The Use of Indirect Corrective Feedback for Improving Written Production

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Abstract

This action research study explores the extent in which Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) contributes to improve sixth graders' written production in a public institution in Medellin, Colombia. The students receive Indirect Corrective Feedback proposed by Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014, p. 55) in one of the three writing process phases suggested by Strömquist (as cited in Ariyanti , 2016, p. 266), namely: pre-writing, drafting and revising. I used a reflective log and three students' artifacts as data collection techniques. The findings revealed that the students improved their written production in the reduction of errors and in their positive attitude towards class activities.

   Keywords: Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF), written production, written phases, pre-writing, drafting, revising, errors.

Degree requirement

This action research study was carried out during my teaching practicum in a public institution in Medellin, Colombia, as a requirement to obtain my B.Ed. in Foreign Languages Teaching (English-French) at Universidad de Antioquia.

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Table of Contents

Preface

This is a report of an action research study that explored the extent to which Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) contributed to improve sixth graders' written production in English classes in a public institution in Medellin, Colombia, from January to November 2017.

Based on the conclusions I came up with after a six-month observation process in this context, I decided to explore to what extent ICF contributes to improve students' written production in EFL class.

This study addresses pre-service and in-service educators interested in alternative approaches to help students develop their written production in EFL. After carrying out this study, I concluded that ICF was useful in contributing to improve students' written production despite the short time that I had to implement the proposed activities. I expect that the positive results serve teachers and researchers who want to explore deeper the students' written production in public institutions in Medellín.

Description of the Context

The institution

The institution where this action research project was carried out is located in Belén neighborhood in Medellín. This public institution has three shifts, one in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one at night. The afternoon shift starts at noon and finishes at 6 p.m. Most of the extracurricular activities of the institution are programmed on Fridays which affects some classes. Respecting to the institution facilities, there are about twenty classrooms, arranged in three floors. Moreover, the institution has the secretary's office, the principal's office, the coordinators' office, the teachers' room, a computer room, a library with six computers with internet access, a cafeteria, the students' restrooms, and two playgrounds.

The mission, the vision, the philosophy, and the institutional policy are stated into the Institutional Educational Project (IEP). Besides, the vision established on the IEP claims that the institution will educate competent students who will be able to respond to the demands of the globalized world. Furthermore, the institution has a social pedagogical model based on a conception of social and holistic pedagogy.

The Class

This research project study was carried out in a group of sixth grade students. They have four English classes a week; each class lasts 55 minutes. The classroom is located on the third floor of the building. It has six lamps and four windows. Furthermore, the classroom has twelve tables, forty five students' chairs, a chalk and marker board, and the

teacher's desk. Moreover, it is equipped with a video beam. The students work on the

textbook Way to go!

The Students

The class is composed by 45 students, 24 girls and 21 boys. The students' range age

is 11 and 12 years old. Most of them live close to the institution. Therefore, the majority of

students belong to socioeconomic strata two and three. As regards to their likes, the

majority of the students like to listen to pop and reggaeton music even when they are in

school. Besides, they do not like English because they think it is not an understandable

language. Hence, while the teacher is explaining the grammar content, some of the

students do assignments from different subjects. The most frequent activities developed by

the students are filling the gaps and translating sentences or paragraphs from English into

Spanish in which they have shown their lack of vocabulary and misspelling issues.

The Cooperative Teacher

The cooperative teacher started to study languages in a public university in

Medellin. There, he studied 4 semesters. Then, he left his studies and started to teach

English in a rural school. Nevertheless, he holds a degree in Teaching English-Spanish

from a private university of Medellín. He has 47 years of experience teaching English as a

foreign language in private and public schools. He follows Teacher- Centered Approach.

According to Duru (2015) in TCA "the teacher is as an expert who selects, determines, and

evaluates the educational process on the behalf of students, who lack the capacity to know

what they need to learn" (p. 283). Furthermore, he employs some reflections after starting

classes as a behavioral strategy. With this strategy, he wants to raise students' awareness

about their behavior in class. As regards on assessment process, he uses a quantitative scale from 1 to 5 to assess his students according to the institutional evaluation system (IES).

Statement of the Problem

After six months of observation process of an EFL class in a public institution where this action research study was carried out and after the analysis of the reflections taken from the entries of my reflective log, I found some issues related to students' written production.

I found that teacher did not use feedback as strategy during the few opportunities students had to write in EFL class. Most of the activities proposed by the Cooperative Teacher (CT) were related to translate sentences or readings from English into Spanish or vice versa. "The teacher wrote the objective of the activity. The activity was divided into four points, the first one was about writing a short English reading on their notebooks. The second one was about translating the short English reading into Spanish" (Reflective log, observation # 9, March 10th, 2017). These translation activities show that CT prioritizes grammar translation activities in EFL class. "The teacher started to do a reflection about how students can learn English language. He told them that he learnt English using the grammar translation method" (Reflective log, observation #17, March 31st, 2017).

The second issue that I found was related to the lack of vocabulary regarding students' written production. Due to the most written activities were related to translate sentences or readings from English into Spanish, I noticed that during development of these activities students did not know the meaning of some words or sentences which they

needed to translate. "Some of the students asked me for help about the assignment, they did not know the meaning of some words" (Reflective log, observation #8, March 7th, 2017).

Therefore, I decided to work with Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) as strategy to improve students' written production and to avoid students' lack of vocabulary during the writing tasks. ICF's purpose is to refer to errors' location without giving explicit suggestions for corrections (Lincoln & Idris, 2015, p. 122). Moreover, ICF will allow me to provide the students with the necessary tools to deal with their writing issues, which is the goal of my study.

Theoretical Background

In this section I present key concepts to better understand this action research study. Firstly, I will elaborate on Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) proposed by Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014, p. 55). Secondly, I will define written production and writing process proposed by Strömquist (as cited in Ariyanti, 2016, p. 266). Thirdly, I will state the importance of vocabulary in written production mentioned by Moeller, Ketsman and Masmaliyeva (2009, p.1). Fourthly, I will explain the correlation between reading and writing mentioned by Adams (as cited in Ariyanti, 2016, p. 265). Finally, I will explain the relevance of errors in the writing process by Phuket and Othman (2015, p. 99) and the teachers' awareness to treat them proposed by Ferris 2002 (as cited in Lincoln, & Idris, 2015, p. 121).

Indirect Corrective Feedback

Feedback is defined as the information provided by an agent regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding (Hattie, & Timperley 2007, p. 81). Moreover, Hattie (2009) states that "feedback aims at the reduction of discrepancies between current understandings and performance on the one hand, and a learning intention or goal on the other" (p. 177). To achieve this, Hattie (2009) states that "teacher feedback needs to be clear, purposeful, meaningful and compatible with students' prior knowledge and to provide logical connections" (p. 177). Correspondingly, as Ferris (2003) states that Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) is seen as helpful for students' long-term writing development" (as cited in Ghandi, & Maghsoudi, 2014, p. 55) and its purpose is to refer to errors' location by indicating that there is an error without giving explicit suggestions for corrections (Lincoln, & Idris, 2015, p. 122). In that way, Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014) state that teachers mark the error spots and requires the students to self-correct their errors" (p. 55). Besides, Guénette (2013) states that "the role of the teacher as a provider of this kind of feedback is the initiator, teacher is the person who signals the student's error, but student is who has to think about it to correct it" (p. 121). Consequently, ICF needs to focus on the students' work not on the student (Fonseca, Carvalho, Conboy, Valente, Gama, Salema, & Fiúza, 2015, p. 60). In that way, Bitchener (2005) states that "teacher feedback is an integral part of students' learning and improvement" (as cited in Ghandi, & Maghsoudi, 2014, p. 55). Moreover, the use of feedback improves the students' proficiency and fosters teacher-student relations (Fonseca et al., 2015, p. 59).

Written Production and Writing Process

Olson, Torrance, and Hildyard (1985) states that written production is the discourse produced in written way by learners (p. 303). Furthermore, as Phuket and Othman (2015)

states "writing is the most difficult skill in English" (p. 99). To treat with this fact, some

scholars have provided solutions to help students to improve their written production. On

the matter, Raimes (1983) stressed that "writing teachers should focus on teaching writing

as a process and on how to convey meaning, construct forms, and select vocabulary" (as

cited in Lincoln, & Idris 2015, p. 120). In the same way, Strömquist (2007) proposes three

phases in writing process namely pre-writing, drafting and revising (as cited in Ariyanti,

2016, p. 266). Firstly, pre- writing phase refers to practices or experimental writing

(Mahnam, & Nejadansari, 2012, p. 155). Secondly, drafting phase involves a free writing,

concept mapping, and an outline activity to generate ideas and establish a purposeful

foundation (Jenks, 2003, p. 4). Finally, revision is a natural part of any writing episode

(Langer, & Applebee, 1983 p. 13). Moreover, in this part of the writing process drafts are

reconsidered and restructured (Langer & Applebee, 1983, p. 13). Accordingly, Indirect

Corrective Feedback as a strategy chosen to carry out this study seems to be suitable to be

provided students during the revising phase of the writing process, in order to improve

students' written production.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the most pivotal components of language learning and

teaching of a foreign language since it affords learner of the language access to all forms of

oral and written communication of the word (Moeller, Ketsman, & Masmaliyeva, 2009,

p.1). Moreover, it can be said that vocabulary is basic to English language teaching because

without adequate vocabulary items learners cannot appreciate others expressions and ideas

or express their own ideas (Faraj, 2015, p. 11). Besides, as Nation and Waring (2014) state

that, vocabulary should be considered as an essential component of learning a

second/foreign language because it inspires and leads the learner the way to communicate

(as cited in Faraj, 2015, p. 11). In that way, when the learners learn the word they know

both the meaning of the word and how to use it (Robinson, 1989, p.275). In addition to this,

it is important to remark that vocabulary building often occurs through reading (Moeller,

Ketsman, & Masmaliyeva, 2009, p.1) and activities which make a great possibility for the

students to learn the word and store it in their long memory (Faraj, 2015, p. 12).

The Correlation between Reading and Writing

English language skills have classified by Schmitt (as cited in Faraj, 2015, p. 12)

into both receptive and productive knowledge competence. Furthermore, they are

developed in the process of learning a foreign language. Receptive skills are listening and

reading, and productive skills are speaking and writing. During the development of a

receptive skill students do not have to deal with the production of the language. Reading

and writing are two points in dialectic of meaning- making with text. Readers read writing;

writers write reading (Mahnam, & Nejadansari, 2012, p. 155). Consequently, Adams

(1990) states that "reading is as complement skill to improve written production because

reading is closely related to the process of writing" (as cited in Ariyanti, 2016, p. 3).

Errors in Written Production

Students commit errors in their writing learning process all the time, due to writing

is the most difficult skill in English (Phuket, & Othman, 2015, p. 99). However, errors are

seen as an important mark of the language development in language learning (Phuket, &

Othman, 2015, p. 99). In that matter, Ferris 2002 (as cited in Lincoln, & Idris, 2015, p. 121)

states that "teachers need to know the mechanisms of treating errors, what type of errors

should be addressed during the writing process as well as how to treat them". In that way, the types of errors are divided into interlingual errors (Phuket, & Othman 2015, p. 101) and intralingual errors (Sattayatham, & Hansa 2007, p. 184). Phuket and Othman (2015, p. 101) list some interlingual errors such as "verb tense, word choice, sentence structure, article, preposition, modal/auxiliary, singular/plural form, fragment, verb form, pronoun, run-on sentence, infinitive/gerund, transition, subject-verb agreement, parallel structure, and comparison structure", and Sattayatham and Hansa (2007, p. 184) consider some intralingual errors such as: "order of adjectives, there is/are, subject-verb agreement, direct/indirect object, verbs of feeling, past tense, present perfect, reported speech, passive voice, and question tag". Accordingly, Indirect Corrective Feedback seems to be an adequate strategy to correct students' errors because most of the EFL learners regard correction stage as an essential step in the writing process. Moreover, they want to be corrected (Havranek, 2002, p. 256) and as Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014) state ICF requires the students to self-correct their errors (p. 55).

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Research Question

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To what extent does Indirect Corrective Feedback contribute to improve sixth graders' written production in a public institution in Medellin?

General Objective

- To explore to what extent Indirect Corrective Feedback contributes to improve sixth graders' written production from a public institution in Medellin.

Specific Objectives

- To provide Indirect Corrective Feedback to improve students' written production.

- To provide vocabulary aiming to improve students' writing process.

- To foster the use of English in a written way.

- To promote students' reading as support on their writing process.

Action Plan

In this section I present the action plan and the data collection techniques to carry out this action research project. Firstly, I explain in detail the action plan that I intent to follow in order to improve written production on sixth graders. Secondly, I describe the data collection techniques I intent to use to collect the data.

In this project I use Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) model proposed by Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014, p. 55) as the strategy to improve written production on sixth graders in a public institution. The students will elaborate three artifacts at three different moments throughout the semester: at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the collecting data stage. The start-up of the artifacts takes into account the three phases of writing process proposed by Strömquist (2007), namely pre-writing, drafting and revising (as cited in Ariyanti, 2016, p. 266). During the pre-writing phase, students and I read the beginning and the middle of a selected and adapted fable according to the students' English level and the content they are being taught, namely simple present. The reading activity served to provide vocabulary and to promote students' reading as support to their writing process. During the drafting phase, students write the end of the fable that they read in three sentences. The students are free to write the end that they want for their own written production. Moreover, the students are instructed to write simple sentences, using the basic

clause patterns of the sentence subject, verb and object or complement (Eastwood, 1994, p.6). The revising phase is divided in two parts. In the first part, I read the end of students' fable to provide Indirect Corrective Feedback (Ghandi & Maghsoudi, 2014, p. 55) through codes (Riddell, 2001, as cited in Ferdouse, 2013, p. 63). In the second part, they are instructed to rewrite the end of their fables taking into account the ICF provided.

Regarding data collection, I will use two data collection techniques, reflective log and three artifacts. Firstly, Moon (2003, p. 59) states the importance of logs have for recording events that have happened. Moreover, in the reflective log where I write events aiming to identify teaching and learning EFL issues in a public school. Secondly, Norman (1991, p. 18) states the importance of the artifacts as man-made things that seem to aid or enhance our cognitive abilities. During this study implementation the students will elaborate three artifacts, one at the beginning, one in the middle and one at the end. These three artifacts consist on writing the end of three fables.

Development of Actions

In this section I describe the actions implemented in order to answer the research question.

To start the implementation of the actions, students and I had a meeting to come to an agreement about the actions to develop and the goals to achieve in the second semester of the school year. Moreover, I presented to the students the three fables to work on during the elaboration of the three artifacts. Furthermore, I encouraged students to participate

actively in the different activities during this study. I expected responsibility, commitment and active participation from the part of the students.

Afterwards, to define disciplinary rules, students and I established another agreement. We discussed five disciplinary rules and I reviewed some rules established from the institution. I wrote the disciplinary rules on the board. After that students and I read all of them. I asked students their opinion about the established rules. Moreover, I encouraged them to reflect about how their behavior affects their learning process. As a consequence, I expected them to be more committed regarding these disciplinary rules.

In the third week of the second semester of the school year, students and I worked on the first artifact of the study. During this stage, I did not provide any kind of feedback. Moreover, I used the three writing phases selected to carry out this study. I used one section of the class to implement the first two phases of the writing process namely pre-writing and drafting. Firstly, I drew on the pre-writing phase. In this phase, we worked with The Turtle and The Rabbit fable written by Wolf (1965). I adapted it according to the students' level and the content, simple present. Moreover, the fable was divided into eight sentences, five for the beginning and three for the middle. Students and I read the beginning and the middle of the fable. By doing so, I introduced new vocabulary to improve their understanding. Next, we carried out the drafting phase. During this phase, I instructed the students to write the end of the fable in three sentences. I told them that they were going to write them using the basic clause patterns of the sentence proposed by Eastwood (1994, p.6). Furthermore, I allowed them to use the dictionary to avoid spelling errors and to encourage them to work more independently.

Afterwards, as I mentioned before, I divided the revising phase in two subphases. In the first one, I revised the students' written production. In the second one, I handed back their initial written production expecting that they corrected their errors. This first subphase corresponded to the baseline activity of the study. Therefore, I did not provide any kind of feedback to indicate students about their errors. I just marked an X in the sentence that they wrote incorrectly. In the second part of this phase, I handed back their initial production to be corrected. I did not mark where exactly the errors were made, but they knew that the sentence was written incorrectly. However, I encouraged them to think about what they made incorrectly in the sentence. Although, they were also encouraged to correct their errors, they did not do it. They lost interest in developing this part of the activity.

Next, I drew on the first two phases of the second artifact in a section of the class. During the pre-writing phase, we read The Golden Egg fable written by Ibáñez (1976). It was also adapted according to the students' level and the content for this fable was the same, simple present. The fable was also divided into eight sentences, five for the beginning and three for the middle. Students and I read the beginning and the middle of the fable. We read sentence by sentence of the fable and I provided new vocabulary in order to improve their understanding. Later, we carried out the drafting phase. For this phase, I instructed the students to write the end of the fable in three sentences. I explained that the sentences had to be written in the basic clause patterns of the sentence proposed by Eastwood (1994, p.6). Moreover, I allowed them to use the dictionary to avoid spelling errors and to encourage them to work more independently.

Afterwards, in the first part of the revising phase, I started to provide Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) proposed by Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014, p. 55). I used the

highlighter and an X as the codes to indicate them where the errors were made. Furthermore, to analyze students' errors, I used the list of interlingual errors proposed by Phuket and Othman (2015, p. 101) such as sentence structure, verb tense, word choice, fragment, verb form, pronoun, the third person singular as a division of the main category of verb form, and others. Moreover, to avoid students' confusion about their errors, and taking into account the basic clause patterns of the sentence proposed by Eastwood (1994, p.6), I clarified to my students the use of codes to indicate where exactly the errors were made. I explained them that there would be an X-S to indicate an error on the subject, an X-V to indicate an error on the verb, and an X-C to indicate an error on the complement, according to Riddell 2001(as cited in Ferdouse 2013, p. 63).

In the second part, I handed back their initial written production. This time, they knew where the errors were made. They spent fifteen minutes to correct their errors. Moreover, I noticed that the students gained interest in developing this part of the activity. Finally, students and I carried out the third artifact. As usually, I used one section of the class to implement the first two phases of the writing process, namely pre-writing and drafting. Firstly, the pre-writing phase took place. In this phase we worked with The Three Little Pigs fable written by Marshall and Weaver (1989). It was also adapted according to the students' level and the content for this fable was the same as the previous ones, simple present. Moreover, this fable was divided into eleven sentences, six for the beginning and five for the middle. Students and I read the beginning and the middle of the fable. We read sentence by sentence and I provided new vocabulary in order to improve their understanding of the fable. We then carried out the drafting phase. I instructed the students to write the end of the fable in three sentences. I told them that they were going to write

using the basic clause patterns of the sentence proposed by Eastwood (1994, p.6) Moreover,

I allowed them to use the dictionary to avoid spelling errors and to encourage them to work

more independently.

Afterwards, in the first part of the revising phase, I provided Indirect Corrective

Feedback suggested by Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014, p. 55). I highlighted their errors and

marked with an X the place where the errors were made S,V or C. Next, the second part of

the revising phase was carried out. The students spent fifteen minutes of the following

section to correct their written production. That time they were aware of where they were

made. Moreover, students gained interest in developing this part of the activity.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze data collected, I drew on the four constructive stages of analysis

proposed by Altrichter, Posch and Somekh (1993, p. 120), namely, reading data, selecting

data, presenting data, interpreting data and drawing conclusions. Accordingly, I assembled

the information gathered from my reflective log and from the three artifacts. Then, I

identified categories from the data, carrying out the developing categories and coding data

proposed by Altrichter et al. (1993, p. 121). Later, I organized the data in an EXCEL chart.

After that, I interpreted the data in order to answer the research question. Finally, I

triangulated the data through the combined method of triangulation proposed by Altrichter

et al. (1993, pp. 113-114). In the following section, I present the findings and

interpretations after the data analysis process.

Findings and Interpretations

The findings revealed that students improved their written production after being provided Indirect Corrective Feedback (ICF) model suggested by Ghandi and Maghsoudi (2014, p. 55). This written production improvement was expressed in students' interlingual error gradual reduction, the students' attitude to improve their written production and the students' necessity of feedback.

Written Production Improvement

Students' interlingual error gradual reduction. Students showed a gradual reduction of errors during the elaboration of the three artifacts. At the beginning, they made more interlingual errors when writing the endings of the fables, during the elaboration of the first artifact. Then, they were reducing their interlingual errors when writing the endings of the fable, during the elaboration of the second artifact. Finally, they reduced meaningfully and some of them reduced totally their interlingual errors when writing the endings of the fable, during the elaboration of the third artifact. The following extract taken from the elaboration of the three artifacts from student A shows the gradual interlingual error reduction:
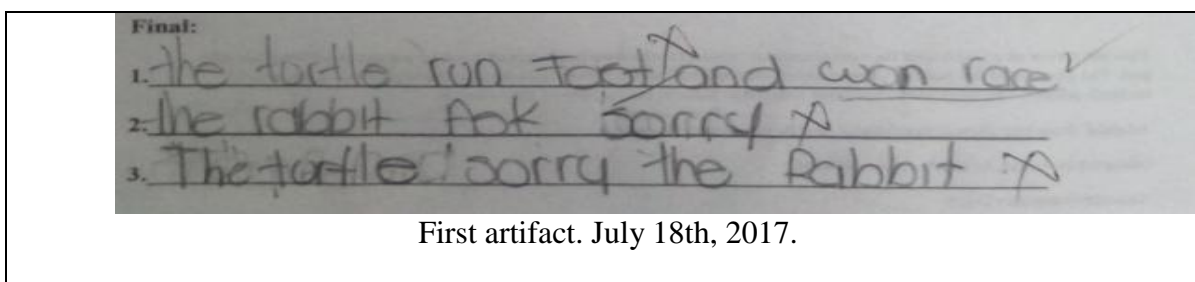
First artifact. July 18th, 2017.

Second artifact. August 22th, 2017.

Third artifact. September 12th, 2017.

Table 1. Elaboration of the three artifacts by student A.

This change happened gradually because learning to write is a complex process, as Phuket and Othman (2015) state learn to write is the most difficult skill in English (p. 99). During the writing process students had to take into account the sentence patterns, and the new vocabulary which increased the difficulty of the writing task proposed by Eastwood (1994, p.6). Moreover, they read the beginning and the middle of a fable; they were also learning new vocabulary. Consequently, they were involved in carrying out various complex processes at once. Therefore, it was natural that they made errors in their written production.

Students' attitude to improve their written production. Students showed a negative attitude to correct their errors during the elaboration of the first artifact. The students' lack of interest was reflected in development of the activity, even though most of them were aware about sentences were written incorrectly, they did not do anything to correct their errors, as it is remarked: "They were confused and most of them lost the interest to carry

out the activity. So, the majority of them did not do it, and they handed it back with the

same errors" (Reflective log, entry # 2, July 21st, 2017).

This negative students' attitude to develop the proposed task may have been caused

by the lack of feedback to indicate where the errors were located. They were aware about

the sentences were written incorrectly; however, they did not know where errors were

located. Consequently, students did not know what to do. This fact made students lost

interest in developing the proposed task of correcting their wrong sentences.

Nevertheless, when I started to provide ICF as strategy to improve their written

production, students showed a positive attitude to correct their errors. They were engaged

doing the task, as it is stated: "I was observing how they were correcting their errors and I

realized that they were more engaged than during the first artifact elaboration. They were

learning about the correct place of the subject, verb and complement in the sentence."

(Reflective log, entry # 4, August 25th, 2017). Moreover, they showed interest on how to

write some words and sentences, as it is stated: "Besides, some of the students were asking

me about how they could write a word or a sentence in English" (Reflective log, entry # 4,

August 25th, 2017).

This positive students' attitude may have been caused by the use of ICF through

codes, which indicated students where errors were made and may have pushed them to

think about how to correct the errors. Students' change of attitude towards error correction

impacted on the quality of their written production.

Students' necessity of feedback. Students showed a necessity to be advised about

the errors in their written production from the beginning to the end of the implementation

of this study. Some of students were not able to write sentences correctly in the drafting

phase; however, they corrected their errors after being advised in the second part of the

revising phase.

This following extract from the reflective log shows how students showed necessity

to be advised about their errors during the elaboration of the first artifact without being

provided ICF: "Spite of the time that they had to correct their errors, I realized that they did

not know what they did incorrectly. They knew sentences were written incorrectly, but they

did not know what kind of error they made or where it was made." (Reflective log, entry #

2, July 21st, 2017).

This lost of interest to make the proposed task may have been caused by the

necessity of being provided with feedback. They were aware that the sentences were

written incorrectly. However, they seemed to need to know more information provided by

me, to be engaged in the correction stage. As Hattie (2009) states "teacher feedback needs

to be clear, purposeful, meaningful and compatible with students' prior knowledge and to

provide logical connections" (p. 177).

Consequently, during the elaboration of the second and the third artifact students

continued making errors in their written production, although we worked on the same

grammar content and they were asked to write their sentences following the basic clause

patterns of the sentence proposed by Eastwood (1994, p.6), as it is stated: "The Rabbit and

the Turtle fable was adapted taking into account the students' level and the grammar

content they were being taught, simple present" (Reflective log, entry # 3, August 22nd,

2017). "The Three Little Pigs fable was selected and adapted according to students' level

and the grammar content proposed for the implementation of this study, simple present"
(Reflective log, entry # , September 12th, 2017).

Students' necessity to be advised about their errors may have been caused by the
complexity that the writing process entails. Phuket and Othman (2015) state that "writing is
the most difficult skill in English" (p. 99). Moreover, they state "It is impossible not to
make errors in writing" (p. 100). Therefore, teachers may use ICF through codes to treat
with students' written errors in English to improve their written production.

Summing up, writing is a complex skill to learn in English. As it is state by Phuket
and Othman (2015, p. 99) most EFL students tend to make errors in writing. Moreover,
students always commit errors when they are in their EFL process. For that reason, students
who are learning to write a foreign language need to be taught with different strategies
which help them to improve their process. Consequently, the adequate use of ICF, provided
through codes, showed an improvement in the learning process of written production of the
students.

Conclusions

The purpose of this action research project was to explore to what extent the
implementation of the ICF contribute to the improvement of students' written production.
After data analysis process, it was possible to conclude that the actions carried out during
this action research project contributed to improve students' written production in a
meaningful way. Moreover, ICF can be used as a strategy to reduce intralingual errors in
writing and to engage students to correct-themselves their errors. Furthermore, the use of

ICF through codes helps students to be more aware about the localization of errors and it also pushes them to think about the kind of errors that they made in order to be corrected. Therefore, the appropriate use of this strategy improves students' written production. In addition, it is important to remark that even though writing is a complex skill to learn in English, teachers may draw on the different phases in writing process to help students to improve their written production. Besides, the use of reading as receptive skill helps students to learn new vocabulary, which they can use in their written production as productive skill. In spite of the improvement achieved in the students' written production through the use of ICF, this study also revealed students' dependence on advice to correct their errors. They never took the initiative to correct their errors before being advised.

Reflections

Conducting an action research study and being a practicum teacher at the same time was not an easy job. Nevertheless, I feel enormously satisfied as I can see how much I have grown in my personal and professional dimensions.

Looking back to all experiences lived as a practicum teacher made me reflect on how difficult and challenging this profession is. This immersion as practicum teacher made me live the limitations that the teachers have teaching English in the public sector. Furthermore, I could be aware of the students' needs. Most of them were related to different issues from outside the school. For that reason I am so glad to have made my practicum in a public school.

Moreover, I conducted an action research study which was a demanding and time consuming job. At the end I felt glad to see the final product of all this effort. Moreover, adding a grain of sand in the life of my students, accompanying them and contributing in their improvement during their learning writing process was very rewarding.

Summing up, I learnt valuable things from all the experiences lived during my practicum. They helped me a lot with my personal and professional growth. Moreover, I feel a little bit more confident to continue my career as an EFL teacher to face the new challenges and make social changes in the Colombian society from the school.

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