

CRITERIA USED BY TEACHERS TO ASSESS WRITTEN PRODUCTION AT  
THE LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF NARIÑO

by

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ABSTRACT

This research was carried out to find out the aspects taken into account by teachers to assess students' written production at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño. At the beginning of this research, it was said the teachers assess writing performance according to the needs but the criteria were not established in advance to students. Two survey's formats were designed, one identified teachers' preferences about the criteria used to assess written production and another one surveyed students to verify teachers' answers.

Examples of international criteria (Brown, 2004; the Common European Framework, 2001; and so forth) were analyzed to compare them with teachers and students' results and find the agreements or disagreements among them. 80% of teachers use defined criteria, whether the aspects were based on international criteria or their own criteria design, but according to students' results, those criteria are arranged in advance only 38% of the times. The results demonstrated that teachers have to give in advance the writing criteria and students need to know the aspects they are going to be assessed in. As a result of the findings of this research a writing assessment criteria grid was designed.

## I. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

*Introduction to the Problem*

Within the new tendencies of teaching and learning languages, many techniques, methods and approaches are developed to improve the different skills, but the oral skill is considered as the most important one for communicative purposes maybe neglecting the other ones, which have the same importance, and disregarding the fact that language is seen as a whole in current communicative approaches.

Writing has its own importance as another way to communicate and at the same time it allows people going beyond the limits of a simple conversation. Teaching a language, and especially a foreign one, implies knowing techniques but also being able to assess the progress that has been made along a course by the student.

Among the possible aspects to be assessed, a teacher can pay attention to the results obtained at the end of the instruction process that in the oral skill means being able to speak accurately and fluently; in other words, being able to communicate. But in writing, it is not that simple because writing not only involves putting some words together and making phrases, clauses, simple or complex sentences, paragraphs or texts but also the application of



grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, coherence, cohesion, and other aspects that have to be known and internalized by students in order to apply them in a correct way and to transmit a message, which is the purpose of communication.

Knowing how to teach writing also requires knowing how to assess written production, and how to assess students' progress in an objective way. This is a complex process needs to define the parameters teachers will take into account to make an objective appraisal of students' production at any level. How can teachers make the assessing process more objective? Are students clearly aware of how teachers assess their work? This paper focused on identifying the criteria used by teachers to assess students' written production.

#### *Problem Statement*

In writing instruction, teachers deal with written production which is a post-instruction students' task; the parameters used by teachers to assess writing change depending on their preferences and the criteria they put together to assess the application of a learning process including the materials, strategies, techniques or procedures applied throughout that process.

Unfortunately, sometimes in written production, the criteria are not clearly established from the beginning by teachers, and students may not know the aspects they are going to be assessed in, and their performance can be affected. For that reason at the time of handing in a paper, a work or an assignment for writing classes, students are not sure of what they are supposed to do and apply the knowledge gotten through the learning process or instruction, but when they are assessed, they do not have a clear idea of which parameters were used by teachers to correct their work.

Not having any idea of the criteria may not only affect students' performance, but also when an assignment is graded, students want to know why they got that good, average, or bad grade, or if they have any corrections to do with the purpose of working on their weaknesses, if they have them, turning them into strengths, and applying some corrections to improve their performance in upcoming tasks or assignments. This makes evident that it is important to identify the aspects involved in evaluating written production in order to make the assessment a rather objective process with clear points of what students are supposed to do and what teachers will look for in a written assignment after instruction.

In conclusion, this work aimed at identifying the criteria used by teachers to assess written production in advanced levels at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño. This identification lead to suggest a grid that can contribute to enhance objectivity and reliability in assessment.

*Research question*

What are the criteria used by teachers to assess written production at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño?

*Justification*

Assessment is considered as an important part in the teaching and learning processes. Nunan (1999) expresses that it is possible to establish students' progress in an instructional process by assessing, it means by using tools and techniques that allow to get results, and their interpretation shows what students are capable to do or to develop.

The assessment provided by teachers is commonly formal (e.g., multiple choice, true or false, matching tests, etc.) which means that results are taken into account. It does not imply that the assessment of a process can only be done at the end of a whole course; it can be carried out along the process but always after partial or full instruction.

In writing, it is difficult to set up a formal test to assess students progress because it is not easy to cover all the aspects in a multiple choice test or a true/false test and even in a matching test, and measuring goals achievement is attached to teachers' criteria and what they expect from students' progress. In writing, any kind of written production plays the role of a test because through it students' progress can be assessed.

Establishing in advance the criteria taken into account may be useful to teachers because they know what they are assessing and looking for in a writing task or written work, and also to students because they will be informed of what they have to do in order to succeed in their writing tasks. According to Cohen (2001), teachers should know that introducing an assessment instrument needs to have an implicit notion of what is being measured and how it might be labeled.

Weir (1995 p. 25-26) states that being familiar with the aspects that are going to be assessed and how those aspects are going to be evaluated might motivate students and make tests less frightening to them.

Finding out through this research the criteria that teachers consider as important opened a possibility to create a grid to improve the process of defining what is

going to be assessed in a task and it allows teachers to tell students what they will be expecting or looking for in written production before an assignment has been handed in.

For that reason, this work attempted to identify the criteria used by teachers to assess written production at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño.

### *Objectives*

#### *General Objective*

To identify the criteria used by English teachers to assess written production at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño.

#### *Specific Objectives*

To analyze current literature on assessment to identify different sources of criteria for evaluating processes.

To analyze examples of international criteria in order to compare it to the criteria used by English teachers at the Linguistics and Languages Department.

To design and apply an instrument to collect information about criteria to assess written production.

To suggest a grid integrating teachers' criteria to assess written production.

The purpose of this research has been explained along this first chapter, but it is necessary to define the terms related to the topic. That can be seen in Chapter 2.

II. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

*Evaluation, Testing and Assessment*

In an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, assessment is present in English courses but sometimes it is mentioned without any distinction from evaluation or testing, while those terms have different meanings as it is explained next:

*Evaluation*

Genesee (2001) and Uhl Chamot & O'Malley (1994) state that evaluation is connected to the language programme, it consists on collecting information about teaching and learning in order to improve educational programmes and students' achievement. It is not only about what students learnt.

*Testing*

McNamara (2001) states that a test is a tool, an instrument to verify something about the knowledge in many fields including teaching and learning a language in which tests are commonly used without the idea of what they involve. "What is true on testing is also true on language testing".

Among the several possibilities of choosing one type of test to assess students there exist paper and pencil tests with fixed responses such as multiple choice tests, matching tests, etc. and tests related to the instructional process,

accumulating information through a course or at the end of it to measure if the progress made in the course corresponds with the goal of the learning process, those are achievement tests (McNamara, 2001).

#### *Assessment*

Nunan (1999) expresses that assessment refers to the instrument used to collect information about students' abilities and measures them according to the instruction given.

According to Brindley (2001, p.137): "Although testing and assessment are often used interchangeably, assessment refers to a variety of ways of collecting information on the learners' language ability or achievement, and testing refers to the tools used to collect the information."

One important part of knowing what assessment means is to consider the different tools and techniques used for that purpose. One of them is testing, which is common in English courses for assessing but its meaning is not the same.

Muñoz et al. (2006) suggest that the purpose of applying assessment in languages is being able to measure students' abilities within the communicative competence. For that reason it is important to define which aspects of those abilities are going to be taken into consideration and how the measurement of those aspects is going to be carried out.



In the same way, Muñoz, A. et al. (2006) in their research argue that besides grammar, language ability or communicative competence, writing refers to the accurate and fluent use of the language system in any situations but paying attention to the functions and the varieties of the language.

Brindley (2001) says that assessment refers to the ways in which information about learners' ability or achievement is collected. The collection of information can be carried out through different types of assessment depending on the aspects that are going to be assessed.

#### *Types of Assessment*

Once the difference among evaluation, assessment and testing was established, it is possible to continue explaining the types of assessment according to some authors' explanations.

Brindley (2001) gives a description of some types of assessment such as Proficiency assessment and Achievement assessment based on an explanation made by Hughes (1989) who refers to those types of assessment as follows:

**"Proficiency assessment** refers to the assessment of general language abilities acquired by the learner independent of a course of study..., **assessment of achievement** aims to establish what a student has learned in relation to a particular course or curriculum (thus frequently carried out by the teacher). Achievement assessment may be based either on the specific content of a course or on the course objectives. (Hughes, 1989. quoted in Brindley, G., 2001)

The author also describes formative assessment that is carried out by teachers during the learning process with the aim of using the results to improve instruction, and summative assessment which is carried out at the end of a course, for purposes of providing information on programme outcomes to educational authorities.

On the other hand, Beale (n.d.) says that Formative assessment indicates a learner's ongoing progress during a course. It need not involve testing under formal conditions, but may simply consist of various impressions and notes that the teacher takes while observing students performance. Summative Assessment is the formal measurement of learners' achievement at the end of a unit or a course of instruction. This involves matching the student's achievement with the stated objectives of the course.

Performance assessment refers to the process of evaluating a student's skills by asking the students to perform tasks that require those skills. The current testing system only taps a small part of what it means to know and carry out work in science, math, English or history, and consequently it drives the system to emphasize a small range of those abilities. Most of the tests used to assess students do not measure all the abilities related to a

specific skill or subject (Russ, n.d.; "Alternative Assessment").

Authentic assessment refers to the procedures for evaluating learners' progress using activities and tasks that integrate classroom goals, curricula and instruction in real life performance. It emphasizes the communicative meaningfulness of evaluation and the commitment to enhancing students learning (Kohonen, 1999).

Not only tests and tasks, but also what all kinds of assessment involve have to consider aspects such as validity, reliability and criteria in order to succeed in their purposes, for this reason a definition of each term is given in the next pages.

#### *Reliability*

Assessment refers to the tools and techniques used to measure what students know or have learnt through an instructional process or at the end of it. The results obtained from the application of those tools or techniques allow teachers, institutions and students to improve the teaching and learning processes.

Reliability consists on the fact that a tool can be used or applied to the same student at least two times and each time it shows similar results. Determining if a tool is

reliable depends on many factors such as students, rate, or administration of a tool or the tool itself.

According to Brown (2004), Student-related reliability is caused by psychological and physical factors, for example, anxiety, temporary illness, fatigue or just a bad day. Rater reliability occurs when two or more people give scores and the results obtained are inconsistent; this can happen because of possible lack of attention to scoring criteria, inexperience or inattention, in other words, human errors. "In tests of writing skills, rater reliability is particularly hard to achieve since writing proficiency involves numerous traits that are difficult to define." (Brown, J.D. 1991 quoted in Brown 2004 p. 21).

Tools administration reliability depends on the conditions in which assessment takes place, for example a test that is administered can present some unreliability caused by photocopying variations, the amount of light in different parts of the room, variations in temperature, and even the conditions of desks and chairs (Brown, 2004).

The author also states that the characteristics of a tool, for example a test that is too long and with very short time to be completed may cause fatigue to the test takers and they can give wrong answers to the last questions.

*Validity*

Validity refers to analyzing if a tool measures what it is supposed to measure. "If the inferences made from assessment results are appropriate, meaningful, and useful in terms of the purpose of the assessment" (Gronlund, 1998. quoted in Brown, 2004 p. 22).

Brown (2004) says that establishing validity for any skill is related to the analysis if the test or task examines the content or the knowledge of the course that is going to be assessed. The test and its validity may be associated to the identification of goals achievement or the level of competence.

"To measure writing ability, one might ask students to write as many words as they can in 15 minutes, then simply count the words for the final score. Such a test would be easy to administer (practical), and the scoring quite dependable (reliable). But it would not constitute a valid test of writing ability without some consideration of comprehensibility, rhetorical discourse elements, and organization of ideas, among other factors." (Brown, 2004 p.22).

Content validity refers to the possibility that a test or a task has for determining the achievement of a specific content. If a person's ability to communicate is going to be assessed by asking him/her to complete a cloze activity, then validity is not present because there is not communication in a cloze activity in which maybe vocabulary, listening, or spelling should be scored or analyzed (Cohen, 2001; Brown, 2004; Hamp-Lyons, 1994).

Face validity refers to the appearance of a test, if it looks like it measures what it is supposed to. It means that students or test takers look at the test and know that it is valid. This kind of validity does not depend on the assumptions of teachers thinking the test looks easy or difficult, nor the idea that the test assess what it has to or not, it depends on what the student or test takers perceive (Cohen, 2001; Brown, 2004; Hamp-Lyons, 1994).

Criterion related validity occurs when results, from two different tests given at the same time, are compared. One of the tests is a traditional design and the other one is a criterion related test, then a parallel is made by contrasting students performance with the traditional test and the test with some criterion measure (Cohen, 2001).

Hamp-Lyons (1994) says that criterion validity is complex and its complexity grows for some skills like writing, she explains as follows:

"As with all criterion validity studies, the key problem when we try to look at the criterion validity of a writing test is the identification of reasonable criterion measure against which the writing is to be compared" (Hamp-Lyons, 1994)

#### *Criterion*

In the Oxford dictionary (2004 p. 298), "criterion is defined as a standard or principle by which something is judged, or with the help of which a decision is made". In

teaching and learning languages the meaning of criterion, or its plural criteria, does not differ from its dictionary definition. In order to design those standards, schools and colleges around the world establish some criteria to make teaching and learning more homogeneous processes.

Criteria or standards help teachers and students to know what learners are supposed to achieve or to know through the instructional process or at the end of it. Criteria also help teachers, specifically in assessment, to quickly identify which of the course's goals are achieved and which are not. It makes it easier to know students' strengths and weaknesses based on the objectives established in a criteria reference.

At this point reliability, validity and criterion has been elucidated, now it is compulsory to continue defining other terms related to writing assessment such as writing conventions and scoring.

#### *Writing Assessment*

Learning a language involves the development of many skills, teachers and students have to be aware that all processes are related in order to achieve courses' goals, and denying one of them is to say that a cube only has one side.

Nowadays there are many theories, in which it is stated that only the process matters so this paper attempts to

clarify and to make the assessment a more objective process focused on the writing skill, and being more specific, focused on the assessment of written production.













Assessing writing or written production is a difficult task because there are two tendencies, which are: first, measuring writing as a general construct; and second, measuring it as a specific ability in context. Nevertheless, it does not matter which of them is chosen, assessment is meaningful when it is conducted and it has a purpose because information about the progress of the teaching and learning processes can be collected, and the assessment of writing is not the exception. In other words, assessing writing allows teachers and students being informed about the progress and the achievements obtained along a course and guiding students to improve their writing skills ("Writing Assessment", 1995).

#### *Writing conventions*

One way to assess students written production is by making corrections on the paper, by adding some symbols that refer specifically to the type of mistake done or by writing some comments or notes, at the end of the paper or at one side of the pages, about what it is considered as wrong or as not accurate to the writing purpose.



Example of writing conventions (Muñoz et al., 2006)

Convention		Type of Error	Examples of errors
	Spelling	Mechanics	<i>Francisco is a <u>bussines</u> man</i>
	Case - capital or small letter		<i>I 'm going to <u>argentina</u> next month</i>
	Punctuation		<i>The students completed their work.<u>they</u> went to the cafeteria</i>
	New Paragraph		<i>Ideas need to be separated into a new paragraph</i>
	Word choice	Vocabulary	<i>He's trying to make <u>friendship</u> with the new students</i>
	Word order (words, phrases, sentences)	Grammar	<i>The <u>old big</u> house.</i>
	Insert word		<i>She is very special person.</i>
	Omit word		<i>Britain exchanges products with <u>the</u> different countries.</i>
	Verb tense		<i>Students will <u>learning</u> English. I went to school yesterday. I <u>eat</u> lunch. After lunch, I played with my friends</i>
	Agreement		<i>The <u>people</u> in my class who <u>is</u> studying English do a lot of extra reading. <u>Mary and her sister wants</u> to go to the mall</i>
	Fragment sentence		<i>Even though he had the better arguments and was by far the more powerful speaker...</i>
	Coherence		Coherence & cohesion

The symbols allow teachers to correct specific mistakes in writing and give students clear directions of what needs to be changed, and also can be useful to determine the students' scores or grades.

*Scoring*

Within the scoring procedure, there are factors that need to be considered. Humans almost always design tests and tasks and even when errors can be avoided in the designing stage, in scoring, subjectivity and objectivity occur because scoring is a human procedure and it is attached to human error (Hamp-Lyons, 1994).

Cohen (2001 p. 517) says that "the objectivity of an item refers to the way it is scored". For example, a free composition may be more subjective in nature if the scorer is not looking at any one right answer, but rather the evidence of a series of features, including, creativity, style, cohesion, coherence, grammar and mechanics.

According to Muñoz et al. (2006) there are two types of rubrics that can be used to score writing, the first one is related to a variety of criteria that produces one score, it is called holistic rubric. The second one is an analytic rubric that takes into consideration all the components involved in writing and they are scored separately.

Brown (2004) states that holistic scoring gives a single score to an entire text that may be seen as reader's opinion. In contrast, analytical scoring takes the written text and divides it into many subcategories (e.g.,

organization, grammar, etc.) taking into account each of them.

Holistic scoring mentioned by Brown (2004 p.242) has advantages and disadvantages such as:

Advantages

- Fast evaluation,
- Relatively high rater reliability,
- The fact that scores represent "standards" that are easily interpreted by lay persons,
- The fact that scores tend to emphasize the writer's strengths (Cohen, 1994 p.135), and
- Applicability to writing across many different disciplines.

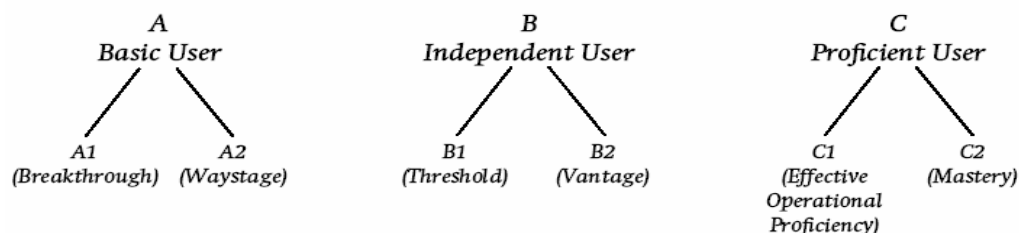
Disadvantages

- One score masks differences across the subskills within each score.
- No diagnosing information is available (no washback potential).
- The scale may not apply equally well to all genres of writing.
- Raters need to be extensively trained to use the scale accurately.

Analytic scoring permits students not only to be aware of their weaknesses to work on them, but also of their strengths to emphasize their performance on them. Brown and Bailey (1984) designed an analytical scoring scale that considers five categories ("organization, logical development of ideas, grammar, punctuation/spelling/mechanics, and style and quality of expression", see appendix A.), a description of five different levels for each category and a range from unacceptable to acceptable (Brown, 2004).

Uhl Chamot and O'Malley (1994) argue that Scoring criteria should always be determined in advance through the development of a scoring rubric. In *The Cognitive Academic Language Learning (CALLA) Handbook*, writing scores are given in a scale of 1-3; with 3 representing the highest scores and 1 representing the lowest ones. Papers scored at the 3 level might have mentioned at least two principles or concepts and included no factual errors. Scores of 2 might have one principle and no more than one factual error. A score of 1 can be assigned, inside this programme, to student's writing samples with no principles or concepts and two factual errors (see appendix B.).

The Common European Framework (CEF) (2001) establishes different levels (A; B; C) to assess students. The levels correspond to: A, Basic User, divided in A1 Breakthrough and A2 Waystage; B, Independent User, also divided in B1 Threshold and B2 Vantage; and C, Proficient User which is divided in C1 Effective Operational Proficiency and C2 Mastery.



Taken from "The Common European Framework..." (2001)

The levels from the CEF are based on what students can do with the language in a global way and according to the skills (see appendix C.).

In writing, specifically in written production, the CEF describes what students are able to do in each level. In overall written production, at A1 level students can write simple phrases and sentences, at A2 level students can do the same things from A1 but they also can link the phrases and sentences with simple connectors like "and", "but", and "because". At B1 level students can write short texts, at B2 level students are capable to write clear and detailed texts. At C1 level students can write well-structured texts of complex subjects, give reasons, expand information, etc., At C2 level students can write texts as they do in C1 level, but they also have an effective style and logical structures that help readers to find significant information. There also are levels referent to creative writing, reports and essays (see appendix D1. Overall Written Production).

Though it is important knowing what writing assessment, writing conventions, and scoring are, and also knowing some examples of international criteria, it is also important and necessary having a clear notion of writing itself and the aspects that are into it like the meaning and the form.

*Writing*

In many language programmes the importance of writing as a form of expression and as a means of communication is not given, but it is a way to communicate that allows writers to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings. It can also convince or persuade readers about the authors' opinion. Written language is more than symbols, it has "the capacity to transcend time and space" (White & Arndt, 1997 p.1).

Byrne (1988) says that writing is a combination of symbols that follows rules and structures in an organized way to produce words, sentences and coherent texts.

For Arapoff (1967), writing is more than a combination of symbols, it is a mixture of many aspects in the writers' background. In other words, writing is the organization of ideas to write a comprehensible and coherent text, it is also the expression of feelings, thoughts, experiences and situations acquired from the contact with the world.

The author also states that learners who write in a second or a foreign language follow the rules and structures from their mother tongue even when they try to write in the target language. That is why they make many mistakes.

Making reference to mistakes related to vocabulary, grammar and structures in the target language, Raimes (1983) wrote that in order to improve the students' creativity and imagination, those language aspects have to be reinforced.

*Main aspects in writing*

Writing has many components that can be classified in two general groups. The first one is the meaning, which involves the topic, theme, information, coherence and cohesion present in a text. In other words, it refers to the organization and content of a text. The second one is the form, which represents grammar, word order, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling (White & Arndt, 1997).

*Meaning in writing*

This group includes the aspects every text and written production need to make sense, to express a clear message. So it is necessary to explain how meaning can take place in writing.

Writing is not a natural skill like speaking or listening that are learnt in a natural way through experience and from the first years of humans' life. Writing has to be acquired and internalized through instruction and rules (Raimes, 1983).

For a speaker of any language, the intention is transmitted in an oral way helped by gestures, idioms and

expressions that make it easier to communicate it. In contrast, writers have to apply more structured and standard language because the intention in writing is defined by the text type (e.g., comparison, contrast, informative, etc.).

Description of types of writing: (Muñoz et al., 2006)

Discourse mode	Characteristics	Genre
<b>Narrative</b>	<b>Intent:</b> to tell what happens, real or imaginary; to put in a time sequence autobiographical Incident, story) Normally chronological (though sometimes uses flashbacks) A sequential presentation of the events that add up to a story	Journal entries, personal essays, biographies, Personal letters, poems
<b>Descriptive</b>	<b>Intent:</b> to describe in vivid sensory detail and to express individual feeling. Descriptive writing portrays people, places, things, moments and theories with enough vivid detail to help the reader create a mental picture of what is being written about.	Anecdotes, captions to cartoons/pictures, dialogues, folk tales, scripts, myths, short stories, letters.
<b>Expository</b>	<b>Intent:</b> to present basic information clearly (report of information) A process paper either tells the reader how to do something or describes how something is done.	Applications, business letters, commercials, directions, friendly notes, lecture notes & class notes, memos, news reports, postcard messages, summaries, research papers
<b>Persuasive /Argumentative</b>	<b>Intent:</b> to explain, analyze, to convince readers of a particular point. (evaluation, problem solution, speculation about causes or effects, interpretation)	Editorials, letters to the editor, reports, research papers, reviews, single paragraphs.



Meaning also depends on the theme or topic chosen to write about. Sometimes teachers specified the topic and some others, it is on students' selection. Nevertheless, specifications about the aspects students have to follow must be known in advance.

Coherence and cohesion are important parts in the meaning's role because any idea can be expressed without connection and order. According to the students' level, the connection and the order among ideas can vary. In the Common European Framework (2001) coherence and cohesion are related to what students can do. See the next box taken from the CEF (2001) for details about coherence and cohesion according to the levels established in the CEF.

	<b>COHERENCE AND COHESION</b>
<b>C2</b>	<i>Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Can use a variety of linking words efficiently to mark clearly the relationships between ideas.</i>
	<i>Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some 'jumpiness' in a long contribution.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Can use the most frequently occurring connectors to link simple sentences in order to tell a story or describe something as a simple list of points.</i>
	<i>Can link groups of words with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because'.</i>
<b>A1</b>	<i>Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like 'and' or 'then'.</i>

*Form in writing*

Writing needs to be a transparent process. It is important to realize the aspects that build a text to get that clearness.

Once the topic is selected and the text type is established the writing process appears. Students can use several techniques or strategies to start writing and when the pre-writing process is almost finished, students have to pay attention to the form, in other words, students have to be conscious of grammatical structures, vocabulary, linking words, conjunctions and punctuation (Gabrielatos, 2002).

The common European framework (2001) has a description divided into levels to specify the students' achievements related to vocabulary range, vocabulary control, grammatical accuracy and orthographic control.

Vocabulary range in level A refers to a basic vocabulary to use it in simple routines or communicative needs and to use simple words for coping or writing simple phrases. Level B refers to having enough vocabulary to talk or write about the students' everyday life avoiding frequent repetition. Level C is related to a broad vocabulary and the correct use of expressions and colloquialisms. The levels of vocabulary control are related to the appropriate use of vocabulary, the frequency of use and the frequency in which

errors occur. It is also important to take into account the Orthographic control, in which the knowledge of spelling, written forms, punctuation marks, etc. need to be handled by students according to the A, B, and C levels. (See the appendix E for details)

Some examples of international criteria have been explained through this second chapter as well as the themes related to this research. In chapter 3, it can be seen the way in which this work was carried out, the materials, the subjects and the instruments needed for this project.

III. CHAPTER 3: METHOD

*Design of the study*

This research was based on a descriptive design. For this reason, the data were collected through surveys, then they were analyzed to provide the results in a qualitative way and finally after the situation had been thoroughly described, a possible grid was suggested.

*Procedure*

This research was carried out at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño. A total population of 66 people answered a survey. This population was divided as follows: 30 students randomly chosen from two advanced semesters of the English and French program; 30 students from two advanced semesters of the English and Spanish program; and 6 English teachers.

The two surveys were specifically designed to obtain relevant information to this research. One was developed for being applied to students and the other one was developed for being applied to teachers.

The data collection was done through the surveys answered by the subjects. Once that process was completed, the organization, verification, systematization and analysis of the results took place. A comparison between students and

teachers' answers is made in order to verify the information.

#### *Subjects*

60 Students, who have theoretical and practical background about assessment and about writing, and 6 English teachers from the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño were the target population in this research. The students' sample was equally divided into four semesters. In other words, two last semesters from each programme and 15 students per semester.

#### *Materials*

In order to accomplish the objectives of this study, bibliography and different examples of international criteria to assess writing, photocopies, a computer, Internet resources, and the surveys designed to collect relevant information for this research were used.

#### *Instruments*

The instruments were the two kinds of surveys that were used to collect the data, one survey for students and another one for teachers.

#### *Data Gathering and Analysis*

In this research the data were collected through two structured surveys, one for 6 teachers, and other one for 60 students from the advanced semesters of the two programmes

in the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño. The subjects who answered the surveys have previous knowledge of assessment and of writing, which are the main topics in this research.

The surveys can be structured or unstructured. For this research purposes, structured surveys were used. According to Key (1997), structured questions allow to find out relevant information about subjects' feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attitudes related to a specific research topic.

Structured formats or close-ended questions have fixed alternatives, and subjects are asked to choose one of them. On the other hand, unstructured formats or open ended questions define few parameters to answer the questions and the responses obtained through this kind of format can vary from words to sentences, paragraphs or even an essay. However, it is important to know that surveys at some point are structured because they need to be planned in advance, it means before being distributed to the subjects ("Degree of Structure in Questionnaires and Interviews", n.d.)

These particular survey formats comprehended 12 close-ended questions for students, and a survey with 8 close-ended questions plus 2 open ended questions for teachers. From 1 to 8 the questions in both surveys have the

same content, but each item was oriented to get teachers' or students' perceptions. Question 9 - 12 in students' survey were different from questions 9 and 10 in the teachers' survey.

Item number one consisted on giving a grade from 1 to 12 according to the importance some aspects of writing have for students when they create a text to be graded, and for teachers when they examine students' written texts. Aspects graded with numbers 1-3 were considered as the least important, aspects with grades from 4-6 were considered as less important, aspects graded from 7-9 were categorized as important, and the aspects graded with numbers 10, 11, and 12 were considered as the most important ones.

The aspects related to meaning and form in writing for Item number one were spelling, topic, verb tense, vocabulary, linking words, connectors, organization of ideas (coherence), length of the paper, punctuation, connection between the ideas (cohesion), collocations, and the use of specific grammar structures.

From item number 2 to item number 8, four options of answers were given: A, O, SM, N. representing always, often, sometimes, and never respectively.

Item number 2 was related to the kind of mistakes teachers use to correct on a paper that has been handed in.

the descriptions of the type of mistakes were the 12 aspects mentioned in item number 1.

Item number 3 was designed to describe what teachers do when errors occur in writing. It means if they add notes or make some marks or symbols to correct writing errors.

Items 4 and 5 were intended to establish if teachers give in advance the parameters they take into account to assess written production, and if those parameters are clearly stated to students.

Item number 6 was pointed to find out if teachers score students' writing performance. On Item number 7, the aspects from item number 1 were taken into account in order to identify what teachers consider when grading students' writing performance. Item number 8 was related to the use of a defined criteria to assess written production.

Items 9, 10, and 11 in the students' survey were designed to collect information about what students look for when they get an assignment back. Finally item number 12 was connected to students' knowledge of symbols or marks used to correct errors in writing assignments.

Item number 9 in teachers' survey look for information about the use of some criteria in writing classes. And item number 10 searches for teachers' knowledge of some criteria for writing assessment. (See appendix F.)



The samples of both surveys were individually analyzed, and once the results of both surveys were established, teachers and students' answers were compared in order to corroborate the information obtained as it can be seen in the next chapter.

Both surveys were applied at the end of the calendar B semester of 2007 to the English and French, and English and Spanish programmes of the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño. All the subjects answered the same survey formats designed for each category (students or teachers) in order to get reliable results.

## IV. CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The initial objectives of analyzing current literature on assessment to identify different sources of criteria for evaluating processes, analyzing examples of international criteria, the design and application of an instrument to collect information about criteria to assess written production in the English programmes at the University of Nariño have, so far, been accomplished.

Now, the results obtained through the application of the instrument are presented with corresponding graphics and followed by a contrast between students' and teachers' answers as well as a comparison between those results and the criteria analyzed in the second chapter.

Before presenting the results one important limitation has to be mentioned. Regarding the teachers' sample, only 5 out of 6 teachers answered the survey; for this reason, to get the results analysis, the 5 teachers' answers were considered as the 100% percent. It means that 60 students and 5 teachers constituted the total sample.

*Results and Discussion*

Item number 1 described in the data gathering analysis showed that teachers consider as the most important aspects when examining a written text the ones related to meaning (coherence, cohesion and topic) with 53% from the total

options, the categories of important, less important and least important obtained marginally smaller percentages (7%, 13%, and 27% respectively). The teachers also consider as *important* the aspects related to form in writing (spelling, verb tense, vocabulary, etc.) with 31%. The less important and least important categories obtained 29% and 24% respectively, but the category of most important showed the lowest percentage with only a 16%. (See Figure 1)

As can be seen in figure 2, students' results showed that in item # 1 the aspects considered as the *most important* correspond to meaning in writing (44%). The *important* and *least important categories* presented 21% each, and only a 14% of the students categorized meaning in writing as *less important*. The form related aspects in writing are considered as less important by the students with 29% of the total, it is the highest percentage presented in comparison with the important and least important categories that obtained 26% each, and the *most important* category with the lowest percentage from all categories (19%).

From the results above mentioned it is possible to say that there is agreement between teachers and students regarding the idea that the aspects involved in meaning are the most important for writing and for assessing writing.

Conversely, form was considered as important by teachers, but students consider it as less important than the other aspects involved in writing. This divergence may cause problems in assessment since learners might not pay attention to form in writing.

Figure 1. Importance of Meaning and Form for Teachers in writing assessment

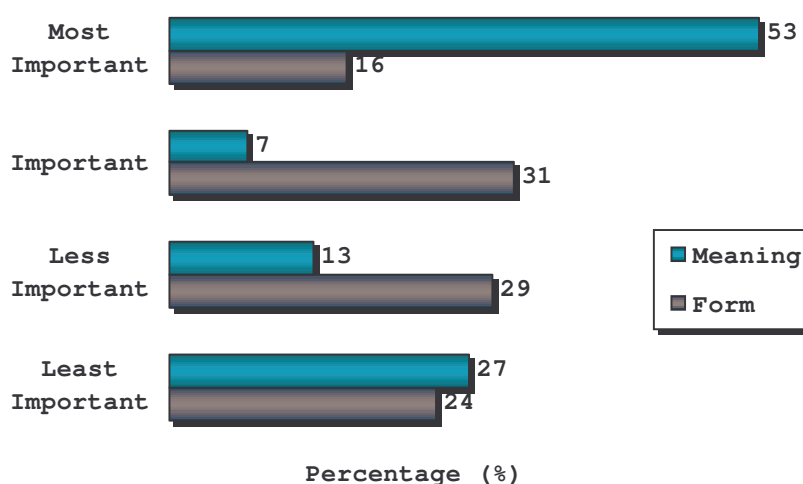
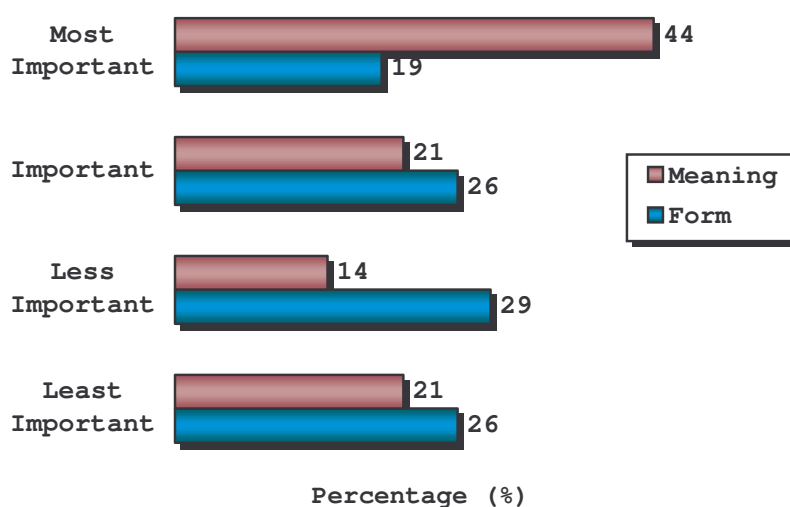


Figure 2. Importance of Meaning and Form for Students in writing



In 1984, Brown & Bailey considered as important aspects in writing related to organization, logical development of ideas, grammar, punctuation, spelling and mechanics, style and quality of expression. For each one they give a scale to measure the way in which each one occurs (Brown, 2004). They do not specify if one of them is more important than the others, but rate them according to the level in: college-level work, unacceptable-not, adequate to fair, good to adequate, and excellent to good (from the lowest to the highest respectively). On the other hand, the CALLA Handbook does not specify any of the aspects considered as important to write or to assess written production, it only gives a holistic concept without paying attention to a particular aspect (see appendix B).

Item number 2 was related to error correction. The same question about frequency with four alternatives (always, often, sometimes, never) was asked for each aspect of meaning and form. The results obtained from teachers' answers showed that the aspects they always take into account to correct written production are related to letter d. vocabulary and letter g. organization of the ideas with 80% each. These two options got the highest percentage. Then the next letters with significant percentages were a., c., and j. (spelling, verb tense, connection between ideas

respectively) with 60% each. Letter e. (linking words) and letter K. (collocations) were established as *often* corrected with 60%. The other letters did not obtain significant percentages among the alternatives of answer. It is necessary to mention that the teachers did not choose the *never* category as an answer to any question from this item. This means that all the aspects are corrected to some extent, even though some of them are more frequently corrected than the others. (see Figure 3)

Figure 4. represents the results from students' answers. Those results showed that spelling (letter a.) is the aspect with the highest percentage among all the options, it obtained 58% in the *always* category followed by letters c. (verb tense) 53% and g. (organization of ideas) 48% in the same category. It means students perceive teachers take more into account mistakes linked to these three aspects than the others that obtained from 8% to 40%. In the *often* category, letter l. (use of specific grammar structures) got 50%, the other aspects were under this percentage. For the *sometimes* category, letter k. (collocations) obtained 52% and the other options did not get superior percentages. The *never* category did not show significant differences in the results. All the aspects got percentages under the 30%.

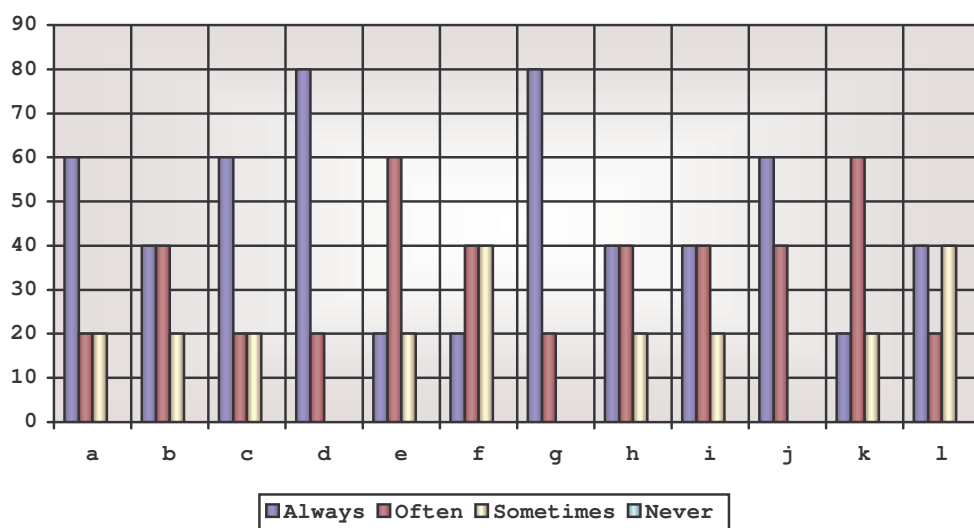
A comparison between students and teachers' results showed that even when teachers affirmed to correct more frequently

vocabulary and the organization of the ideas than the other aspects, students affirmed that teachers correct more frequently spelling, and the organization of the ideas was in third place. There is a significant difference between what teachers said they correct and what students perceive. It is possible to say that at some point the aspects considered as important by teachers are not clear for students, but this statement is supported by the answers from items 4 and 5. The importance of feedback is explained next.

White and Arndt (1997) express that error correction may focus on all the aspects involved in writing, but sometimes students cannot deal with all the things to correct at the same time. However, error correction that focuses only on one part of the language like grammar may interfere with meaning, for this reason two criteria may be used: one related to the communicative effect (topic, coherence, cohesion, clearness), and another that takes into account only the errors that occur more frequently.

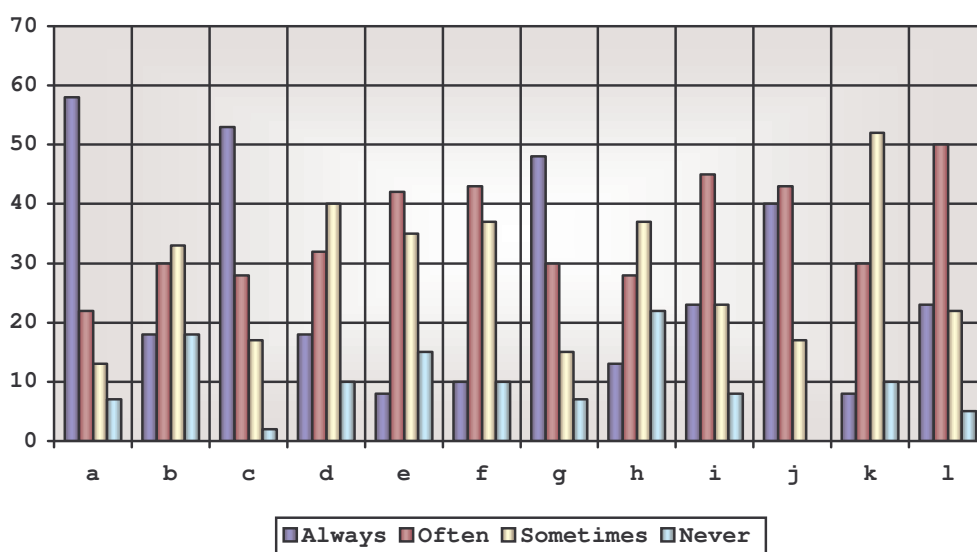
Fathman and Whalley (1994 p. 16-18) stated that Written feedback that is focused only on grammar make students pay more attention to form, while teachers' comments on content focused students on the *content* of their writing. And Students who receive feedback on both grammar and content "improve their grammar accuracy and improve the content on their writing".

Figure 3. Frequency of Error Correction



Figures 3 and 4. Error Correction. Each letter corresponds to an aspect linked to the type of error - letter a. spelling, b. topic, c. verb tense, d. vocabulary, e. linking words, f. connectors, g. organization of ideas, h. length of the paper, i. punctuation, j. connection between the ideas, k. collocations, l. use of specific grammar structures.

Figure 4. Students' Perception of the Frequency of Error Correction.





For question or item number 3, what teachers do when error occurs was evaluated. Although the results showed that teachers *always* (100%) make marks or symbols related to the type of error and 60% add notes on the side and at the end of a paper, 55% of students perceive that teachers *always* make symbols and marks according to the type of error; 42% of students affirmed that teachers *sometimes* add notes at the end of a paper and 38% add them *sometimes* on the side. Those were the highest percentages in teachers and students answers.

These results expose a significant difference between the subjects' answers demonstrating that students are not getting the corrections teachers declared to make and students expect from them. This affirmation is corroborated by the answers obtained in item number 12 from students surveys in which 80% of them stated to know the symbols and marks related to error correction in writing, for this reason the possibility of sustaining that students probably do not know the corrections is dismissed.

Fathman and Whalley (1994) found that students, whose errors are marked and receive some general comments, improve significantly their grammar and content in the next composition. This demonstrated that adding some notes or

making some marks to highlight students errors help them to improve their written production.

Items 4, 5 and 6 from teachers and students' answers are shown in figures number 5 and 6 respectively. In item number 4 related to give in advance the parameters to assess students' written production, teachers affirmed in a 100% to always give them. However, the answers given by the students to the same question revealed that even when teachers said they always give the parameters in advance, just a 38% of students perceive that frequency. Also a 38% of the students said teachers *often* give the parameters in advance. These two options got the highest percentage. Less than the fifth part of the students affirmed that teachers *sometimes* give the parameters in advance, and only 3% give the option *never* as the answer to the same question.

For item number 5 that was about the clarity in the parameters when teachers state them, the answers obtained from teachers showed that an 80% consider they *always* give the parameters in a clear way. And 20% of teachers said that the parameters are *often* clearly stated. To this item, students' answers revealed that a 48% consider the parameters are *often* clear, a 33% consider they are *always* clear, and an 18% consider that *sometimes* they are clearly stated.

The differences between students and teachers' answers demonstrate that even when teachers think what they said or stated is clear, students do not perceive or receive the message with the same clarity.

At any University, giving grades is inevitable because it is a requirement, even though grading is not compulsory in assessment because it is a process that can be carried out not only by teachers but also by students themselves, teachers have to make that grading process and it is always attached to assessment. For that reason it was important to know the frequency in which teachers score students' written performance. This was related to item number 6 that in reference to teachers' answers showed that in a 40% they *always* give scores, as well as in a 40% they *often* score students' performance. 20% of teachers said they sometimes score them.

The results obtained from item number 6 in students' answers showed that in a 55% their written production is *often* scored. 38% of students affirmed their work is *always* scored. And seven percent (7%) of them stated that teachers *sometimes* score written production.

The results from teachers and students are the evidence that students' performance in writing can be graded or scored according to teachers' needs or according to the

requirements of any Educational programme or Institution, but assessment is a process that has to be present whether or not it is graded. However, the frequency in which teachers grade or score students' work is more important for students because they affirmed they pay attention to the corrections made by teachers and the grade they gave them but with a little more emphasis on grades. This affirmation is explained in the next pages in results of items 9, 10, and 11 from students' survey.

Figure 5. Statement, Clarity and Scoring of Parameters

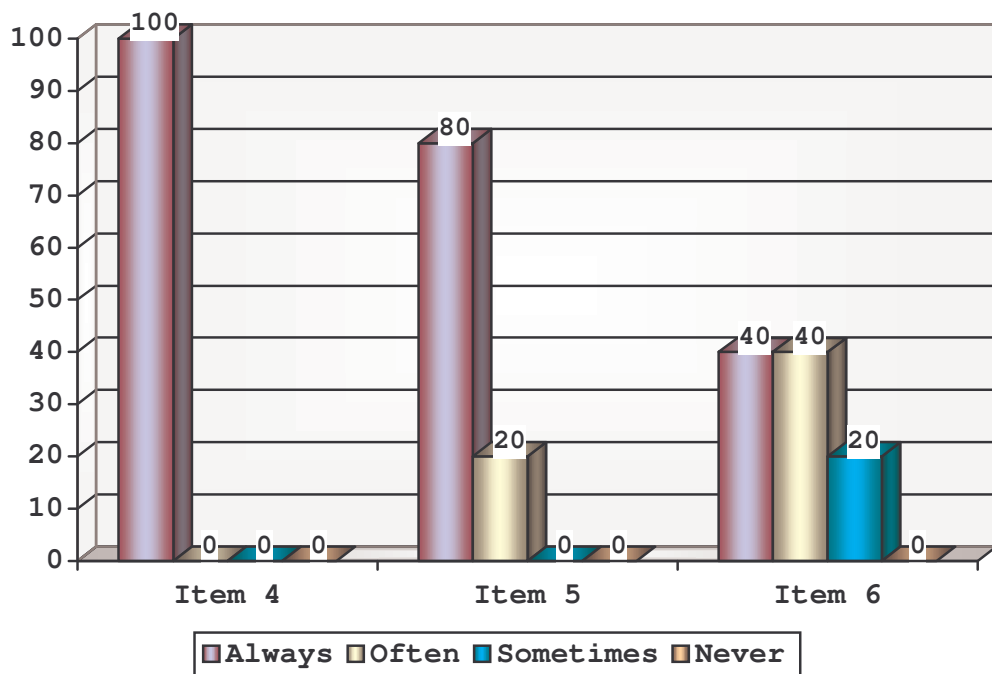
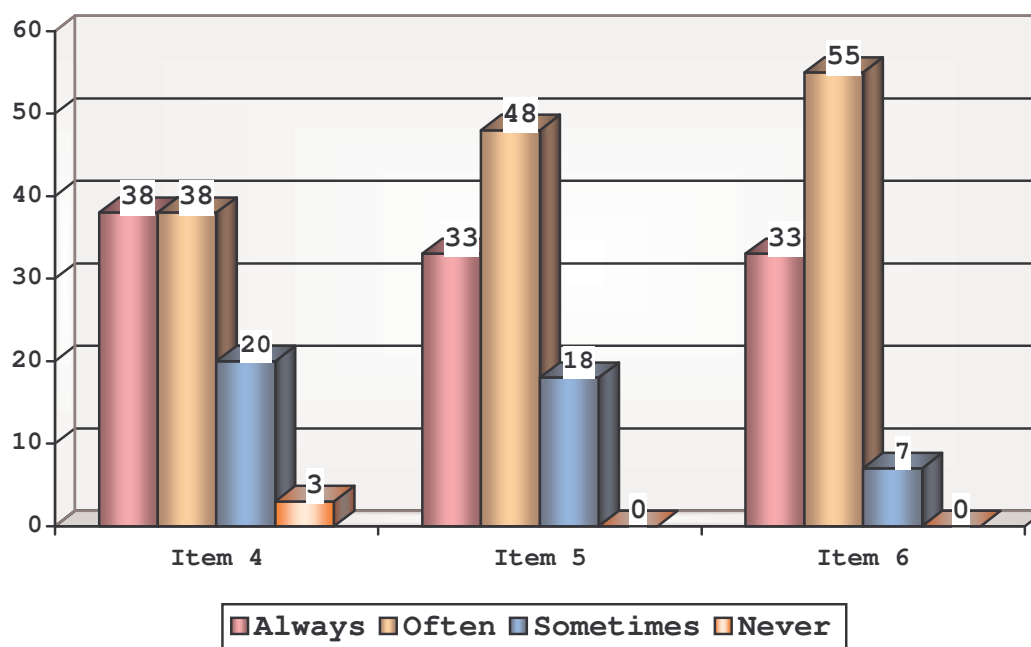


Figure 6. Students' Perception of the Statement, Clarity and Scoring of Parameters



Once established that teachers grade or score students' performance at some time, it was important to find out which parameters are taken into account by teachers when that scoring process is carried out. That was measured through item number 7. In this item teachers' answers were as follows: coherence and cohesion obtained the highest percentage (100% each) in the *always* category compared to the other letters in the four categories (*always*, *often*, *sometimes*, *never*), the next significant percentage was 80% in the same category for letters b., and j. (text relation to the topic and collocations). Letters a. spelling, e.

vocabulary according to the topic, g. length of the paper, h. punctuation, and k. use of specific grammar structures, obtained 60% the highest percentage for each one also in the *always* category. For letter d. (vocabulary according to the type of text) the highest percentage was 60% in the *often* category. Finally letter c. (verb tense) obtained 40% as its highest percentage in both *always* and *sometimes* categories. This can be seen in figure 7.

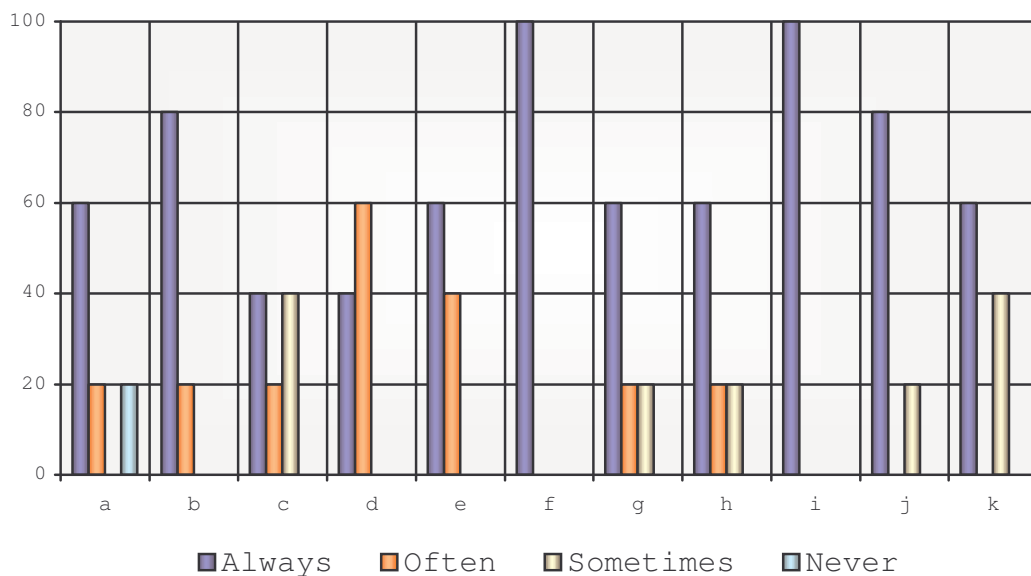
Students' results for item number 7 showed that letters a. and b. (spelling and text relation to the topic) are *often* taken into account to grade their work. These two aspects obtained the highest percentage in comparison to the other letters in the four categories (52% each). They also affirmed, with percentages near to the 50%, that the teachers *always* look for the length of the paper and collocations to give a grade (letters f, i). For letter c, d, e, g, h, j, and k, the highest percentages were for the *often* category with an average of 43.6% among them. This can be observed on figure 8.

Through a comparison among these results from item number 7, it can be noticed that even when the total of the teachers said they always pay attention to coherence and cohesion over all the other aspects to give a grade, less than half of the students perceive it that way. But it is

important to establish that in students' results almost all of the aspects got between 40% and 50% as the highest percentages which were in the *often* category. Only letters a and b obtained 52% each in the same category of the average and being the last two the highest among all the aspects teachers take into account to give a grade.

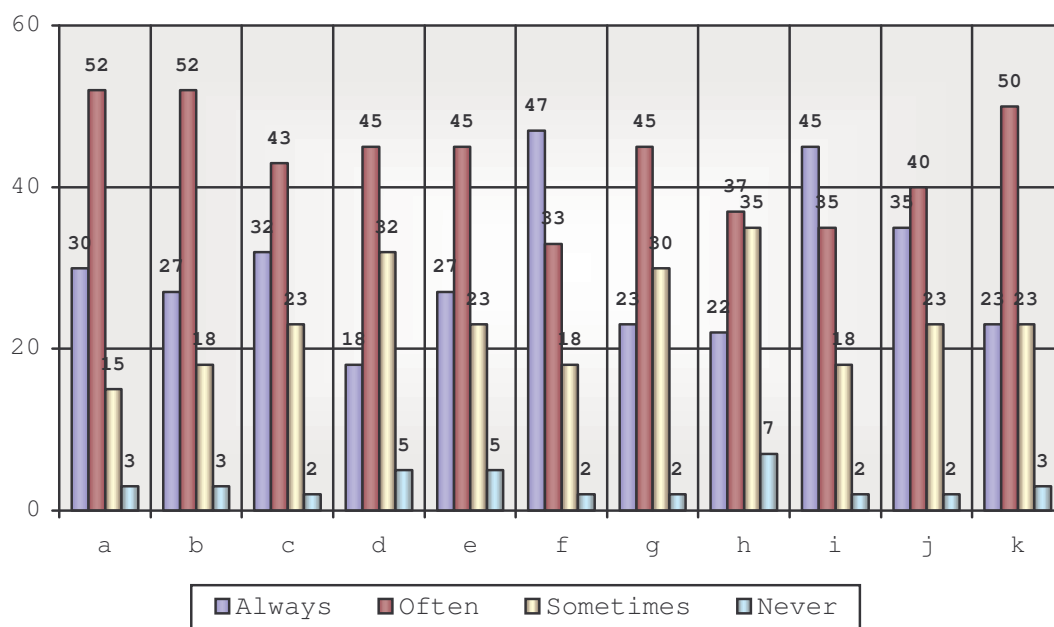
Brown (2004) in his Test of Written English Scoring Guide, states a holistic evaluation for writing. It is divided in points from 0-6, statements related to topic, organization and development, supporting ideas, grammatical and lexical correctness, define the score points.

Figure 7. Criteria Considered as Important to Grade Writing Performance



Letters in figures 7 and 8 correspond to: a. spelling, b. text' relation to the topic, c. verb tense, d. vocabulary, e. linking words, f. cohesion, g. length of the paper, h. punctuation, i. Coherence, J. collocations, k. use of specific grammar structures.

Figure 8. Students' Perception of Criteria Considered Important to Grade Writing Performance



Item number 8 was related to the use of defined criteria to score or grade written production. To this item most of the teachers answered they *always* used defined criteria to give grades, and only 20% affirmed never to use one. On the other hand, students' answers to this item showed that even though teachers use defined criteria the



frequency in which criteria are used oscillates from "sometimes" to "always" with percentages under the 40% as it can be noticed in figures 9 and 10.

Figure 9. Use of Defined Criteria to Score or Grade Writing Performance

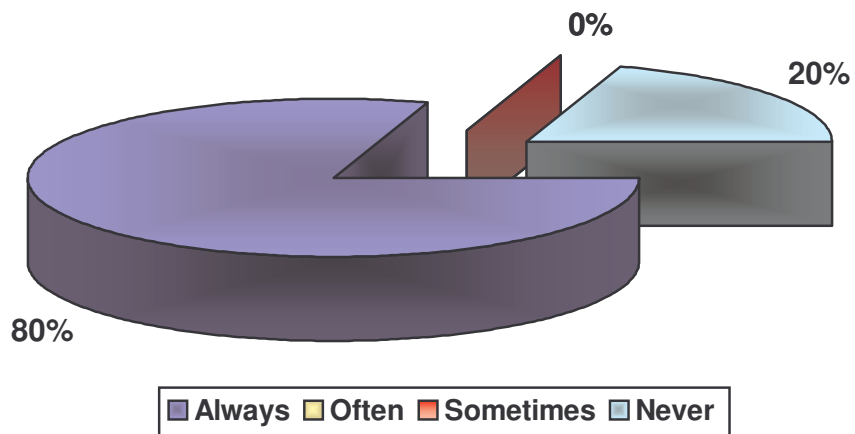
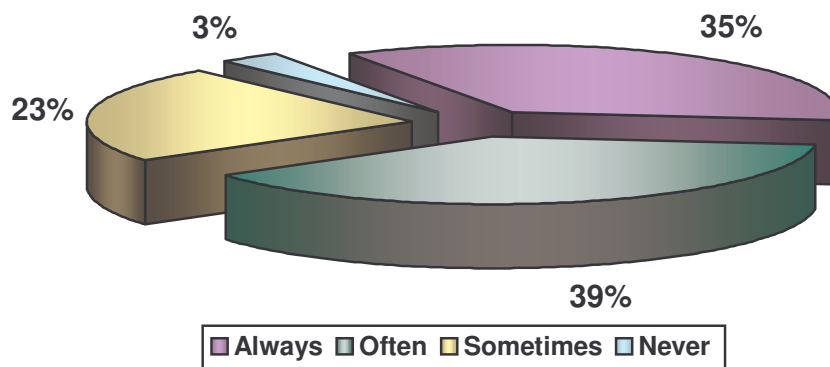
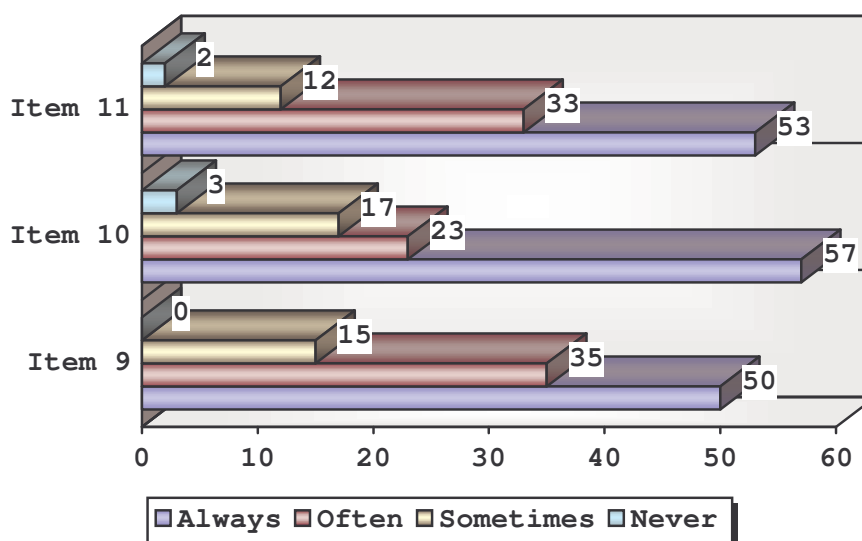


Figure 10. Students' Perception of the Use of Defined Criteria to Score or Grade Writing Performance.



Items 9, 10, and 11 from students' survey pointed at collecting information about what students look for when they get back an assignment (see figure 11). In item number 9, students' results showed that half of the students always pay attention to teachers' corrections to improve their writing, and the other half of the students also pay attention to them but not in the same frequency. To item number 10, students affirmed that 97% pay attention to the grades and only a 3% do not pay attention to them. From that 97%, 57% always look for grades and the others do it in a lower frequency. In item number 11, related to both corrections and grades, the results showed the highest percentage in the *always* category and it is equal to the average of the highest percentages in items 9 and 10; this confirms the answers given by the students to these two items. This also corroborates the affirmation made in the discussion of item number 6 about the importance that grades and corrections have for students.

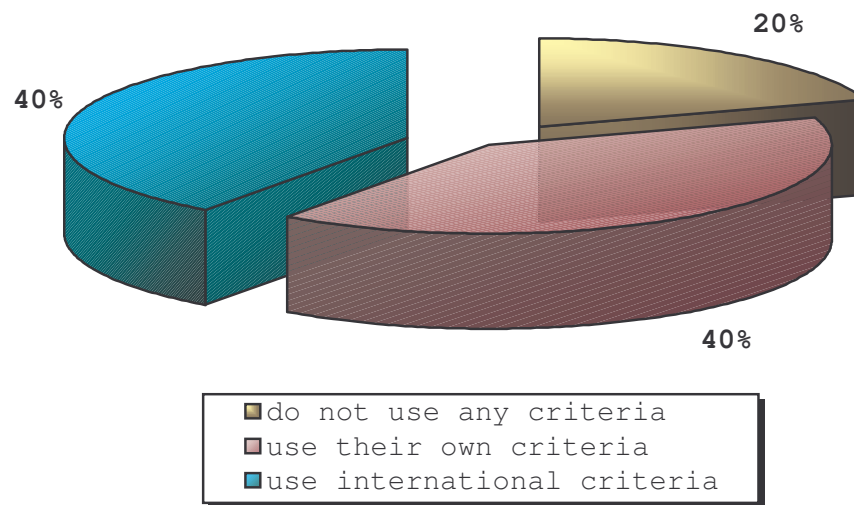
Figure 11. Students' attention to Teachers' corrections and Grades.



The last two items in the teachers' survey were open questions and the answers were as follows:

Item number 9 in the teachers' survey looked for information about the use of some criteria to assess writing. The answers suggest that 2/5 of teachers use an international criteria design and they specified it by using "Symbols for self assessment length" and "Symbols by Oyama". The other 40% of the teachers affirmed to use their own criteria design, and only 1/5 of all teachers surveyed said not to use any criteria to assess writing.

Figure 12. The Use of Criteria to Assess Written Production



Item number 10 looked for information about the criteria known by teachers. The results showed that the 60% of the teachers know some kinds of criteria such as "Criteria by Oyama", "Brown 2004", and "the Common European Framework". 20% of the teachers affirmed not to know any criteria, and the last 20% mentioned some aspects related to writing like coherence and cohesion, but any other type of criteria was not mentioned.

This demonstrates that even when 80% of teachers affirmed in item 8 to use defined criteria all of the times, only 60% know what criteria they use and mentioned names of international criteria as a guide to assess. the other teachers just mentioned isolated aspects they consider as important to that purpose.

Once the results and the discussion were presented, it is possible to mention some limitations that occurred through the development of this work, it is also possible make pertinent conclusions related to the objectives of this research, and give some recommendations for further researches on this field as well as recommendations about how writing can be assessed, and how criteria can be set up. These important aspects are exposed and explained in chapter number 5.

## V. CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Before presenting all the aspects that concern to this chapter, it needs to be mentioned that four different semesters were interviewed and that no significant differences among them were found. For this reason the results, the discussion and the conclusions were made considering the 60 students from the four semesters as just one group.

During the development of this research only one limitation can be mentioned and it was that the teachers' sample at the beginning was composed by 6 teachers but one of them did not fill in the survey, and the sample had to be reconsidered with five teachers as the new total for the statistics and the analysis. No limitations related to the materials, the literature review or other aspects involved in this research can be mentioned. The bibliographical resources were enough and they were available when they were needed. Now we can continue with the conclusions.

The most important conclusion is that almost all the teachers, at some point, use some criteria related to form and meaning aspects. This means that teachers are conscious that in the process of learning second language writing it is important to be accurate, but it is also necessary to express some relevant ideas in the written text, something

that goes beyond the mechanical exercise of writing. Within the criteria used, it was observed that teachers pay more attention to coherence and cohesion. More than half of them consider meaning as important in writing assessment but according to students' opinion, when teachers *read* and *correct* the assignments, mistakes related to spelling and verb tense are more frequently corrected. This shows that students perceive feedback differently from teachers, although it was also mentioned that the organization of the ideas is taken into account so students know that they will be assessed on this aspect as well. It is possible to say that the criteria used by teachers at the Linguistics and Languages Department of the University of Nariño is related to meaning, but for grading purposes teachers pay attention to aspects related to form like spelling, collocations, linking words, length of the paper, punctuation and the use of specific grammar structures. A suggestion that can be derived from this conclusion is that teachers must let students know about the aspects that will be assessed before hand so that the parameters are clear for students and their production is oriented towards these parameters.

Meaning and Form have to work together to obtain a good performance in writing, especially when the future teachers will need to teach writing and they will have to write

monographs, articles or other academic documents. The revision of grammar permits that the ideas are well formulated and the revision of the organization, coherence and cohesion makes it possible to understand the message those ideas attempt to express.

From the first conclusion and as a complement of it, another one can be drawn. There is a difference between what teachers affirmed to correct and what students perceive, this happens because the criteria are not clearly established and they are not given in advance to students all the times as it was revealed by the instruments applied on this research.

If it is made a comparison between the criteria used by teachers and the criteria suggested by the authors mentioned in the literature review, it can be said that the aspects taken into account by teachers to assess writing are not enough, writing integrates many aspects that need to be taken into account and maybe if they are classified and organized, they can be stated and assessed in a clearest way.

Teachers need to be more specific about the aspects students are going to be assessed in, and students must be aware of them in advance. The criteria need to be more reliable to reduce subjectivity on teachers' appreciation of



the written production, especially when grading is present in the assessment process because all the aspects are important.

Brown (2004), Uhl Chamot and O'Malley (1994), and the Common European Framework (2001) propose many ways to set up writing criteria. They are useful guides for teachers who want to improve the assessment process on this field. Adapting or applying, according to teachers and students' needs, one or all the examples of criteria these authors give could be recommended for further research in order to establish the effectiveness of them and to find out their advantages or/and disadvantages.

It is recommended to students and teachers to work together on setting up the criteria that are going to be assessed in order to avoid a lack of validity and reliability. The results, corrections or grades students get help and encourage them to improve their writing in upcoming papers. For that reason teachers must be aware that the assessment they carry out needs to be clear and to measure what it is supposed to.

Another important conclusion that can be made is that the notes and the symbols used by teachers to highlight students' mistakes do not occur with the frequency teachers declared. The way in which those corrections could be done

have to be understandable because it lets students improve their writing and some times improve their grades too.

The creation of a tool that allows teachers to give the criteria in advance, and allows students to know the aspects that are going to be measured by teachers could reduce and probably eliminate the subjectivity present in writing assessment, it is also a way to assess writing. For this reason and, according to the literature review, it is possible to suggest a writing assessment grid formulated as a result of this research, it integrates the aspects considered as important for teachers and students, as well as the information from Brown (2004), and the Common European Framework (2001)

The main objective of the grid is to help teachers to decide which aspects of writing are going to assess. The grid has five categories to assess that were taken from Brown (2004) (organization; development of ideas; grammar, punctuation, spelling and mechanics; and style and quality of expression), each category has a concept that integrates the aspects involved on them, the concepts are in terms of what students can do at a determined level. Those concepts were taken from the Common European Framework (2001), level C and C1 that represents what students from advanced semesters at the university can do in writing. Nevertheless,

the concepts can vary according to teachers needs, for example: if Hi-school teachers want to apply the grid, they could change the actual concepts on it for the ones that correspond to their students' level (B, B1, A, or A1).

The grid also offers the possibility of using it to state criteria in advance to students only for assessment and also for grading purposes. Even though using a grid to grade students' performance in writing can be time consuming, it can be more rewarding and effective than grading with no set parameters. This could a topic for further research. Actually, once teachers internalize the way in which this grid or a grid created by them is used, the time they would spend in grading written compositions may decrease.

All the categories can be graded individually and if teachers want to pay more attention to one or two of them, a percentage can be settled in a rectangle that is on the left of each category according to teachers' needs or preferences, the important fact is that the percentages need to be given with the criteria in advance. On the right of the concepts teachers can give the grades from 1-5 by marking an "X" in front of each number, and grades like 1,1 or 2,5 can be given and they have to be written in front of the "other" option.

To give grades, teachers should use the following scale: very good to excellent (4,6 - 5); adequate to good (3,6 - 4,5); acceptable (3 - 3,5); fair (2 - 2,9); needs improvement (0,1 - 1,9); students who do not turn in the assignment (0.0).

The final grade to the paper or assignment is the addition of the individual grades (multiplication of each category percentage by its grade). If each category has the same value or percentage, then the final grade is the average from the individual ones. The format of this grid can be seen in the Appendix G.

The teachers who want to add some observations to the grid or the criteria can write them on the *Observations* space. This grid makes it possible to improve writing assessment in terms of validity and reliability and it is known that students who know the terms in which they are assessed also improve their performance (Fathman and Whalley, 1994).

Finally, it is important to say that Writing has importance in itself and more research needs to be made in this field. The oral proficiency and accuracy are not enough to tell that someone can deal or knows a language. One topic for further research may be the use of a grid such as the one suggested on this paper or of another tool that allows

teachers to improve the writing teaching and learning processes.

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## APPENDIX A. Brown: Test of Written English Scoring Guide

Table 9.1. Test of Written English Scoring Guide

<b>6</b>	<p><b>Demonstrates clear competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels, though it may have occasional errors.</b></p> <p><i>A paper in this category</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effectively addresses the writing task.</li> <li>• is well organized and well developed.</li> <li>• uses clearly appropriate details to support a thesis or illustrate ideas.</li> <li>• displays consistent facility in the use of language.</li> <li>• demonstrates syntactic variety and appropriate word choice.</li> </ul>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Demonstrates competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels, though it will probably have occasional errors.</b></p> <p><i>A paper in this category</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may address some parts of the task more effectively than others.</li> <li>• is generally well organized and developed.</li> <li>• uses details to support a thesis or illustrate an idea.</li> <li>• displays facility in the use of language.</li> <li>• demonstrates some syntactic variety and range of vocabulary.</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Demonstrates minimal competence in writing on both the rhetorical and syntactic levels.</b></p> <p><i>A paper in this category</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• addresses the writing topic adequately but may slight parts of the task.</li> <li>• is adequately organized and developed.</li> <li>• uses some details to support a thesis or illustrate an idea.</li> <li>• demonstrates adequate but possibly inconsistent facility with syntax and usage.</li> <li>• may contain some errors that occasionally obscure meaning.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Demonstrates some developing competence in writing, but it remains flawed on either the rhetorical or syntactic level, or both.</b></p> <p><i>A paper in this category may reveal one or more of the following weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inadequate organization or development</li> <li>• inappropriate or insufficient details to support or illustrate generalizations</li> <li>• a noticeably inappropriate choice of words or word forms</li> <li>• an accumulation of errors in sentence structure and/or usage.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Suggests incompetence in writing.</b></p> <p><i>A paper in this category is seriously flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• serious disorganization or underdevelopment</li> <li>• little or no detail, or irrelevant specifics</li> <li>• serious and frequent errors in sentence structure or usage</li> <li>• serious problems with focus.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Demonstrates incompetence in writing.</b></p> <p><i>A paper in this category</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be incoherent.</li> <li>• may be undeveloped.</li> <li>• may contain severe and persistent writing errors.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<p>A paper is rated 0 if it contains no response, merely copies the topic, is off-topic, is written in a foreign language, or consists only of keystroke characters.</p>

APPENDIX A1. Brown: Analytic Scale for Rating Composition

Tasks (Brown & Bailey, 1984, pp. 39 - 41)

Table 9.2. Analytic scale for rating composition tasks (Brown & Bailey, 1984, pp. 39-41)

	20-18	17-15	14-12	11-6	5-1
	Excellent to Good	Good to Adequate	Adequate to Fair	Unacceptable-not college-level work	Unacceptable-not college-level work
<b>I. Organization: Introduction, Body, and Conclusion</b>	Appropriate title, effective introductory paragraph, topic is stated, leads to body; transitional expressions used; arrangement of material shows plan (could be outlined by reader); supporting evidence given for generalizations; conclusion logical and complete	Adequate title, introduction, and conclusion; body of essay is acceptable, but some evidence may be lacking, some ideas aren't fully developed; sequence is logical but transitional expressions may be absent or misused	Mediocre or scant introduction or conclusion; problems with the order of ideas in body; the generalizations may not be fully supported by the evidence given; problems of organization interfere	Shaky or minimally recognizable introduction; organization can barely be seen; severe problems with ordering of ideas; lack of supporting evidence; conclusion weak or illogical; inadequate effort at organization	Absence of introduction or conclusion; no apparent organization of body; severe lack of supporting evidence; writer has not made any effort to organize the composition (could not be outlined by reader)
<b>II. Logical development of ideas: Content</b>	Essay addresses the assigned topic; the ideas are concrete and thoroughly developed; no extraneous material; essay reflects thought	Essay addresses the issues but misses some points; ideas could be more fully developed; some extraneous material is present	Development of ideas not complete or essay is somewhat off the topic; paragraphs aren't divided exactly right	Ideas incomplete; essay does not reflect careful thinking or was hurriedly written; inadequate effort in area of content	Essay is completely inadequate and does not reflect college-level work; no apparent effort to consider the topic carefully

<p><b>III. Grammar</b></p>	<p>Native-like fluency in English grammar; correct use of relative clauses, prepositions, modals, articles, verb forms, and tense sequencing; no fragments or run-on sentences</p>	<p>Advanced proficiency in English grammar; some grammar problems don't influence communication, although the reader is aware of them; no fragments or run-on sentences</p>	<p>Ideas are getting through to the reader, but grammar problems are apparent and have a negative effect on communication; run-on sentences or fragments present.</p>	<p>Numerous serious grammar problems interfere with the communication of the writer's ideas; grammar review of some areas clearly needed; difficult to read sentences</p>	<p>Severe grammar problems interfere greatly with the message; reader can't understand what the writer was trying to say; unintelligible sentence structure</p>
<p><b>IV. Punctuation, spelling, and mechanics</b></p>	<p>Correct use of English writing conventions: left and right margins, all needed capitals, paragraphs indented, punctuation and spelling; very neat</p>	<p>Some problems with writing conventions or punctuation; occasional spelling errors; left margin correct; paper is neat and legible</p>	<p>Uses general writing conventions but has errors; spelling problems distract reader; punctuation errors interfere with ideas</p>	<p>Serious problems with format of paper; parts of essay not legible; errors in sentence punctuation and final punctuation; unacceptable to educated readers</p>	<p>Complete disregard for English writing conventions; paper illegible; obvious capitals missing; severe margins, severe spelling problems</p>
<p><b>V. Style and quality of expression</b></p>	<p>Precise vocabulary usage; use of parallel structures; concise; register good</p>	<p>Attempts variety; good vocabulary; not wordy; register OK; style fairly concise</p>	<p>Some vocabulary misused; lacks awareness of register; may be too wordy</p>	<p>Poor expression of ideas; problems in vocabulary; lacks variety of structure</p>	<p>Inappropriate use of vocabulary; no concept of register or sentence variety</p>

APPENDIX B. CALLA Handbook: Criteria for Scoring a Writing Sample.

<b>CRITERIA FOR SCORING A WRITING SAMPLE</b>	
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>	Relative to the writing of a native speaker of English of the same age, how smoothly do the thoughts in the written passage flow? This characteristic may be applied with more validity to the writing of students above the sixth grade. This criterion can be eliminated from the evaluation of samples from younger students.
<i>Advanced:</i>	Fluent expressions, ideas clearly stated/support, succinct, well-organized, logical, sequencing, cohesive.
<i>Intermediate:</i>	Somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand out, limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing.
<i>High Beginning:</i>	Non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lacks logical sequencing and development.
<i>Low Beginning:</i>	Does not communicate, no organization, OR not enough to evaluate.
<b>VOCABULARY AND WORD FORMS:</b>	Relative to the writing of a native speaker of English of the same age, how adequate is the range of words used in the passage?
<i>Advanced:</i>	Sophisticated range, effective word/idiom choice and usage, word form mastery.
<i>Intermediate:</i>	Adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage, but <i>meaning not obscured</i> .
<i>Beginning:</i>	Essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form, OR not enough to evaluate.
<b>LANGUAGE USE:</b>	Relative to the writing of a native speaker of English of the same age, how adequate are the grammatical structures used by the student?
<i>Advanced:</i>	Effective complex constructions, appropriate register, and few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions.
<i>Intermediate:</i>	Effective but simple constructions, minor problems in complex constructions, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions <i>but meaning seldom obscured</i> .
<i>Beginning:</i>	Virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate, OR not enough to evaluate.
<b>MECHANICS</b>	Relative to the writing of a native speaker of English of the same age, how well has the student mastered paragraphing, spelling, punctuation and capitalization?
<i>Advanced:</i>	Demonstrates mastery of conventions, few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing.
<i>Intermediate:</i>	Occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing <i>but meaning not obscured</i> .
<i>High Beginning:</i>	Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, <i>meaning confused or obscured</i> .
<i>Low Beginning:</i>	No mastery of conventions, dominated but errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing OR not enough to evaluate.

## APPENDIX C. Common European Framework: Global Scale Levels

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

APPENDIX D. Common European Framework Levels: written  
production

## APPENDIX D1. Common European Framework Levels: Overall

## Written Production

	<b>OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION</b>
<b>C2</b>	<i>Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Can write clear, well-structured texts of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because'.</i>
<b>A1</b>	<i>Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences.</i>

Note: The descriptors on this scale and on the two sub-scales which follow (Creative Writing; Reports and Essays) have not been empirically calibrated with the measurement model. The descriptors for these three scales have therefore been created by recombining elements of descriptors from other scales.



## APPENDIX D2. Common European Framework Levels: Creative

## Writing

	<b>CREATIVE WRITING</b>
<b>C2</b>	<i>Can write clear, smoothly flowing, and fully engrossing stories and descriptions of experience in a style appropriate to the genre adopted.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Can write clear, detailed, well-structured and developed descriptions and imaginative texts in an assured, personal, natural style appropriate to the reader in mind.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.</i>
	<i>Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write a review of a film, book or play.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest.</i>
	<i>Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can write a description of an event, a recent trip – real or imagined. Can narrate a story.</i>
	<i>Can write about everyday aspects of his/her environment, e.g. people, places, a job or study experience in linked sentences. Can write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job. Can write short, simple imaginary biographies and simple poems about people.</i>
	<i>Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do.</i>
<b>A1</b>	<i>Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do.</i>

APPENDIX D3: Common European Framework Levels: Reports and  
Essays

	<b>REPORTS AND ESSAYS</b>
<b>C2</b>	<i>Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, complex reports, articles or essays which present a case, or give critical appreciation of proposals or literary works. Can provide an appropriate and effective logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Can write clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues. Can expand and support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Can write an essay or report which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. Can evaluate different ideas or solutions to a problem.</i>
	<i>Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Can synthesise information and arguments from a number of sources.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Can write short, simple essays on topics of interest. Can summarise, report and give his/her opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.</i>
	<i>Can write very brief reports to a standard conventionalised format, which pass on routine factual information and state reasons for actions.</i>
<b>A2</b>	No descriptor available
<b>A1</b>	No descriptor available

APPENDIX E: Common European Framework Levels: Vocabulary

Range, Vocabulary Control, and Orthographic Control

## APPENDIX E1: Common European Framework Levels: Vocabulary

## Range, Vocabulary Control

VOCABULARY RANGE	
<b>C2</b>	<i>Has a good command of a very broad lexical repertoire including idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms; shows awareness of connotative levels of meaning.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions; little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies. Good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Has a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to his/her field and most general topics. Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition, but lexical gaps can still cause hesitation and circumlocution.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Has a sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some circumlocutions on most topics pertinent to his/her everyday life such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Has sufficient vocabulary to conduct routine, everyday transactions involving familiar situations and topics.</i>
	<i>Has a sufficient vocabulary for the expression of basic communicative needs. Has a sufficient vocabulary for coping with simple survival needs.</i>
<b>A1</b>	<i>Has a basic vocabulary repertoire of isolated words and phrases related to particular concrete situations.</i>

VOCABULARY CONTROL	
<b>C2</b>	<i>Consistently correct and appropriate use of vocabulary.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Occasional minor slips, but no significant vocabulary errors.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some confusion and incorrect word choice does occur without hindering communication.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Shows good control of elementary vocabulary but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts or handling unfamiliar topics and situations.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Can control a narrow repertoire dealing with concrete everyday needs.</i>
<b>A1</b>	No descriptor available

APPENDIX E2: Common European Framework Levels: Orthographic  
Control

	<b>ORTHOGRAPHIC CONTROL</b>
<b>C2</b>	<i>Writing is orthographically free of error.</i>
<b>C1</b>	<i>Layout, paragraphing and punctuation are consistent and helpful. Spelling is accurate, apart from occasional slips of the pen.</i>
<b>B2</b>	<i>Can produce clearly intelligible continuous writing which follows standard layout and paragraphing conventions. Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate but may show signs of mother tongue influence.</i>
<b>B1</b>	<i>Can produce continuous writing which is generally intelligible throughout. Spelling, punctuation and layout are accurate enough to be followed most of the time.</i>
<b>A2</b>	<i>Can copy short sentences on everyday subjects – e.g. directions how to get somewhere. Can write with reasonable phonetic accuracy (but not necessarily fully standard spelling) short words that are in his/her oral vocabulary.</i>
<b>A1</b>	<i>Can copy familiar words and short phrases e.g. simple signs or instructions, names of everyday objects, names of shops and set phrases used regularly. Can spell his/her address, nationality and other personal details.</i>

APPENDIX F. SURVEY FORMATS

APPENDIX F1. TEACHERS' SURVEY

UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO  
LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT  
WRITING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA  
TEACHERS SURVEY

This survey is completely anonymous and the answers obtained through it will be used only for research purposes.

Please give honest answers according to your background as teachers of the English language focused on your experience and knowledge in writing and in assessment.

1. Assign a number from 1-12 to the next components according to the importance you assign them when examining a written text. Assign 1 to the least important and 12 to the most important. Remember using each number only once.

- |                    |     |                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|
| a. Spelling        | ( ) | i. Punctuation     | ( ) |
| b. Topic           | ( ) | j. Connection      | ( ) |
| c. Verb tense      | ( ) | between the ideas  |     |
| d. Vocabulary      | ( ) | k. Collocations    | ( ) |
| e. Linking words   | ( ) | l. Use of specific | ( ) |
| f. Connectors      | ( ) | grammar            |     |
| g. Organization of | ( ) | structures         |     |
| the ideas          |     |                    |     |
| h. Length of the   | ( ) |                    |     |
| paper              |     |                    |     |

For the next questions, mark with an X the option you choose as your answer. The options given are:

**A = ALWAYS      O = OFTEN      SM = SOMETIMES      N = NEVER**

2. When students hand in a writing assignment I correct mistakes linked to:	A	O	SM	N
a. Spelling				
b. Topic				
c. Verb tense				
d. Vocabulary				
e. Linking words				
f. Connectors				
g. Organization of the ideas				
h. Length of the paper				
i. Punctuation				
j. Connection between the ideas				
k. Collocations				
l. Use of specific grammar structures				

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For the next questions, mark with an X the option you choose as your answer. The options given are:

**A = ALWAYS      O = OFTEN      SM = SOMETIMES      N = NEVER**

<b>3. When errors occur in writing assignments I...</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>SM</b>	<b>N</b>
a. Add notes at the end of the paper				
b. Add notes on the side of the page				
c. Make some marks/symbols related to the kind of error				
<b>4. The parameters to assess students' written production are given in advance.</b>				
<b>5. The aspects assessed in a writing assignment are clearly stated</b>				
<b>6. Students written performance is scored</b>				
<b>7. To grade students writing performance I look for:</b>				
a. Misspelled words				
b. Text's relation to the context chosen or given				
c. Use of tenses according to the type of text				
d. Use of vocabulary according to the type of text				
e. Use of vocabulary according to the topic				
g. Cohesion				
h. Number of words, paragraphs or pages written				
i. Right use of colons, semicolons, periods, etc.				
j. Coherence				
k. Right use of words' order				
l. The right use of gerunds, participles, suggestions, conditionals, etc.				
<b>8. The scores or grades for writing performance is related to defined assessment criteria.</b>				

**9. For writing assessments, you:**

- a. Do not use any criteria
- b. Use your own criteria design
- c. Use an international criteria design (Please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you know some criteria for writing assessment? If you do, please mention some of them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION!!**



APPENDIX F2. STUDENTS SURVEY

UNIVERSITY OF NARIÑO  
**LINGUISTICS AND LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**  
**WRITING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**  
 STUDENTS SURVEY

This survey is completely anonymous and the answers obtained through it will be used only for research purposes.

Please give honest answers according to your background as students of the English language focused on your experience and knowledge in writing and assessment.

1. Assign a number from 1-12 to the next components according to the importance you assign them when creating a text to be graded or according to the importance you believe teachers give them. Assign 1 to the least important and 12 to the most important. Remember using each number only once.

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| a. Spelling ( )        | i. Punctuation ( )     |
| b. Topic ( )           | j. Connection ( )      |
| c. Verb tense ( )      | between the ideas      |
| d. Vocabulary ( )      | k. Collocations ( )    |
| e. Linking words ( )   | l. Use of specific ( ) |
| f. Connectors ( )      | grammar                |
| g. Organization of ( ) | structures             |
| the ideas              |                        |
| h. Length of the ( )   |                        |
| paper                  |                        |

For the next questions, mark with an X the option you choose as your answer. The options given are:

**A = ALWAYS      O = OFTEN      SM = SOMETIMES      N = NEVER**

<b>2. When I hand in a writing assignment teacher corrects mistakes of:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>SM</b>	<b>N</b>
a. Spelling				
b. Topic				
c. Verb tense				
d. Vocabulary				
e. Linking words				
f. Connectors				
g. Organization of the ideas				
h. Length of the paper				
i. Punctuation				
j. Connection between the ideas				
k. Collocations				
l. Use of specific grammar structures				

Writing Assessment Criteria 90

For the next questions, mark with an X the option you choose as your answer. The options given are:

**A = ALWAYS      O = OFTEN      SM = SOMETIMES      N = NEVER**

<b>3. When errors occur in writing assignments the teacher...</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>SM</b>	<b>N</b>
a. Adds notes at the end of the paper				
b. Adds notes at the side of the page				
c. Makes some marks/symbols related to the kind of error				
<b>4. The parameters to assess written production are given in advance by the teacher.</b>				
<b>5. The aspects assessed in a writing assignment are clearly stated</b>				
<b>6. My written performance is scored</b>				
<b>7. To grade writing performance the teacher looks for:</b>				
a. Misspelled words				
b. Text's relation to the context chosen or given				
c. Use of tenses according to the type of text				
d. Use of vocabulary according to the type of text				
e. Use of vocabulary according to the topic				
g. Cohesion				
h. Number of words, paragraphs or pages written				
i. Right use of colons, semicolons, periods, etc.				
j. Coherence				
k. Right use of words' order				
l. The right use of gerunds, participles, suggestions, conditionals, etc.				
<b>8. The scores or grades for writing performance is related to defined assessment criteria.</b>				
<b>9. When I get back my writing assignment, I pay attention to teachers' corrections to improve my writing for new assignments.</b>				
<b>10. When I get back my writing assignment, I pay attention to my grade.</b>				
<b>11. When I get back my writing assignment, I pay attention to teachers' corrections and to my grade.</b>				

12. I know the meaning of the marks/symbols used to correct errors in writing assignments.

- a. Yes
- b. No

**THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION!!**

APPENDIX G. GRID FORMAT

<b>WRITING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA GRID</b>								
<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Write on the squares located in the left of the categories students are going to be assessed the percentages you have decided according to the importance you give to each one of them.</li> <li>▪ For grading, take into account that each category's concept is in terms of what students are supposed to do or accomplish in writing from short to long texts.</li> <li>▪ Grades have to be given in numbers from 0 - 5. The use of intermediate grades is allowed to assess students' performance (e.g. 0,5 - 0,8, etc.). Write an " x " in front of the grade number, for intermediate grades write them on the "other" option.</li> <li>▪ For giving grades, you should use the following scale:</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin: 5px 0;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">5 - 4,6 = excellent - very good</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">4,5 - 3,6 = good - adequate</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">3,5 - 3 = acceptable</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">2,9 - 2 = fair</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">1,9 - 1 = needs improvement</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">0 = students who do not present the assignment</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The final grade to the paper is the addition of the <i>individual grades</i> (multiplication of each category percentage by its grade). If each category has the same value or percentage, then the final grade is the average from the individual grades.</li> <li>▪ Any additional aspect or specification needs to be written on the observations space and be communicated to students in advance with the criteria.</li> </ul>			5 - 4,6 = excellent - very good	4,5 - 3,6 = good - adequate	3,5 - 3 = acceptable	2,9 - 2 = fair	1,9 - 1 = needs improvement	0 = students who do not present the assignment
5 - 4,6 = excellent - very good	4,5 - 3,6 = good - adequate	3,5 - 3 = acceptable						
2,9 - 2 = fair	1,9 - 1 = needs improvement	0 = students who do not present the assignment						
<p><b>Teacher:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Subject:</b> _____</p>	<p><b>Semester:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Date:</b> _____</p>							
CATEGORY	CONCEPT	GRADE						
<input style="width: 30px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> Organization :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can develop a clear text, expanding and supporting his/her main points with relevant supporting detail and examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</li> </ul>	5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ other _____						
<input style="width: 30px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> Development of ideas :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can create coherent and cohesive texts making full and appropriate use of a variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices.</li> </ul>	5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ other _____						
<input style="width: 30px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> Grammar :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot.</li> </ul>	5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ other _____						
<input style="width: 30px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> Punctuation, spelling and mechanics :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writing is orthographically free of error. Spelling is accurate, apart from occasional slips of the pen. Layout, paragraphing and punctuation are consistent and helpful.</li> </ul>	5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ other _____						
<input style="width: 30px; height: 15px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/> Style and quality of expression :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express him/herself clearly, and give emphasis without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.</li> </ul>	5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ 1 _____ other _____						
<b>FINAL GRADE</b>		<input style="width: 100px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>						
<p><b>Observations :</b></p>  								
<p><i>Designed with information taken from: * Common European Framework (CEF, 2001), **Brown (2004).</i></p> <p>* The concepts are taken from the C1 and C2 levels of the CEF (2001). They can be changed by levels A or B to evaluate students from lower levels.</p> <p>** The categories are taken from Brown (2004)</p>								