

TEACHING THE WRITING SKILL IN ENGLISH FOR STUDENTS FROM INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

LA ENSEÑANZA DE LA HABILIDAD ESCRIBIR EN INGLES EN LOS ESTUDIANTES DE LA FORMACION INICIAL

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ABSTRACT

The present paper is addressed to solve the problem relate to insufficiencies in the writing skill in the students from Foreign Language Teacher Education Program. The objective to present these results here is to share these theoretical and practical points of view that emerged from the necessity detected in the professional-pedagogical experience as teacher of the discipline Integrated English Practice. The main methods we use are: participant observation, workshop for collective elaboration, modeling and others. It constitutes the expression of the main results of the studies of the main author of the research, enriched during the process of the continued introduction in the practice of the mentioned discipline. The other authors play an important role in the enhancement of this work in theory and practice. It includes the essence of the theoretical contribution that supports the procedure for the teaching of English in the students from the Foreign Language Teacher Education Program. It also constitutes a need to treat this matter in spaces like these, because of the approach officially declared nowadays in the postulates of the current Curriculum for the Education Program.

Key words: writing, pedagogic-professional, skill, discipline

RESUMEN

El presente trabajo está dirigido a resolver el problema relacionado con las insuficiencias en la habilidad de la escritura en los estudiantes de la carrera Lenguas Extranjeras. El objetivo de presentar estos resultados es compartir puntos de vista teóricos y prácticos que surgen de la necesidad detectada en la experiencia profesional-pedagógica como maestros de la disciplina Práctica Integral de la lengua inglesa. Los métodos principales que usamos son: la observación participante, el taller de opinión crítica y elaboración colectiva, la modelación y otros. Este estudio constituye la expresión de los resultados principales de los estudios del autor principal de la investigación, enriquecida durante el proceso de la introducción continuada en la práctica de la disciplina mencionada. Los otros autores juegan un papel importante en la mejora de este trabajo en la teoría y práctica. Este incluye la esencia de la contribución teórica que apoya el procedimiento para la enseñanza del inglés en los estudiantes de la carrera Lenguas Extranjeras. También constituye una necesidad de tratar esta materia en los espacios como éstos, debido al acercamiento oficialmente declarado hoy día en los postulados del Plan de estudios del actual Programa de Educación,

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Palabras claves: Escritura, pedagógico-profesional, habilidad, disciplina.

The results of the research to be presented here go beyond the results of my doctoral studies. It is the expression of an alternative for teaching English with a didactic-professional approach.

In spite of the fact that at present the teaching of foreign languages in Cuba is gaining in the quality of the approaches applied, writing is a skill about which, it is still sometimes assumed a position to reduce its use as a practice of linguistic structures or as a way to measure knowledge, Acosta 2014 It should also be used with the other communicative approaches it provides, considering that writing, as an instrument is also communication, as it is referred by Borrero(2008,2016).

The researcher, in her condition of an Integrated English Practice teacher, faces a problematic situation: the teaching-learning process of the writing skill in the discipline Integrated English Practice, which is aiming at, among other objectives, developing the writing communication as a need to reach a flexible, communicative, didactic-professional approach.

In correspondence to the problematic situation, it is stated the existence of the scientific problem, expressed in the insufficiencies the students from Initial Teacher Education in Foreign Languages have for writing in English, which limit their performances as professionals of education.

In the researching process, some theoretical items emerged to articulate the linguo-communicative and the didactic-professional dimensions, somehow unlinked up to the moment of the beginning of this research.

Among these items, the Functional Formal Pedagogical Written Text (see annex 1) was highlighted, as well as its definition and distinguished features.

The Functional Formal Pedagogical Text is the product of the linguo-communicative-didactic integration in the writing process with communicative and didactic-professional purposes, which essence is given by the interrelation established among the categories functional, formal and didactic, taking place in the teaching-learning process. This theory also articulates with the integration of the skills by Frett (2017).

In the process of the theoretical elaboration of this research, some regularities of this kind of written text with linguistic and didactic purposes were determined, as features of the transformed object.

Basic characteristics for the written text

This elaboration is fundamentally based on the theory established by a staff of scientists, headed by Roméu (2007): The Cognitive, Communicative and Socio Cultural Approach, as the linguistic and methodological base for the teaching-learning process of the writing skill in English as a foreign language in the discipline and major in which these studies are taking place.

This text has a communicative character, for it takes place throughout communication, which is carried out with didactic purposes, paying attention to the needs of solving the lack of articulation between the lingüo-communicative and the didactic-professional aspects. The text

also has a social character, expressed in the social and human interaction.

In this sense, it was also proved the pragmatic character of this text, taking into consideration its communicative intention and its professional purpose, throughout the contextualized didactic area of the linguo-communicative aspects of the written communication, In the same way, this new text is characterized as an independent semantic unit.

Another feature is that it has a structured character with a logical sequence, in which all of its parts form an articulated set, interrelated in the functional and formal aspects, as well as in the didactic professional ones. This constitutes a theoretical and practical significant contribution of this research, since the lingüo-communicative aspects were not linked to the didactic-professional ones up to the moment this study occurred.

The results obtained with this study allows for the determination of a new quality in the teaching-learning process of writing in English as a foreign language in the students of this Teacher Education Program in the university of Las Tunas; that is, the linguistic and didactic functionality of this skill.

This theory constitutes the main support for the procedure for writing in English as a foreign language in the Teacher Education Program referred.

This procedure aims at developing the teaching-learning process of writing in English and is composed of a set of actions that happen in different stages, according to Borrero (2008).

Stages of the methodological procedure

Stage one: Diagnosis: this stage is composed of actions, which are related to the study of documents that have to do with writing in English, the determination of criteria for the assessment and the elaboration of the different instrument for the diagnosis, their application and the process of socialization of the results with the members of the discipline staff.

It is necessary to point out the need to take into account the different intelligences for this diagnosis as a process, Tejeda (2011)

Second stage: Analysis of the lingüo-communicative aspects

Here, actions are offered in each of the functional and formal aspects in the lingüo-communicative dimension, which are related to the determination of what it is going to be written, to the characteristics, arguments and information, as well as the vocabulary to be used, it is also related to the use of the formal aspects, and the checking of the final draft of the written text.

Third stage: Analysis of the contextualized didactic-professional area

To determine the actions of this stage we took into account the pedagogic-professional theory stated by Mas (2008), who conceived it since the communicative and pedagogic-professional competence.

In this stage, there is a proposal of actions, such as different steps for the workshop of foreign languages lessons that have to do with writing, taking into account as epistemological base the structure of workshop offered by Britten (2013).

Fourth stage: Feedback

Here, there is a proposal of making critical analysis in the teaching-learning process of

Integrated English Practice with the active participation of the students.

Before the time devoted for this critical analysis, actions are proposed, such as the determination of the objective, the choice of the materials that are going to be used, and also the choice of a moderator for the activity.

During the development of the critical analysis, the actions have to do directly with their execution. Afterwards, there is a suggestion of actions to know about the results they are having. Example of the actions: the determination of the criteria to evaluate the emotional and cognitive development of the students.

Consequently, with the materialist approach assumed from the philosophical basis of Education in Cuba, the procedure presented here is not a finished didactic reference. Oppositely, it is daily enhanced in the professional practice of the teachers from the staff of the discipline Integrated English Practice. One of the changes in the application of this procedure is referred to its use in the integration of skills it also contributed to the development of autonomy of the students, taking into considerations their interests, motivation, professional aspects as stated by Velázquez (2017).

You can read with more details the different actions of the stages of this procedure in annex 2

As the conclusions for this presentation of scientific results, is feasible to state that the articulation reached between the linguo-communicative and didactic dimensions made possible a new quality in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language in the students of the Teacher Education Program referred: the linguistic and didactic functionality of writing.

The procedure for writing in English with linguistic and didactic-professional purposes, as the result of being supported on the linguistic and didactic functionality of writing, is applied at present in the Foreign Languages Teacher Education Program, in correspondence to the current demands of nowadays didactics for foreign languages.

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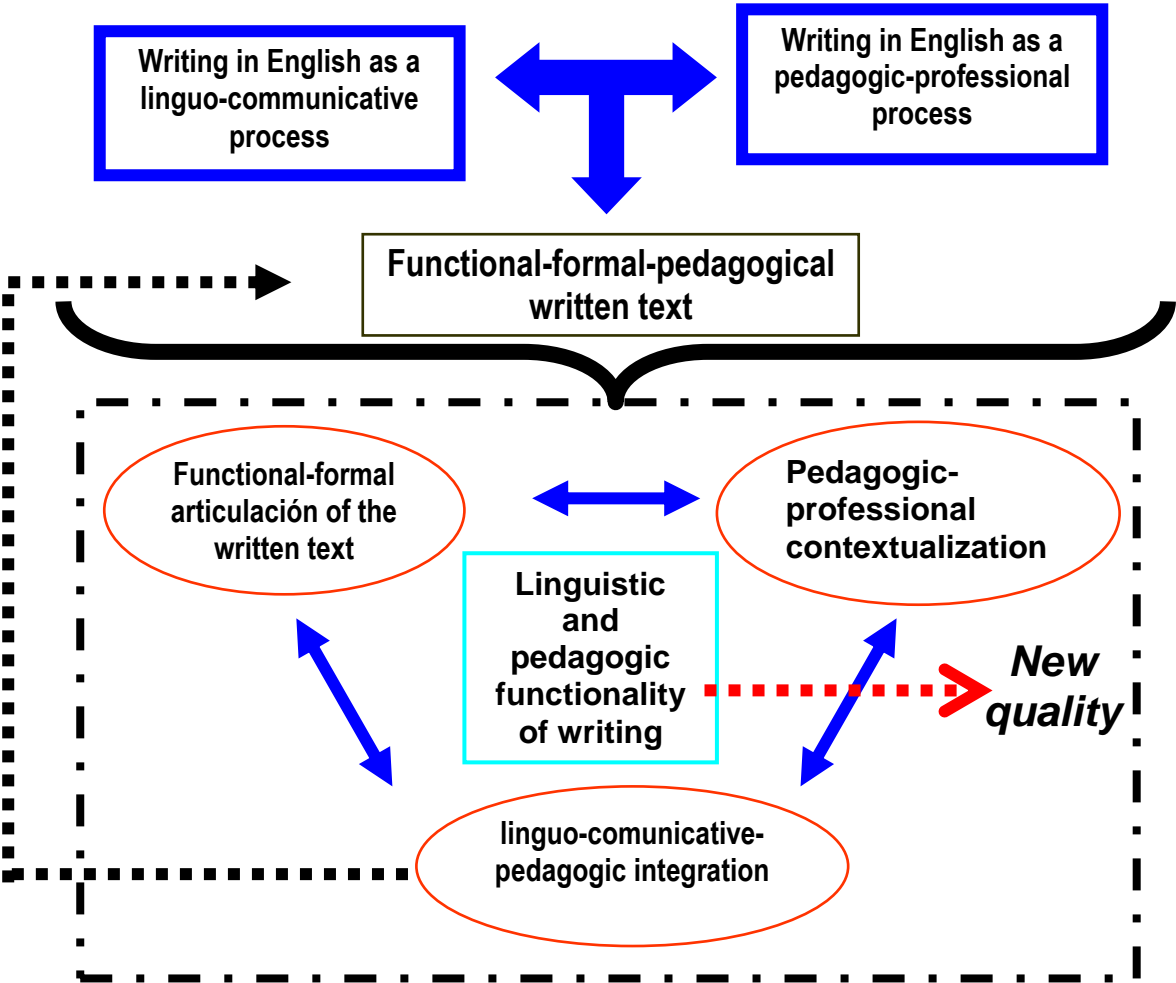
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Annex 1: Graphic of the LINGUO-COMMUNICATIVE-PROFESSIONAL MODEL

LINGUO-COMMUNICATIVE -PROFESSIONAL MODEL



Annex 2. Methodological procedure for the teaching-learning of writing in English

Objective: to methodologically guide the teachers from the discipline Integrated English Practice towards the actions to be carried out in each stage to enhance the teaching-learning process of writing in English with communicative and pedagogical purposes, in a flexible way throughout the linguistic and pedagogical functionality of writing, which allows the students from Initial Teacher Education in Foreign Languages to learn to write in English and to learn to teach how to write in English.

Stages of the methodological procedure

- I. Diagnosis.
- II. Analysis of the linguo-communicative aspects.
- III. Analysis of the pedagogical-professional context.
- IV. Feedback.

Actions:

- *Stage I*
- To study the syllabus of the discipline Integrated English Practice.
- To study the syllabuses of the subjects Integrated English Practice I, II, III, IV, V.
- To study the writing objectives of the different subjects of this discipline.
- To determine the assessing criteria for diagnosing.
- To elaborate the instruments to measure the cognitive and emotional development of the students from Initial Teacher Education in Foreign Languages.
- To apply the instruments to measure the cognitive and emotional development of the students from Initial Teacher Education in Foreign Languages.
- To socialize the results obtained in the staff of the discipline Integrated English Practice and its subjects.
- To set-up the integrated diagnose of writing through cooperative work.
- II. *Analysis of the linguo-communicative aspects.*

Describing

- To determine the objet.
- To analyze the objet.
- To number features.
- To determine the order in which the previously determined characteristics will be used in correspondence with the relevance level of them taking into account the objective of the description.

Narrating

- To make a selection of the facts and events to be narrated.
- To determine the actions, people and places related to the fact.

- To decide which details of these actions, people and places to include in the narration.
- To determine the order in which the selected facts will be narrated.

To explain

- To determine the object.
- To analyze the facts.
- To establish the relation among all the parts of the written text.
- To establish what is essential.
- To determine cause-effect.
- To answer: What for? Why? When? Where?
- To structure the order in which the aspects previously mentioned will be used for the explanation.

Arguing

- To select the object.
- To characterize the object.
- To give reasons.

Handwriting

- To master the English ABC.
- To work with the blending.
- To fulfill the practice needed.

Spelling

- To master which are the different spelling rules.
- To know which are the exceptions.
- To look for the meaning of the words in the dictionary.
- To check the spelling.
- To correct the mistakes.

Punctuation

- To master which are the punctuation marks.
- To master the use of the punctuation marks.
- To check the correct use of the punctuation.
- To make the necessary corrections.

Structure of the format

- To master the structure of the format.
- To know what the different parts of the format are good for.

- To check the correct use of the structure.
- To make corrections.

Structure of the language

- To determine what is the structure of the aspects of the language they will use.
 - What is the verbal tense
 - Which are the gramatical aspects
- To check if they have doubts
- To find out the ways to clear up these doubts.
- To make a list of the main vocabulary.
- To use the dictionary.
- To check the material for corrections.

III. Analysis of the pedagogic-professional contextualization.

- To determine whether to begin with the introduction or a review, or the combination of both.
- To elaborate the learning tasks or preparatory tasks.
- To determine the main task.
- To establish the conditions to favor the feedback and the conclusions.

IV. Feedback with the participation of the teachers in initial formation and teacher development.

- To determine the objective.
- To select the materials.
- To select the moderators.
- To execute the workshop.
- To determine the assessing criteria.