

Employing the Formative Evaluation to Improve Writing Skills, Through the
Technique of Annotated Portfolios of Creative Work, with Seventh Graders of the
New Hope Bilingual High School

Mariela Porras Valerio

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Faculty of Education

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Prof. Aramis K. Vidaurre

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Abstract

This research paper is going to investigate the technique of annotated portfolios of creative work as a useful practice to work on the improvement of writing skills through a formative method. This investigation takes place in the private high school of New Hope, in Heredia, seventh graders were part of the process. The technique of annotated portfolios of creative work was combined with the teaching method of formative evaluation to have a variety of tasks where the students could develop their creativity to the fullest using their abilities, dividing the portfolio into the three tasks as writing about the environment, a picture, and a person.

Chapter I

Investigation Problem

1.1 Problem Statement

1.1.1 Background

The purpose of this research is to evidence how the technique of annotated portfolios of creative work improves the writing skills, combined with the teaching method of formative evaluation, using feedback as the central aspect to achieve this goal. Seeing as the problem of this research consists of the approach MEP is using, which is focused on oral communication.

Additionally, the writing area is considered, as well as the speaking area, to be part of daily communication. Ever since the smartphones are part of the majority's daily life such actions as texting are regular, the same occurs with messenger and other apps like Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube that are some of the apps used to stay in touch with friends, family and even work.

With this in mind, writing and speaking are part of day-to-day life, which is essential to pay attention not only to the speaking area but as well as the writing area. These actions might seem to be very easy when communicating with friends, but they do not produce the same bearing as when it is focused on the academic aspect.

Afterward, when referring to academic writing, this could lead to stress and anxiety as Thomas (2017) stated: "Due to challenges like time constraints, lack of knowledge or improper writing skills a student may get frightened by the thought of assignment writing." Furthermore, all these different scenarios lead to "In various

cases, students go through a lot of mental stress and anxiety at this young age to meet various academic deadlines...", when learners are developing ideas in a written format, they might not be well prepared or confident of their previous knowledge.

As future teachers; it is substantial to build knowledge in the students, not only with the reason to help them with their grades but, also, to help them build a broad perspective of how education can help them in the future. This research is valuable because improving writing skills is going to have a consequence of a better understanding of readings, as a result of being able to find and create coherence in a paper.

A vital feature that has to be taken into account is that the vocabulary is crucial in writing; thus, the students are going to learn more vocabulary and would apply it in their future compositions helping them to create professional papers.

If the students do not have an extensive vocabulary, would contribute to a poor writing paper, since vocabulary is the most fundamental characteristic in developing an essay, for students that their first language is not English this aspect is decisive to develop their thoughts.

Moreover, when the students are prepared specially for the writing area, they are going to be confident because all the practice they already had has guided them. Besides, they are going to know their strong or weak areas when it comes to writing, which is essential in order to progress.

1.1.2 Problem justification

The importance of caring out this study is to prepare the students for their future towards the writing area, expand their knowledge of the vocabulary used in the daily basis, and teach them to develop their thoughts in a coherent way using the technique of annotated portfolios of creative work.

This type of evaluation in order to improve their skills and not punish them, because of their errors, has to be formative. They only have a classwork percentage for delivering it to the professor, which is going to give them feedback.

The relevance of the formative evaluation method not having a percentage, besides delivering it to the professor, is a way to pressure the students to make their writing assignments and improve their skills, therefore is an excellent way to motivate them to gain "easy points."

This method is vital for the professor because he or she can see in which areas the students struggle the most and contextualize the future writing activities for them, also being able to prepare the students for upcoming writing assignments, and identify which students need more time to improve in this area.

The writing area of English put under stress the majority of students, as Thomas (2017) stated before, also, this is one of the most time-consuming aspects on the development of the language.

The composition might make the students feel insecure and doubtful about their writing capacity, for the reason that they might not feel as confident as when it

comes to the speaking area, which is one of the most wide areas in the different classrooms for the acquisition of English.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 General Objective

Implementing formative evaluation to improve writing skills, through annotated portfolios of creative work.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

Designing three different activities to measure the improvement of writing with different settings.

Comparing each one of the different tasks, to see if there was an improvement.

Identifying the most common errors students make based on the activities made.

1.3 Scope and limitations of the problem

1.3.1 Scope

The concept is to prepare the students by doing a portfolio that is going to contain the different writing activities done in the classroom to have a reference, from previous works to then being able to improve every time they are going to write.

It should be noted that an activity related to the writing area has to be done at the beginning of this investigation in an educational center with 7th graders,

students are going to include it in a portfolio, two weeks is going to be the period established to obtain the results from this teaching method. Throughout the two weeks until the last day, activities related to composition are going to be made as a way to see if there is an improvement in the individuals.

Related to the state of the art of this investigation several interesting articles, books, and journals were used as a reference throughout the paper.

Working with children between the ages of 12 to 13 is suitable for this investigation, since, they are suggestible and that is an advantage for the researcher to increase their probabilities to reach the goal.

If using the technique of annotated portfolios of creative work, combined with the teaching method of formative evaluation, does improve the writing skills in the students, then using it would be beneficial just as much for students as for professors. However, a crucial aspect that must be considered is that this combined technique could be used in the development of the reading, listening and speaking areas; and not just for the written area.

1.3.2 Limitations

One of the shortcomings was that the day the activity of the first task some students were absent leading them not to be part of this process, even though these students were not part of the evaluated development, they still had to create their paragraphs.

A point often overlooked, students' proficiency in writing; not all the students have the same capabilities in the development of their thoughts, this is not a

limitation, but it is crucial to take into consideration. An implicit limitation was the vocabulary the students have acquired because, as it was mentioned before, it is crucial when writing.

Another limitation is that the researcher planned to do four activities, the fourth being a design created by the students; however, it was not possible because the host teacher did not give the authorization to the researcher to do it since allegedly the group was behind schedule compared with the generation.

Besides, what was already mentioned the researcher did not encounter any other limitation while doing the research, the aspects and necessities set by the researcher went out smoothly throughout the two weeks established to develop the tasks.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

2.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1.1 Writing Skills

It is impossible to talk about academic writing without also talking about academic reading. In order to understand how texts work, people need to become acquainted with a variety of written texts. Reading and understanding the material produced by a particular group are also a way for new members to become integrated. (Goddard, 2004, p.8).

An important aspect, in the writing process, is reading since it provides guidance when it is time to create a paper. The more a person reads, the more aware of the topic is and get used to the structure a paper must have; as an example, if someone is interested in animals then is more likely to read about this topic leading to know more about the topic and have different points of view about it.

The same occurs with academic writing, students first need to get the first contact with the literature and outline, to have their points of view on how to develop a specific topic; but at the same time use it as a guide, reading the vocabulary used and the structure it has. Another critical aspect that reading has is that it expands the vocabulary of the students, which is crucial when writing informal and formal papers.

2.1.2 Teaching Method of Summative Evaluation

Summative evaluation could be defined as cumulative evaluations, like exams or quizzes, that the main objective is to capture what a student has learned and judge their performance with a score (National Research Council), in other words, the summative evaluation consists in graded evaluations that determine if a student know or does not know about an specific topic.

Moreover, summative evaluation does not focus in the student self-knowledge acquired, instead it takes for granted that a high score on the evaluation means that the student understood the topic.

Similarly, summative evaluation does not concentrate on the process itself, of knowing how to apply the knowledge into the task asked, but then again it is emphasized in the final product, if the goal of what was asked was met or not met, disregarding its process.

2.1.3 Feedback

The term feedback is going to be used throughout the paper, is crucial to know to what it stands for, feedback is the process in which part of the output of a system is returned to its input in order to regulate its further output. It should be an essential part of education, training and personal development. (Kennedy & McGarthy, 2015)

As an example, is when a student gives a completed activity to the teacher, where this activity has information that the teacher interprets and gives back different aspects where the student could improve in future tasks.

In other words, Kennedy and McGarthy (2015) explained as “it helps learners to maximise their potential at different stages of training, raise their awareness of strengths and areas for improvement, and identify actions to be taken to improve performance.”

Moreover, the feedback the teacher gives could be from different forms, Brinko (1988) stated: “Feedback may be verbal, written, statistical, graphical, or behavioral in the manner in which it is conveyed; it may be unstructured or structure in nature.” Feedback is essential to be self-aware of the different mistakes made, and the only way to know this information is through feedback.

In addition, feedback could be positive or negative and its central idea is to improve in future scenarios, is to help the feedback receiver (student) to get in the path, in this case, the teacher desires the students to be.

2.1.4 Teaching Method of Formative Evaluation

As Mathison (2005) stated “Evaluation is considered formative when it is conducted during the development or delivery of a program or product to provide feedback to improve the evaluand. The formative evaluation may also focus on program plans or designs.”

In essence, the formative method consists of giving feedback to the students about the mistakes they did in the assignment, to learn from the mistakes and correct them in future assignments or tests.

It is also a method that has an impact on the students because the professor sees the gaps in the learning of the students then, as a tutor, guide them and teach them in order to fill the different lulls.

In the same way, this teaching method is used to progress in the improvement of a particular topic or skill, as it is not summative the students do not experience the pressure of having to achieve good grades.

Therefore, the aim of the formative evaluation is for students to realize and ponder on the different mistakes they made; as a significant learning this method is useful for the purpose that the students do not study to get a good grade in the evaluation; instead they study to improve their abilities in the topic, leading to personal growth.

2.2 THEORETICAL CONTEXT

2.2.1 Principles and Objectives of Formative Evaluation

As Mathison (2005) stated the primary purpose of formative evaluation consists in

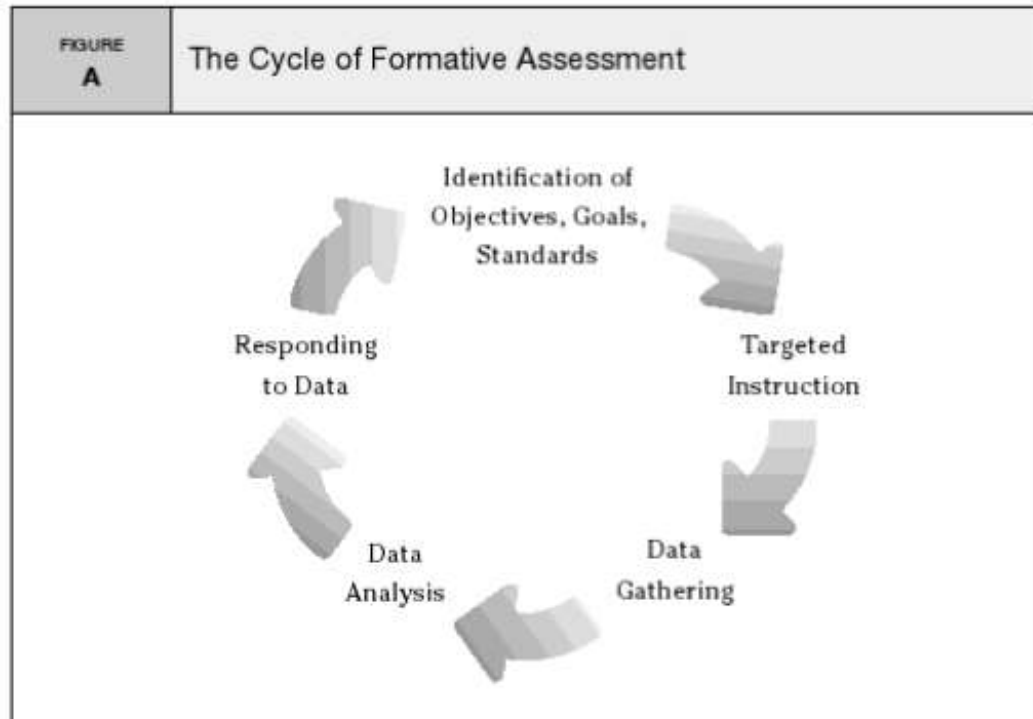
Formative evaluation typically focuses on determining whether a program is unfolding as planned, identifying obstacles or unexpected opportunities, and identifying midcourse corrections that will increase the likelihood of the program's success. It is a structured way to provide program staff with feedback designed to finetune the implementation of the

program, and most often it is for internal use. Because many programs are never really complete, the formative evaluation may be the primary mode of evaluation and can be critical to the development of information systems that provide regular feedback over time.

Asserting that formative evaluation seeks improvement in the individuals' actions through feedback to correct the mistakes they make, maintaining the probability of success of the plan and, most significantly, the success of the individual at the realization of the specific task.

The objectives of the formative evaluation, as Greenstein (2010) mention, are:

- “Formative assessment gives teachers information that they can use to inform their teaching and improve learning while it is in progress and while the outcome of the race can still be influenced.” (p.2)
- “Allowing teachers to pinpoint and address any impediments to a student's progress.” (p.2)
- “Teachers use formative data to decide how much and what kind of learning, support, and practice a student needs to reach the goal.” (p.2)
- An accurate system, to see the process of how this teaching method works, is the representation of the formative evaluation as a cycle, for example,



(p.7)

2.2.2 Improve Writing Skills, Through Innovative Activities

Innovative activities are needed to get the attention of the pupils and motivate them, Mayfield (2011) explained the concept of innovation as “...characteristic in the field of creativity is that innovation is purposeful: the innovation fulfills a specific need. Where creativity can occur spontaneously and simply for the joy of being creative, innovation achieves some end or solves some problem.”

The need that is going to be reviewed, with the innovative activities, is the necessity to achieve excellent writing skills through a stimulating, inspiring and thought-provoking environment.

Furthermore, that is going to be captured later on paper which is a mode to improve the creative way of writing of the students.

Not to mention, a technique that could be used with the formative evaluation method, and at the same time is innovative, is the assessment technique of annotated portfolios of creative work.

The description of this assessment technique is “Briefly, the notion of annotated portfolios entails selecting a collection of designs, re-presenting them in an appropriate medium, and combining the design re-presentations with brief textual annotations.” (Löwgren, 2013, p.30)

In other words, the annotated portfolios work with images or designs that, in this case, the students are going to give a description or annotation creating a creative paragraph about it. It should be noted; a re-creation of one design could also be part of this activity in where the students do the design, and afterward, they describe what they want the design to be interpreted as or create a story behind the creation they have made.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

3.1 Type of investigation

3.1.1 Purpose

This research paper uses the qualitative method to analyze the outcomes of the study, in light of the focus of the investigation, which is the improvement.

The qualitative research method is the most adequate for this study; Willig (2016) defined it as "It seeks to deepen the understanding of people's behavior by accessing the meaning behind it. Qualitative methods of data collection and analysis are designed to detect meaning from the perspective of the research participants." Moreover, this is precisely what this investigation is looking for, to see if the writing skills do improve through the annotated portfolios of creative work implementing the teaching method of Formative Evaluation.

3.1.2 Temporary dimension

It is important to highlight, that a developing process is needed to assure the validity of the technique used, in other words, the same students are going to be a consistent part of the process of the different tasks.

The sixteen students involved in the process are going to have portfolios that are going to be given by the researcher, the activities are based on the technique of annotated portfolios of creative work, and the researcher is going to bring the different instruments, images, and designs required to accomplish the goals of the research.

3.1.3 Framework

The qualitative research method is defined as "...an approach to research that is primarily concerned with studying the nature, quality, and meaning of the human experience. It asks questions about how people make sense of their experiences..." (Willig, 2016), improvement is not an object that could be measured; after all, different factors could affect it, consisting of one of the reasons why it is vital to implement this research method.

Students from a private institution constitute the population that the researcher chooses for this investigation, the students must be from seventh grade. Equally important, the study is meant to be done in an English classroom, where Literature and Language are taught.

3.2 Subjects and Sources of research

3.2.1 Second Hand Information

This investigation uses books, journals, encyclopedias, and articles. Each one was part of a database of public universities, as UCR and TEC.

3.3 Selection of the sample

3.3.1 Population

The required population involves sixteen students from III cycle of a private school, specifically from seventh grade. They were chose, by the researcher, because they are familiarized with the four areas of the English language.

Furthermore, these students have practiced the area of writing in II cycle and know how to do a composition, opposing from the children of I cycle, where the focus is not on the development of their writing skills.

The population chosen were 16 students from the 7-1 of the private institution New Hope, with 16 students out of the 23 that were part of the group. Consisting of random students that happened to be present on the first day the activity was introduced.

Besides, a significant piece of information that must be mentioned is that the students were familiarized with the writing aspect of the language since II cycle of primary, as the program of MEP establishes

During the Second Cycle, students are exposed to more complex tasks that gradually demand them to produce longer chunks of language in oral and written form within sentence frames until they begin to write more words and sentences on their own. They can also engage in the writing process, revising, editing, and finally producing polished texts on their own. (2016, p.33)

3.4 Techniques and Instruments to collect the information

3.4.1 Technique

The technique that is going to be used is the annotated portfolios of creative work, which purpose is “Using Annotated Portfolios provides the teacher with a limited sample of students' creative work along with information on the students' understanding of that work in relation to the course content or goals.” (Cross &

Angelo, 1988), which contextualized for motives of this study, is going to be developed through different activities related to images, designs, and objects.

Additionally, students are going to describe or explain them to later produce creative paragraphs or descriptions; subsequently, those paragraphs are going to be stored in a portfolio.

Afterward, the students are going to deliver the portfolio to the researcher, without delay the investigator checks the different paragraphs and is going to provide the necessary feedback to the students.

3.4.2 Instruments

- Portfolio

The portfolio that is going to contain the four different tasks to be made throughout the establish time, where the first task is going to be based on a picture.

The third task is going to be about a person, which is going to be the researcher. Thereupon, learners have had experiences with her, and she has spent almost two months with them.

The third task is going to be about their environment or, in other words, their surroundings. The students are intended to create a creative fantasy story of a paragraph of 7 to 10 lines.

The criteria to evaluate the different task are going to be the same in each task, skewing criteria number 5 which was not part of the first activity. The criteria that are going to be evaluated in each task is the following,

Figure 1

Criteria	Met	Not met	I noticed
The paragraph is clear and easy to understand. It has characters and a plot that is described well. The writer uses many interesting details. (Adjectives)			
The story grabs the reader's attention at the beginning. The events happen in an order that makes sense. The story has a clear ending.			
Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with the correct punctuation. Most words are spelled correctly.			
Verb tenses well developed. Subject verb agreement. (Verb to-be, pronouns, possessive nouns, possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns)			

Source: Porras, M. Task #1 Criteria, 2019

Figure 2

Criteria	Met	Not met	I noticed
The paragraph is clear and easy to understand. It has characters and a plot that is described well. The writer uses many interesting details. (Adjectives)			
The story grabs the reader's attention at the beginning. The events happen in an order that makes sense. The story has a clear ending.			
Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with the correct punctuation. Most words are spelled correctly.			
Verb tenses well developed. Subject verb agreement. (Verb to-be, pronouns, possessive nouns, possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns)			
Vocabulary			

Source: Porras, M. Task #2 and Task #3 Criteria, 2019

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is going to illustrate the data analysis and findings from the different tasks made with the technique of annotated portfolios of creative work, completed by seventh graders during the teaching period of 2019.

Throughout the following descriptions of the graphs, the criteria referred to in the axle "Number of Criteria" are explained in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Henceforward, it is going to be mentioned in the analysis and description as Criteria 1, Criteria 2, Criteria 3, Criteria 4, and Criteria 5.

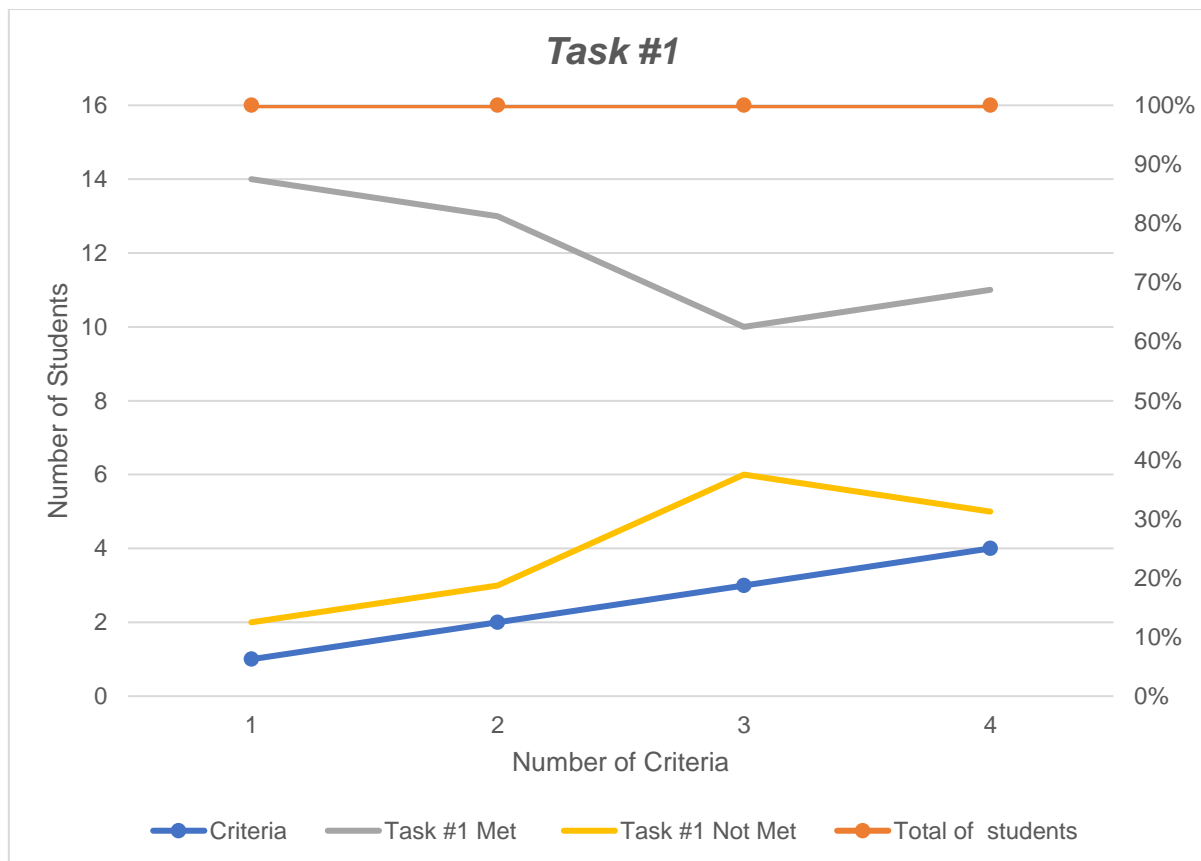
Moreover, the axle of "Number of Students" corresponds to the 16 learners that were continuously part of the process, which is going to be equivalent to 100%. Students are mentioned according to the list number that they represent, to protect their identity.

Equally important, the different tasks the graphs denote are explained in the previous chapter, where it is essential to recall the guidelines used as well as the complexity of each activity.

4.2 Data Description

4.2.1 Data from Task #1

Graph 1



Source: Porras, M. Task #1, 2019

An important aspect that should be noted, learners did this first activity without any prior feedback, in the light of taking this activity as a starting point in the research.

According to the graph, 14 students met what the researcher established in Criteria 1 representing an 87,5% of success, while two students did not meet the guidelines of the criteria. Given that, student 7 did not use adjectives, and student

5 wrote a paragraph that was not clear and easy to understand, they represent a 12,5% of unsuccess.

In Criteria 2, an 81,25% represent 13 students that met the criteria established, on the other hand, students 5 and 7 wrote a paragraph without coherence, and student 11 did not end it. Furthermore, these three students represent 18,75% of unsuccess.

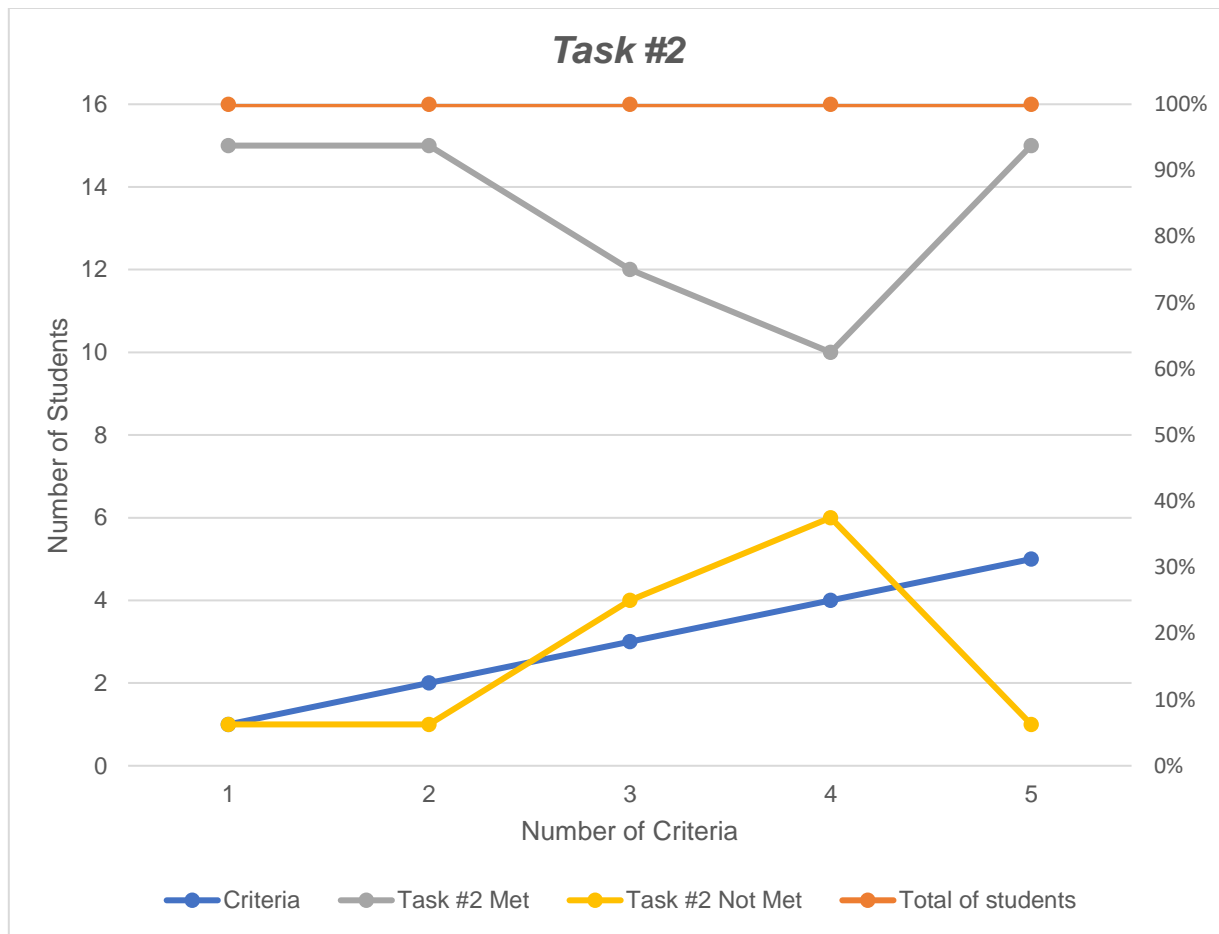
In Criteria 3, 62,5% of success is represented in 10 students, but six students did not meet the criteria established by the researcher, these students represent 37,5% of unsuccess. Down to students 7,12, and 13 that did not use punctuation correctly, students 4 and 9 had difficulties with spelling, and student 11 did not use the capital letters fittingly.

In criteria 4, 11 students met the criteria representing a 68,75% of success, while five students did not meet the guidelines established. For instance, students 4,7, and 10 had struggles with the verb tenses structure; students 5, 15, and 19 had difficulties with the subject-verb-agreement and student 11 who combined "to" with the past form of the verb or the verb accompanied with the termination "ing."

It is imperative to emphasize that Criteria 5 are not part of the activity named as Task #1; therefore, there are no results in this aspect to analyze.

4.2.2 Data from Task #2

Graph 2



Source: Porras, M. Task #2, 2019

This second activity was done while students got their feedback on the first activity done; the researcher gave individual feedback to each student respectively.

Conferring the graph 2, 15 students met what the researcher established in Criteria 1 representing a 93,75% of success, though there was one student that did not meet the guidelines of the respective criteria. Specified that, student 1 did not meet the appropriate length, representing a 6,25% of unsuccess.

In Criteria 2, an 93,75% represent 15 students that met the criteria established; on the other hand, student 1 did not put an end to the paragraph. Furthermore, this student represents 6,25% of unsuccess.

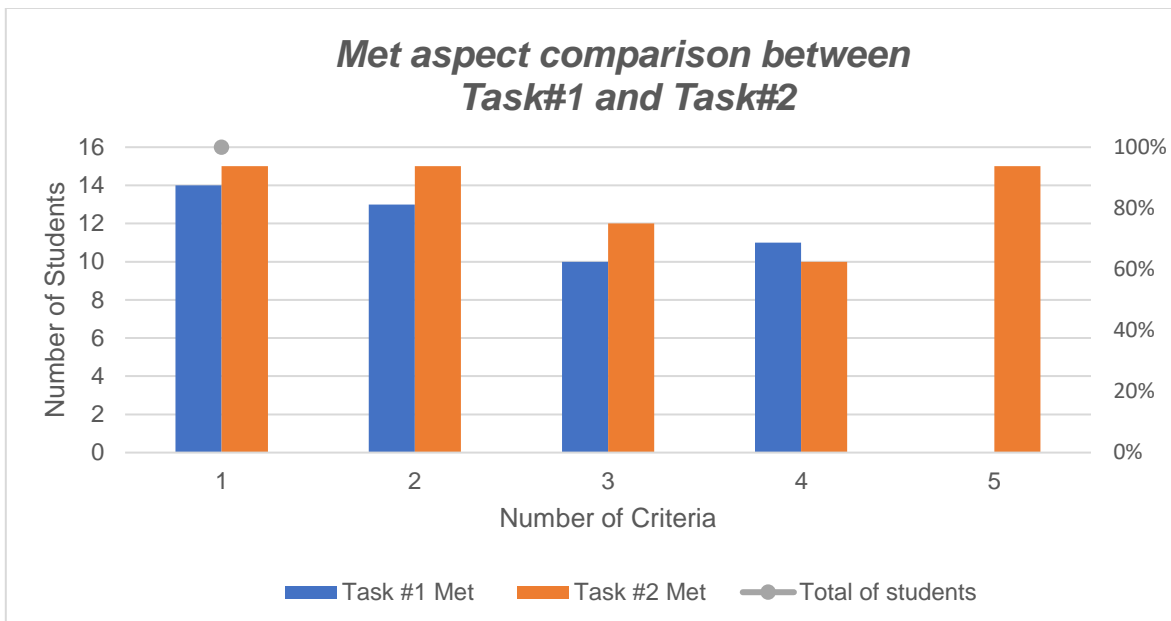
In Criteria 3, 75% of success is represented in 12 students, but four students did not meet the criteria established by the researcher, these students represent 25% of unsuccess. Down to students 7,11, and 12 that did not use punctuation correctly, which they represent the unsuccess in the activity made.

In criteria 4, ten students met the criteria representing a 62,5% of success, while six students did not meet the guidelines established. Illustrating, students 3,5,7,12,13, and 15 had difficulties with the subject-verb-agreement representing 37,5%.

In Criteria 5, 93,75% of success is represented by 15 students; thus, one student represents a 6, 25% of unsuccess. Additionally, student 1 put words in Spanish.

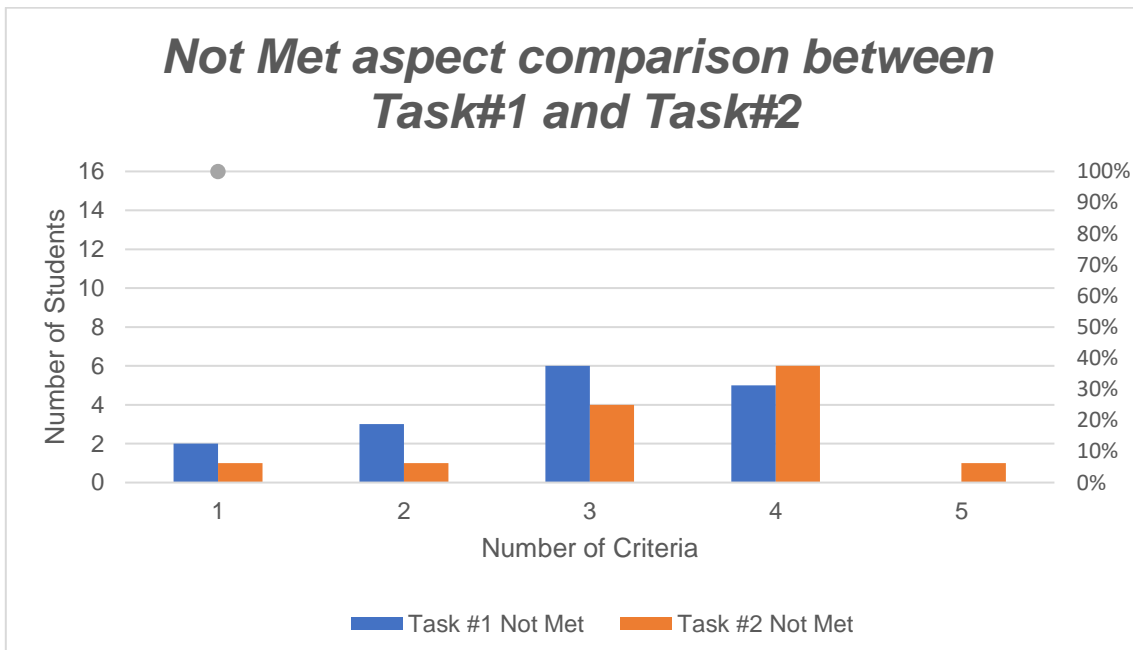
4.2.3 Data from Task #1 and Task #2

Graph 3



Source: Porras, M. Met aspect comparison between task#1 and task#2, 2019

Graph 4



Source: Porras, M. Not met aspect comparison between task#1 and task#2, 2019

It is important to compare both tasks (task#1 and task #2), referring to the met and not met aspect, wherein the graphs 3 and 4 is in more detail what graphs 1 and 2 displayed. Respectively, it is going to describe and illustrate the improvement depending on the different criteria.

In Criteria 1, there was an improvement of one student. While in the first task, without feedback, two students did not meet the criteria established.

Not only there was an improvement in Criteria 1 but also in Criteria 2, where the margin of error at the beginning was of 3 students, and there was an improvement of two students.

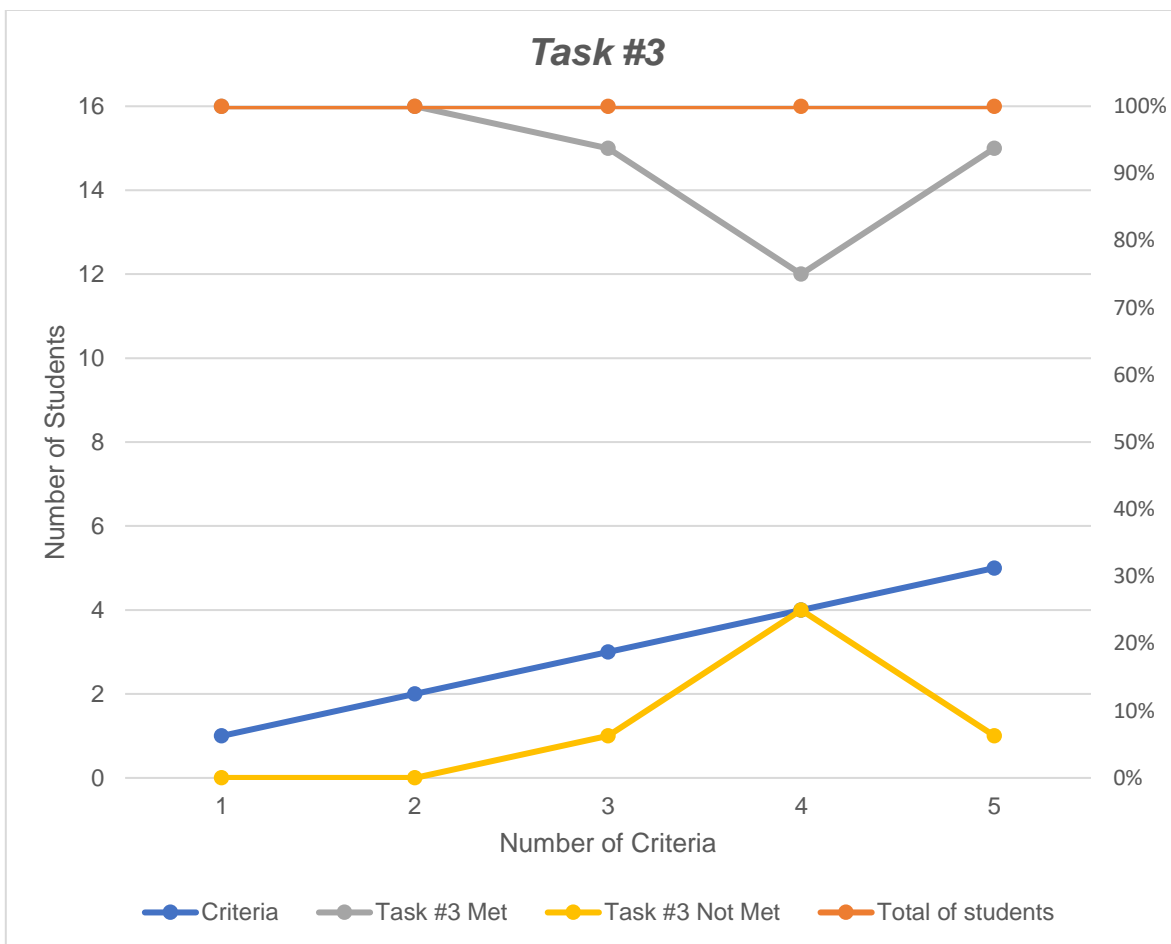
Similarly, to the previous criteria, there was an improvement of two students in Criteria 3 where at the beginning it was of 10. Correspondingly, there were only mistakes related to punctuation, and the other two problems about capital letters and spelling were amended.

Although there was an improvement in the previous Criteria; it is not the case in Criteria 4, where regardless of the given feedback, the margin of error increased by one student.

Despite Criteria 5 not being included in Task #1, the margin of error was of one student in the second task, and these criteria shall be considered in the following task.

4.2.4 Data from Task #3

Graph 5



Source: *Porras, M. Task #3, 2019*

This third activity was done after students got their feedback on the other activity done; the researcher gave general feedback to the students involved in the process.

Discouraging the graph 5, 16 students met what the researcher established in Criteria 1 representing a 100% of success, hence there was not a percentage of unsuccess.

In Criteria 2, 100% represents 16 students that met the criteria established; there was not a percentage of unsuccess in the criteria.

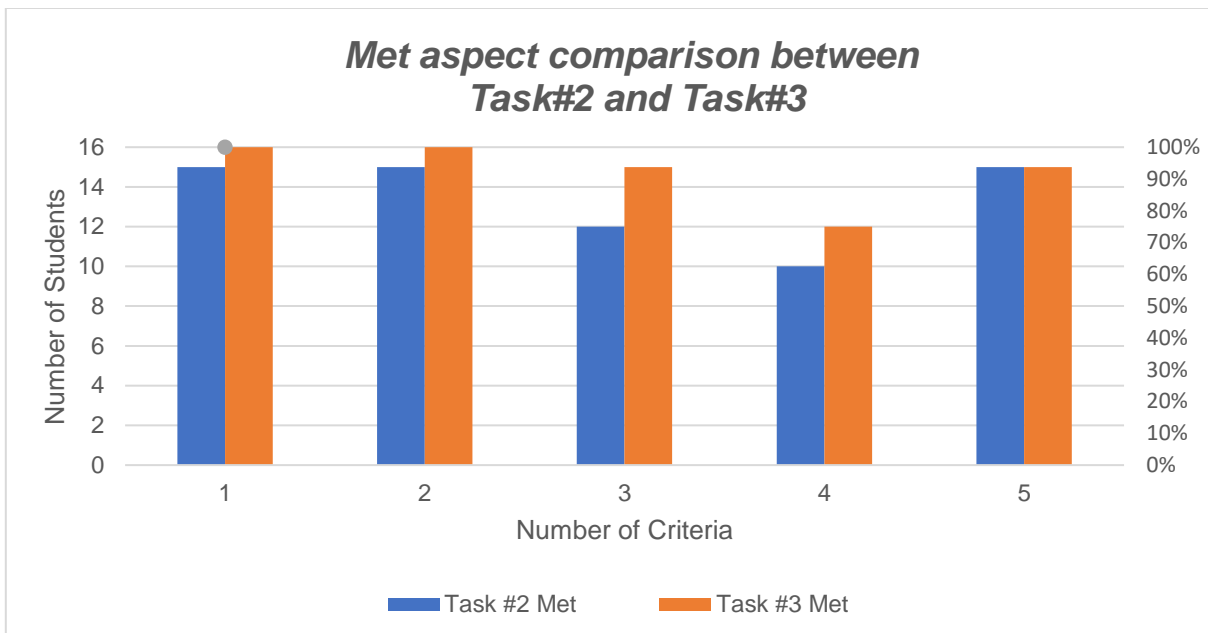
In Criteria 3, 93,8% of success is represented in 15 students, but one student did not meet the criteria established by the researcher, this student represents 6,25% of unsuccess. Down to student 1, that misspelled the word "said" by writing "sayed."

In criteria 4, twelve students met the criteria representing 75% of success, while four students did not meet the guidelines established. Illustrating, student 5 had difficulties with the subject-verb-agreement, student 4 and student 11 struggle with the verb tense structure, and student 10 had complications with the possessive pronouns representing 25% of unsuccess.

In Criteria 5, 93,8% of success is represented by 15 students; thus, one student represents a 6,25% of unsuccess. Additionally, student 10 did not know some words.

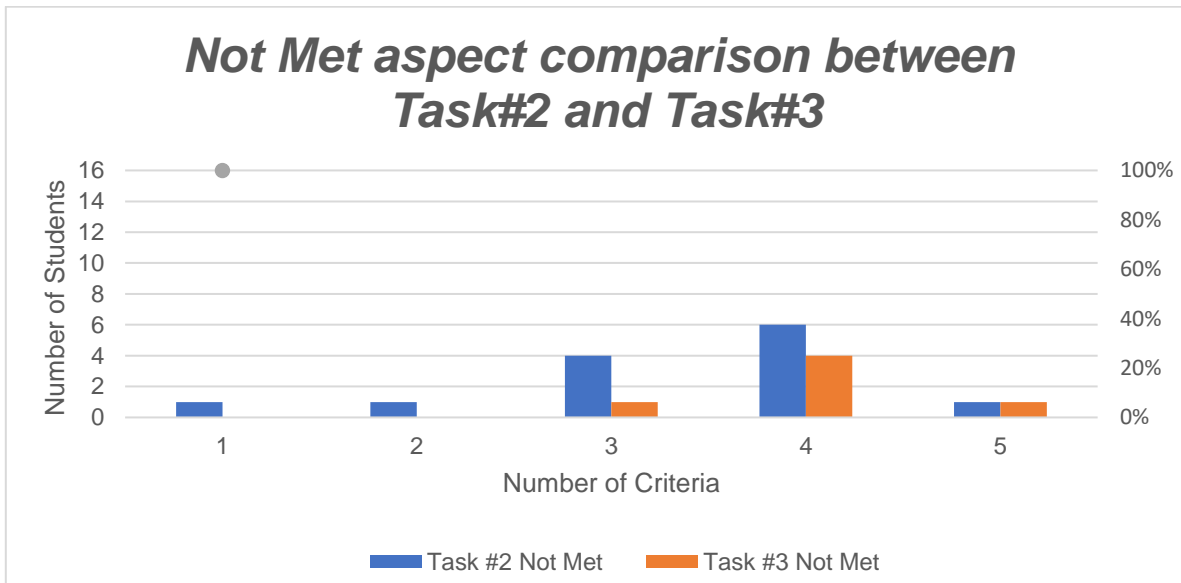
4.2.5 Data from Task #2 and Task #3

Graph 6



Source: Porras, M. Met aspect comparison between task#2 and task#3, 2019

Graph 7



Source: Porras, M. Not met aspect comparison between task#2 and task#3, 2019

It is vital to compare both tasks (task#2 and task #3), denoting the met and not met aspect, wherein the graphs 6 and 7 are further detailed what graphs 2 and 3 exhibited. Correspondingly, the following information is going to label and exemplify the improvement reliant on the different criteria.

In Criteria 1, there was an improvement of one student, while in the second task, with individual feedback, there was one student who did not meet the criteria established. This student, which was student 1, was able to correct the mistake made in the preceding task.

Additionally, in Criteria 2, where the margin of error in Task #2 was of a single student in Task #3 this student was able to improve. Given that, student 1 was successfully part of the 100% of success.

Equally, to the previous criteria, there was an improvement of three students in Criteria 3, where the margin of error in task #2 was of 12 students. Nonetheless, student 17 had problems with the spelling of the word "say."

Differently from the comparison between Task #1 and Task #2, in Task #3 there was an enhancement in Criteria 4 compared with Task #2. The improvement, in Criteria 3, is of two students while in Task #2 the margin of error was of 6 students.

Despite Criteria 5 not being included in Task #1, the margin of error was of one student in the second task, which is maintained in Task #3.

4.2.6 Overall Data

Table 1

Criteria	Task #1	Overall
1	87,5%	60%
2	81,25%	
3	62,5%	
4	68,75%	

Source: Porras, M. Overall performance in Task #1, 2019

Table 2

Criteria	Task #2	Overall
1	93,75 %	83,75%
2	93,75%	
3	75%	
4	62,5%	
5	93,75%	

Source: Porras, M. Overall performance in Task #2, 2019

Table 3

Criteria	Task #3	Overall
1	100%	92,5%
2	100%	
3	93,75%	
4	75%	
5	93,75%	

Source: Porras, M. Overall performance in Task #3, 2019

The tables as mentioned above represent the overall performance of the different tasks applied, where table 1 represents Task #1, table 2 represents Task #2 and table 3 represents Task #3. Given that, there was an improvement of 32,5% between Task #1 and Task #3.

Table 4

The improvement between Task #1 and Task #2			AVERAGE
23,75%	6,25%	8,75%	12,91%
5/5 criteria	4/4 criteria	5/4 criteria	

Source: Porras, M. *Improvement between Task #1 and Task #2, 2019*

Table 5

The improvement between Task #2 and Task #3
8,75%

Source: Porras, M. *Improvement between Task #2 and Task #3, 2019*

Since Task #1 did not have Criteria 5, there are three different ways to set the overall improvement comparing it with Task #2, as it is detailed in table 4.

With the attention to the 23,7%, that represents the improvement, it is considering the Criteria 1, Criteria 2, Criteria 3, Criteria 4, and Criteria 5 of both tasks. Subsequently, this means that in Task #1, Criteria 5 was taken as 0% in order to represent the percentage already mentioned.

With this in mind, if Criteria 5 are not considered in Task #2, then the improvement is represented by 6,2% between both tasks. However, if the results of each task are taken without adding or extracting information, then 8,7% represents

the improvement. Specified, the average improvement between tasks corresponds to 12.9%, considering all the different aspects previously mentioned.

Additionally, in table 5, is displayed the improvement between Task #2 and Task #3 which corresponds to 8,7%, meaning that between table 4 and table 5, there was an average improvement of 10,8%.

The following tables are going to illustrate the improvement of the different tasks in each of the different criteria established, besides the improvement, the average score, of the met and not met aspects, is also going to be denoted.

Table 6

Criteria	IMPROVEMENT	
	Task #1	Task #2
1	1	
2	2	
3	2	
4	-1	
5	15	

Source: Porras, M. *Improvement Task #1 and Task #2, 2019*

In table 6, describes the improvement of task #1 and Task #2 by the number of students which the total is 16 students; illustrating that there was an improvement in Criteria 1 of one student, in Criteria 2 and Criteria 3 there was an improvement of two students.

However, in Criteria 4 there was no improvement since the margin of error increase by one student, finally, in Criteria 5 there was an improvement of 15 students since these criteria were not part of Task #1.

Table 7

Criteria	IMPROVEMENT	
	Task #2	Task #3
1	1	
2	1	
3	3	
4	2	
5	0	

Source: Porras, M. *Improvement Task #2 and Task #3, 2019*

In table 7, is represented the improvement between task #2 and task #3 as in table 6, by the total number of students. Correspondingly, Criteria 1 and Criteria 2 had an improvement of one student each, Criteria 3 had an improvement of three students, Criteria 4 had an improvement of two students, and lastly, in Criteria 5 there was not an improvement neither a decline.

Table 8

Criteria	AVERAGE SCORE Task #1 and Task #2	
	Met	Not Met
1	90,62%	9,37%
2	87,5%	12,5%
3	68,75%	31,25%
4	65,62%	34,37%
5	46,87%	3,12%

Source: Porras, M. *Average Score Task #1 and Task #2, 2019*

Table 9

Criteria	AVERAGE SCORE Task #2 and Task #3	
	Met	Not Met
1	96,87%	3,12%
2	96,87%	3,12%
3	84,37%	15,62%
4	68,75%	31,25%
5	93,75%	6,25%

Source: Porras, M. Average Score Task #2 and Task #3, 2019

Moreover, table 8 and table 9 represent the average score in each criterion comparing among the different tasks made, where it is detailed in percentages the met and not met aspects.

In both tables, it could be seen the improvement since the feedback was first given, which was illustrated in more detail in table 6 and 7 but instead of percentages with students.

4.3 Data Interpretation

4.3.1 Task #1

As an illustration of the different mistakes, the students involved in the process made, the first task was made without feedback and students wrote about a family image.

Subsequently, in Criteria 1, student 5 wrote a paragraph that was not easy to understand because the composition did not have a thread to follow, and student 7 did not use adjectives, as well as that the paragraph could be understood but was missing something.

Following, Criteria 2, student 5 and student 7 wrote a paragraph without coherence, and student 11 did not put an ending to the paragraph. Consequently, this might be because since they came from II cycle, they are supposed to write individual sentences and not a coherent composition with chronological order.

Then, Criteria 3, student 4 and student 9 were the only ones to have problem with the spelling of some words like “couse” (because), “nok” (knock), “asome” (awesome), “aswome” (awesome), “beatiful” (beautiful), and “broy” (bought). While, students 7, 12 and 13 did not put attention to punctuation in the paragraph, ones did not even put a single dot. Finally, student 11 did not know when to put the capital letters in the composition.

In Criteria 4, students 4, 7, 10 and 11 had problems with the structure of the tenses, to illustrate, one student puts “search a place to adopted a kid and they founded”, another one wrote “want to found”, “they are so helpfuls each other”, and in the end, student 7 confused the verb *were* with the adverb *where*.

Similarly, students 5,15 and 19 struggle with the verb-subject-agreement, for example, “He don’t has family,” “...found a girl that have 6 years.”, “she love them” and finally “Peter family have 6 persons”.

4.3.2 Task #2

As an exemplification of the different mistakes, the students involved in the process made, the second task was made with individual feedback and students wrote about a person, the researcher in this case.

Afterward, in Criteria 1, student 1 wrote a paragraph, better said, just a bunch of sentences not meeting the length that was asked for, however, the sentences did have a thread that the student followed, then having a coherent story.

Following, Criteria 2, student 1 did not put an ending to the paragraph, this might be because the student did not ask questions to the researcher about herself or because the students did not know how to proceed.

Thenceforward, Criteria 3, students 7, 11 and 12 struggled with the punctuation; run-on sentences composed their paragraphs. Something that should be mention is that neither of the students used transition words because of the same reason that was specified in point 4.2.1; they are familiarized with sentences and not with compositions.

In Criteria 4, students 3,5,7,12,13 and 15 had difficulties with the verb-subject-agreement, for example, the most common one was "she have," "she didn't scream when she talks.", "she seem" and "she like."

Finally, in Criteria 5, only student 15 wrote a word in Spanish is the word "amigable," these Criteria were put in this task because, in the first task, students were asking for vocabulary to the researcher.

4.3.3 Task #3

Emphasizing, in task 3 was made with general feedback and students wrote about their surroundings, the classroom and everything inside of it.

Afterward, in Criteria 1 and Criteria 2, the goal was met, and none of the students made mistakes.

Following, Criteria 3, student 17 wrote “sayed” instead of said, even though the student pronounce it like *said* when writing it did not know how to spell it.

After that, Criteria 4, student 4, and student 11 had problems with the structure of verb tenses, as an example, “At first I think and said...” Similarly, students 5 and 10 had difficulties with the subject-verb-agreement, demonstrating, “her parents was furious...”, “she never talk about unicorns again.”

Finally, in Criteria 5, only student 10 wrote a word that did not have sense being the word “magitions” when the researcher asked the student what she was referring to she said that it was magicians.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

The goal of this investigation was to demonstrate how the technique of annotated portfolios of creative work, combined with the formative method, improves the writing skills of seventh graders.

It was observed, after the first time the researcher gave feedback to the students involved, that there was an improvement in the majority of the paragraphs of task #2 and consequently in task #3 as well. Conferring the data analysis, the improvement between the first task and the third task was of 32,5%, attesting the functionality of the technique used.

According to experience, the researcher considers that when working with a large group of students, it is better to give the feedback in general not individual. Due to, when giving individual feedback, the only student paying attention is the one that the investigator is talking to, while the other students are working on their paragraphs without a guide.

Subsequently, the general feedback is a better option to deliver it to the students; also, they are going to be able to ask questions related to the problems they had encountered and clarified it to everyone else that might have the same mistake.

It gives the impression that under positive settings, the technique proposed is useful, it is crucial to consider that a quiet and peaceful environment is essential to the students to be able to develop their ideas; foremost class management is central to preserve the group focused in their assignment.

As an interpretation, from all the different tasks made, the researcher concludes that the most common errors students made throughout the process, correspond to the subject-verb-agreement, punctuation and the development of verb tenses.

Equally important, these students were from a private school where speaking is the central aspect in II cycle; thus, students knew what they were saying but did not know how to interpret it into a written format.

Moreover, the goal of the research was met because, as it was explained in the data analysis, the technique combined with the feedback did improve the writing skills of the students throughout the different tasks made.

5.2 Recommendations

Correspondingly, the researcher esteems that on the way to develop adequately the writing area is essential to have a base, meaning that the teacher could use a fraction of the class to focus on reading, that way students shall have an idea of what a composition is about and then apply it.

Additionally, it is vital to emphasize that practice produces better results and hence is essential to start with topics that the students might find interesting or are more aware of, then continuing with more complex topics.

Similarly, it is suitable for teachers to give the students a list of transitional words and practice with it, since, as it was stated before, students from II cycle are prepared to write individual sentences and might struggle when writing a composition.

For future research, it would be advisable to give general feedback, instead of individual, to students since it is more effective and less time-consuming.

Also, apply the fourth task that shall be about a design created by the students, this might have an impact on the research as the students had an idea of what they want to create, and they shall have more contact with it.

Equally important, applying the technique in different areas of the English language and even in other subjects, like, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Spanish, where a progression is needed in order to move to the complex information of the subject.

It should be noted; the class environment is an essential factor that could be considered when doing writing assignments, because the students are supposed to work individually, and they need silence to concentrate.

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Annexes

Task #1

1. Create a story based on the following image. Give it a title and one paragraph of 5-7 lines.



<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Met</i>	<i>Not met</i>	<i>I noticed</i>
The paragraph is clear and easy to understand. It has characters and a plot that is described well. The writer uses many interesting details. (Adjectives)			
The story grabs the reader’s attention at the beginning. The events happen in an order that makes sense. The story has a clear ending.			
Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with the correct punctuation. Most words are spelled correctly.			
Verb tenses well developed. Subject verb agreement. (Verb to-be, pronouns, possessive nouns, possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns)			

Task #2

1. Describe the following person, her name is Mariela. Give the story a title and one paragraph of 5-7 lines.

Criteria	Met	Not met	I noticed
The paragraph is clear and easy to understand. It has characters and a plot that is described well. The writer uses many interesting details. (Adjectives)			
The story grabs the reader's attention at the beginning. The events happen in an order that makes sense. The story has a clear ending.			
Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with the correct punctuation. Most words are spelled correctly.			
Verb tenses well developed. Subject verb agreement. (Verb to-be, pronouns, possessive nouns, possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns)			
Vocabulary			

Task #3

1. Create a short fantasy story about your surroundings, what is next to you? Do you like the surroundings? Is there an object? Does it have an enemy? Give the story a title and one paragraph of 7-10 lines.

Criteria	Met	Not met	I noticed
The paragraph is clear and easy to understand. It has characters and a plot that is described well. The writer uses many interesting details. (Adjectives)			
The story grabs the reader’s attention at the beginning. The events happen in an order that makes sense. The story has a clear ending.			
Sentences begin with a capital letter and end with the correct punctuation. Most words are spelled correctly.			
Verb tenses well developed. Subject verb agreement. (Verb to-be, pronouns, possessive nouns, possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns)			
Vocabulary			

Jul

5

Task #3

1. Create a short fantasy story about your surroundings, what is next to you? Do you like the surroundings? Is there an object? Does it have an enemy? Give the story a title and one paragraph of 7-10 lines.

Monseerratt

Monseerratt is a girl that has 12, ~~her~~ she was born in 2006, 6, 22. She has a sister that ~~bro~~ is 7 years old. She likes to ~~eat~~ bite the people. She swims very good, is the best of the five of us. Also, she is ~~to~~ small. But she ~~has~~ ^{does} not ~~have~~ brother. She ~~has~~ ^{is} 7 years in this school. She likes to eat sushi.

7

Task #1

1. Create a story based on the following image. Give it a title and one paragraph of 5-7 lines.

The ^Familiar ^{normal} Vacation went
 One day a ^a normal family ^{go} to a
 normal vacation ^{where} no one attack them. ?
 In that normal vacation they ^{go} to
~~the~~ beach ^{normal} were nothing happened.
 When they go to ^{their} house it was
 a normal trip. It was a normal funny vacation.



were
 ↳ verb
 where
 ↳ adverb

Dr. 7/6/11 7

Task #2

1. Describe the following person, her name is Mariela. Give it a title and one paragraph of 7-10 lines.

Mariela

Mariela is ^{studying} studying to be a teacher, so we know her about ^{because of} that. She is small, she have ^{has} curly hair and she is an animated person. She is patient with with us. Mariela lives in Heredia and she goes to the Hispanoamericana university. We don't know her very well, but she seems to be a good person.
seems

5

Task #1

1. Create a story based on the following image. Give it a title and one paragraph of 5-7 lines.

Peter's family
 Peter's family ~~(GWA)~~ has 6 ~~person~~ people. Peter's
 the father ~~(is)~~ of this house. He has 3 kids
 1 girl and 2 boys. The big one that
 Peter has ~~has~~ is 6 years old and the smaller is
~~is~~ one and the other is 5 years old. He
 is happy to have his family



Task #3

#7

1. Create a short fantasy story about your surroundings, what is next to you? Do you like the surroundings? Is there an object? Does it have an enemy? Give the story a title and one paragraph of 7-10 lines.

The magical classroom weird

One day, a strange light enter in our class it was very weird, but it starts saying that we were chosen to go in a magic trip. Then we were in a magical place in where we learn to fly but what no one knew is that ^{that} ^{trip} ^{was} ^{for} only ~~two~~ 2 hours, then we came back and no one remembered what happened.

12

Task #3

1. Create a short fantasy story about your surroundings, what is next to you? Do you like the surroundings? Is there an object? Does it have an enemy? Give the story a title and one paragraph of 7-10 lines.

The Magic Day

One day, I was in my high school with my friend Sofia. But something was really strange. All the world was stopped. Every student was quiet and didn't move. I was very scared, and Sofia too. But then, we notice that the high school was changing. The uniforms were different and there were butterflies everywhere. Suddenly, I listened to my alarm on my bedroom. It was just the most weird dream I ever had!

19

Task #2

1. Describe the following person, her name is Mariela. Give it a title and one paragraph of 7-10 lines.

T. Mariela

Mariela is my english teacher, she is a good person. She has curly hair and her hair is like a combination of red and purple. She also has dark brown eyes and she always use a beautiful eyeliner. She is a sweet person with us. I think she explains very good. I like the topics she gave us. She is one of my favorite teachers.

15

Task #1

1. Create a story based on the following image. Give it a title and one paragraph of 5-7 lines.

The ^Happy ^Family

One day a very young kid of 7 years, ^{old} that ^{doesn't} ^{have} a family. He feels very alone, so he goes to ^{find} a family. He ^{doesn't} ^{find} a family, but he ^{find} a girl that ^{is} ⁶ years ^{old}. So now, they are two. They found a big family with a mom, a dad, a grandpa, a grandma, and a little baby. They ^{are} a happy family.




Task #3 

1. Create a short fantasy story about your surroundings, what is next to you? Do you like the surroundings? Is there an object? Does it have an enemy? Give the story a title and one paragraph of 7-10 lines.

The revenge of the Backpacks.

Once upon a time, there was a castle named classroom. There was a king named Desk. He controlled all the kingdom, but he had slaves named backpacks. One day, the backpacks were fed up so they had their revenge to the Desk. They infiltrated the classroom and killed the Desk. One of the backpacks became the king and the kingdom was safe for decades.