writing proficiency? Was answered as follows: The data collected during this study showed that the subject reached the alphabetic stages in the two languages simultaneously. Although some of the subjects' development in the first fourth stages varied from one language to another, there was almost no difference when they reached the Alphabetic stage; in fact, all the students achieved the traits of this stage at the same time in both languages. This result was possible since the two languages shared the same writing prints (two of them use the same alphabet) which did not allow significant interference from one language to another in the subject's development of writing. The confusion of sounds does not affect the process of writing in any of the languages because the interference and the transfer are so little they can easily be underestimated. After each subject reach the Alphabetical stage, their writing moved little by little to the standard which allow us to say this group has no problem with future writing in the two languages.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations.

A. Conclusions

This study has brought about many experiences, as a primary-level teacher, the researcher was privileged to witness the development of writing in two languages in

children from a immersed school. Although it was a challenge to guide students through it, one thing is clear, the efforts in teaching will determine what kind of writers students become later on. The truest compass of the study was to understand that students come to school wanting to communicate, and willing to do the work necessary for growth. If they are offered with the opportunity to interact and communicate more effectively they will indeed do so.

After the analysis of the data and the triangulation, we have a clear view of the process children undergo when developing writing in two languages simultaneously. As a formal conclusion of the case study and specifically this group of children, the process of developing writing in two languages is the same in both of them. The data showed just two main differences in this process: the first is that the writing production in the Syllabic alphabetic stage in the subjects produced more and accurate words in English than in Spanish; and the second difference observed, it is that the learning speed of the subjects varied from one language to another. When there was a difference in the stage between English and Spanish most of the subjects were just one stage ahead or behind. These differences were influenced by the time students had been exposed to prints, writings, and materials in English. In fact, these differences have a direct relationship to the type of program delivered at the school where the study took place, because through this program children had at least five hours of teaching in English while they just had three hours of teaching in Spanish.

To answer the question if there were similarities in the process children undergo when learning writing in two languages simultaneously, there were a number of similarities: first, all of the Subjects of the study follow a regular path to literacy. Second,

all of the subjects in Pre-Syllabic stage preferred drawing instead of writing. Although, these two similarities were not even mentioned neither by Ferreiro´s writing stages nor by Buchanan´s, they were observed in the texts produced by the students and was also observed in the data collected through the observation guides.

There are many common characteristics shared by writing stages observed during the process of developing writing in two languages. In the data collected, we can clearly see the traits of the Pre-syllabic stage and some egocentric writing because children were writing no expecting any audience to the production they made- they were just writing. . We found evidence of the Syllabic Alphabetic level A when the participants identified more letters in English, and they used the English letters' names or sounds to express the letters in Spanish. Furthermore, we observed that for the participants sentences have letters and words and they were aware of that fact, and they started to use more letters in their writings not just the ones from their names. Moreover, in the study we collected evidence to state that students underwent Syllabic Level B when they showed a beginning of letter combinations in the two languages. Additionally, participants started using syllables from Spanish to represent English words and they used English sounds to represent Spanish words. The evidence supports that students at a certain stage produced the perception of English and Spanish writing as if they were using the same code. Finally, children reached the syllabic stage when they purposely used language to communicate and have a clear idea that one sound can be represented by two or more letters in English and may use only one letter in Spanish; afterwards, children started the final path to conventional writing in two languages simultaneously.

The data collected during the study provided little evidence of transference or interference from one language to the other —in terms of grammar—, but showed some vocabulary and letter transfer because both languages share the same writing system or alphabetic code and have words in common. It also showed a relationship between English and Spanish writing, since subjects used sounds in one language to represent the letters in the other. The most common example are the vowels because in English there is more than one sound for each vowel whilst Spanish have just one sound for each phoneme; besides, there are consonants such as /j/ & /w/ which are easily confused from one language to another because they sound differently in both languages.

In the case of similar words; the data showed when subjects find a word meaning the same in both languages they tend to say they are writing in two languages at the same time. This must be part of the awareness of prints part of the syllabic stage. This phenomenon needs further and more in depth research.

According to our data, in this case study, there are not many differences in the process of developing writing stages in Spanish and English simultaneously. The process follows a regular path in the development of the first four stages of writing; the subjects tend to reach each of the stages depending specifically on the length of time the children are exposed to the language. In this case study, they developed the three first stages in English and then in Spanish, finding evidence to support that in the first three stages there is a difference of one stage between languages; nonetheless, the alphabetic stage is reached at the same time in the two languages. This leads to conclude that writing development occurs just once even when learners are exposed to input from two languages as long as the languages share the same alphabetic code.

Conclusively, human beings learn how to write just once in life, and it depends on the languages the children are exposed to so that they will develop the writing in any other language, becoming easier if the languages share the same alphabetic code. In the case of children learning how to write in two languages simultaneously, the children develop the four first stages of writing development, first in the language in which they receive the highest level of input and then the language in which they receive a slightly lower level of exposure a little bit later. Regardless of this, the alphabetic stage is reached at the same time in the two languages when the two languages share the same code or writing system. To emphasize, we state that in this case study: writing is just one process the children underwent in two languages simultaneously.

B. Recommendations

After collecting the data and processing the information, we recommend conducting a study with a considerate sample so that the study will enable to generalize within this topic. Since this is just an exploratory and descriptive study, the results of this case study are only applicable to the subjects involved in it.

In regards to methodology, the methodology used in teaching how to read and write must be coherent with each specific context. This is because everyone is unique and humans do not share the same learning style; therefore, there is no special or standardized methodology to teach how to write. Furthermore, if different contexts have different needs the methodology must be adapted to each group and it cannot be considered as standardize to function or work in every single situation.

One important limitation was the lack of bibliography in the field of writing development in two languages in the University's library, therefore, we recommend we acquire more literature and make it available to all: professors and graduate studies students.

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VI. Annex

A. Research Handbook.

9/10

The subjects were trying to write most of the time, but most of them just drew just the two girls wrote letters by themselves. The others who printed letters use books or print environments to copy letters

10/10

When writing most of the subjects just copied letters from everywhere they could see. Just Ze and Bi wrote by themselves without help. Some of the children wrote some letters and others did not want to write in any language. But Bi answered this writing is in English and Spanish when she was questioned about why she just wrote in English. Also Ja said that "I cannot write in Spanish"

Jo said he prefer to draw instead of write and he can only write when they si the words.

11/10

Track (Chr) wrote Walter Cristian Playstation

Readers. –Bi, Ze, Ja, Pe.

Complete sentences.

Most of the kids were anxious. They were too hyperactive. We accomplish the objectives from the workshop, but it required a lot from the teacher.

Causes:

*TT got late.

*Kids distracted since beginning.

*Much attention is needed. Most kids work but some of them need more attention.

They wrote the words with letters. When sound lacked they copied to complete the word. They wrote in different ways the word “sitting” some siri and other sairing.

The two girls show greater progress than the rest of the groups, they associate sounds with letters in both language while some boys confuse the sound from the two languages.

Some children keep writing in one language either Spanish or English. This month Ra said English and Spanish are the same.

12/10

The children ordered alphabetically their names. They decided the order. Jo improved identifying letters

*Jos looks like a sight problem.

Ja Write the colors on the board.

Jos Corrects him.

Jos used vocals to decode and encode a story.

When they studied the Calendar, They notice one blank space and ask why? they confused names from days in Spanish to English. They say the days in Spanish which may be a problem of language vocabulary.

Standard Spelling – 6 – Mistake

Invented Spelling – 2

Incomplete - 3 standard spelling

Most of the subjects tend to confuse the sounds.

Jan 2011

e i u p a D e I y d l o feliz cumpleaños

a i t d o e t e b y o te regalo un furgón

these are the letters written by one of the subjects we can observe the second stage the syllabic one in this papers because he is aware of the need of letter to write or communicate a message.

All the subjects associated initial sounds of months with proper nouns * (lack lexis in English). Without asking, also some said words that began with the sound.

When asked to write, almost all do except for two who do not seem interested in the process. The others end task but they do not

*2 left handed.

They identify the first sound of each word (month). When reading the advanced reader, they read the phonemes as Spanish. They tend to read more in Spanish than in English. After vacations, they tend to use more Spanish than English. Example: July was pronounced as Spanish even though it was written in English.

February 11

Girls end at first. They write a story about princesses.

Most of the boys wrote stories about “Kick Pudowsky” (most of them just wrote Kick) and Ben 10. Just Jared wrote a story about home.

They were cheating on their notebook some spelling, but they print environment is related to TV programs (cartoons).

Some kids like to write others, not the one who like the most is Bi. Josh did a fast job but he didn’t write it in standard spelling. Most of them are writing invented spelling. Ol did not want to write just draw. They shared many ideas about their programs.

*Influence of media in teaching.

When reading, they identify the sound of letters but they have not acquired the lexicon requirement. They prefer to use Spanish when talking. They recognize pictures but they use the Spanish word not the English word to name it.

When writing they can write more words in Spanish than in English. But Pe stated that one paper was written in two languages.

March 11

When reading they use the syllables from Spanish mainly the pronunciation of “to” they pronounce it as in Spanish. They started to transfer the print recognition from Spanish because when they hear the sound correctly they tend to pronounce it in a better way.

*Usage usefulness (motivation integral and instrumental motivation).

They tend to use the places they get when writing (time first, second to show status).

They usually write and refer to cartoons and artifacts or movies even though most of them use simple structure like “I like …” They are not coping when they need a word for spelling. They ask for a friend help, instead of a teacher. When kids do not know a work (they haven’t heard in English) they tend to write as they listen. Even though they do not have standard spelling, they write more to show they can write better.

Jo copied the name of a team from his t-shirt even though C8 copied most of the letters, he was able to identify the print environment around him

Some of the children said that English is easier than Spanish, but others say writing in Spanish and English is the same.

April 11

When reading, children show interest on prints. They decode most of the words. They know the sounds but they don’t know the exact meaning. Most of them are good sound decoders, but not good meaning finders. They use too much Spanish when interacting among them. When copying from books and board, they are accurate.

Ze read jungle as jungol (instead yongol). Most of them recognize new words easily. They read sounds in similar ways associating new words with sounds. They have already

mastered the example before show how “gle” (final sound) was pronounced correctly. Even though children struggle with sounds they are more accurate.

They were asked to look for wild animals in their reading books. They identified the picture and the word. Even though they named some animals in Spanish, they were accurate to find the animal name when the English referent was said. They also looked for domestic animals were easy to find and wrote names.

There is an interesting issue they use Spanish to talk but when writing most of the subjects tend to use English writing.

Some of the subjects continuing saying English and Spanish are the same Jo.

May and June 2011

Most of the children have reached the alphabetical stage and there is too little to observe. Jut the difficulties one of the subjects had in reaching all the stages; his problems may be related to other circumstances different to teaching.

B. Semi structured Observation Grid.

Date _____ School Year _____

Term_____ child gender _____

Observable Traits	Spanish	English
The child points out the letter corresponding to the prompted phoneme (as an example Where is the /s/? where is the /l/?		
The child represents most of the phonemes in the words they write, even though they don´t use conventional letters. (c instead of s, l instead ll, v instead of b)		
The child writes words and short phrases in writing situations (neither dictation nor copying); they use at least 20 from 28 letter of the alphabet.		
They plan the message before writing it. (they decide the audience, the content, and the purpose)		
The child takes care of the writing neatness they write complete ideas using letters from the alphabet but sometimes they miss some letters.		
The child writes complete ideas using the alphabet´s letter; these ideas can be read even though the child does not separate all the words.		

Adapted From “Principios Teóricos Metodológicos Según CETT” P 54

Vocabulary and phonemic awareness observation guide.

Date: September 2010

Subject	The child points out the letter corresponding to the prompted phoneme (as an example Where is the /s/? where is the /l/?		The child represents most of the phonemes in the words they write, even though they don´t use conventional letters. (c instead of s, l instead ll, v instead of b)		The child writes words and short phrases in writing situations (neither dictation nor copying); they use at least 20 from 29 letter of the alphabet.		They plan the message before writing it. (they decide the audience, the content, and the purpose)		The child takes care of the writing neatness they write complete ideas using letters from the alphabet but sometimes they miss some letters.		The child writes complete ideas using the alphabet´s letter; these ideas can be read even though the child does not separate all the words.	
	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English
K1	x	x	x	x	x	x					x	X
K2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X	x	x
K3												
K4	x	X										
K5	x	X										
K6												
K7												
K8												
K9	x	X	x	x					x	x	x	X
K10		x		x		x		x		x		X
K11												

Comments:

Vocabulary and phonemic awareness observation guide.

Date: February 2011

Subject	The child points out the letter corresponding to the prompted phoneme (as an example Where is the /s/? where is the /l/?		The child represents most of the phonemes in the words they write, even though they don´t use conventional letters. (c instead of s, l instead ll, v instead of b)		The child writes words and short phrases in writing situations (neither dictation nor copying); they use at least 20 from 29 letter of the alphabet.		They plan the message before writing it. (they decide the audience, the content, and the purpose)		The child takes care of the writing neatness they write complete ideas using letters from the alphabet but sometimes they miss some letters.		The child writes complete ideas using the alphabet´s letter; these ideas can be read even though the child does not separate all the words.	
	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English
K1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K3	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
K4	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
K5	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K6	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x
K7	x	x										
K8	x	x	x	x	x	x					x	x
K9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K10			x	x	x	x					x	x
K11	x	x	x	x							x	x

Comments:

Vocabulary and phonemic awareness observation guide.

Date:

Subject	The child points out the letter corresponding to the prompted phoneme (as an example Where is the /s/? where is the /l/?		The child represents most of the phonemes in the words they write, even though they don´t use conventional letters. (c instead of s, l instead ll, v instead of b)		The child writes words and short phrases in writing situations (neither dictation nor copying); they use at least 20 from 29 letter of the alphabet.		They plan the message before writing it. (they decide the audience, the content, and the purpose)		The child takes care of the writing neatness they write complete ideas using letters from the alphabet but sometimes they miss some letters.		The child writes complete ideas using the alphabet´s letter; these ideas can be read even though the child does not separate all the words.	
	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English
K1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K3	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
K4	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K5	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K6	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K7	x	x	x	x								
K8	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K10	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
K11	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Comments:

C. The analysis of the papers written by the subjects.

Month: September 2010

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1							x	X		
K2							x	x		
K3	x	X								
K4				x	x					
K5										
K6	x	x								
K7			x	x						
K8		x	x							
K9							x			
K10		x					x			
K11		x			x					

Comments: k5 has a twisted wrist he could not write but he attended school; K6 said “I cannot write if I don´t read” K9 did not write in Spanish because he said he cannot do it. K11 used print environment in English.

Month: October 2010

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	x
K2							x			
K3			x	X						
K4					x	X				
K5							x			
K6	x	x								
K7			x	x						
K8		x	x							
K9						x	x			
K10		x					x			
K11					x	x				

Comments: K2 said “she writes English and Spanish at the same time”; K5 “I cannot write Spanish” K6 drew but did not write

Month: November 2010

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	x
K2									x	X
K3										
K4							x	x		
K5							X			
K6			x	x						
K7			x	x						
K8		x	x							
K9							x	X		
K10							x			
K11						x	x			

Comments: K3 was on a trip he did not write during this month; K5 “I cannot write Spanish”; K6 copied from his notebook; K9 Thought his name is the only word in Spanish. K10 “write in English and Spanish is the same”

Month: December 2010

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	x
K2									x	X
K3					x	X				
K4							x	x		
K5							X			
K6									x	X
K7			x	x						
K8							x	x		
K9							x	x		
K10							x	x		
K11							x			

Comments: even though K5 was accurate in writing he copied from his science notebook that´s why he is still placed on Syllabic Alphabetic Stage; k6 wrote many sentences in English and one in Spanish; K9 Thought his name is the only word in Spanish. K11 said “write in English and Spanish is the same”

Month: January 2011

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	X
K2									x	x
K3					x	X				
K4							x	x		
K5									x	X
K6									x	x
K7			x	x						
K8							x	X		
K9								x		
K10							x	x		
K11							x			

Comments: K9 said “write in English and Spanish is the same” he wrote in Spanish; K11 said “write in English and Spanish is the same” he wrote in English

Month: February 2011

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	X
K2									x	X
K3										
K4							x	x		
K5									x	X
K6									x	X
K7			x	x						
K8								X	x	
K9									x	x
K10							x	X		
K11							x			

Comments: K3 was sick during two weeks; K9 said “write in English and Spanish is the same”; K11 said “write in English and Spanish is the same” he wrote in English

Month: March 2011

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	X
K2									x	x
K3										
K4							x			
K5									x	X
K6									x	x
K7					x	x				
K8							x	X		
K9										
K10							x	x		
K11							x	x		

Comments: k3 was still sick; k4 did not write in Spanish because he said “Spanish and English are ‘lo mismo’” K9 was on a trip

Month: April 2011

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	X
K2										
K3										
K4									x	x
K5									x	
K6										
K7										
K8									x	X
K9										
K10									x	X
K11										

Comments: chicken pox epidemic (k2, K3, K6, K7, K9, K11 were absent); K4 say he can combine Spanish and English at once; K5 write twice in English.

Month: May 2011

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	X
K2									x	X
K3							x	X		
K4									x	X
K5									x	x
K6									x	x
K7							x	x		
K8									x	x
K9									x	x
K10									x	X
K11									x	x

Comments: K8 mixed sounds from Spanish into English;

Month: June 2011

Subject	**Pre-syllabic stage.** There is not difference between letters and drawing.		**Syllabic stage level A** Uses letters but they do not fit with words syllables		**Syllabic stage level B** Writes one letter for each syllable (vowels for Spanish) (Consonants for English)		**Syllabic Alphabetic Stage** Write words with complete and incomplete syllables.		**Alphabetic Stage** Writes complete words representing each phoneme with a letter.	
	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish	English	Spanish
K1									x	X
K2									x	X
K3									x	X
K4									x	x
K5									x	X
K6									x	x
K7					x	x				
K8									x	X
K9									x	x
K10									x	X
K11									x	X

Comments: K4 had family problem his final paper was taken from May. K10 mixed two languages