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CARRERA DE LENGUA Y LITERATURA INGLESA

Benefits of Multimedia Resources in the EFL Classroom and the Integration of Kurzweil 3000 Software as an Aid for the Conversation and Composition IV Course at "Universidad de Cuenca"

Trabajo de investigación previo a la obtención del Título de Licenciado(a) en Ciencias de la Educación en la Especialización de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa.

Tutor: Ing. Jean Paul Jara Villacreces

Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres

Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

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Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres

Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the use of multimedia resources in English as a Foreign Language **(EFL)** classroom and the use of the software Kurzweil 3000 in a Conversation and Composition IV class in order to develop writing skills. Even though the students of the course were meant to develop two main skills, namely, writing and speaking, with the usage of the software the research focuses on writing skills. Multimedia resources are widespread since teachers and students use it in one way or another. Technology is an important resource and it is important to be aware of how it should be used appropriately in the classroom. In order to be as objective as possible, the students of the Conversation and Composition IV course were consulted and asked to give their points of view, check their progress, and express their feelings about the usage of multimedia resources before, during, and after the application of them. To accomplish this goal and have a record of the classes some measurement tools such as a pre-test and a post-test, surveys, questionnaires, and interviews were employed. In order to analyze the results of the research, quantitative graphics are provided. In addition, professionals in education provided some personal experiences about the use of multimedia resources.

KEY WORDS:

Multimedia, resources, Prezi, YouTube, projector, writing skill, graphics, internet.

Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres
Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

RESUMEN

La presente investigación se centra en el uso de recursos multimedia en el aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera y además del uso del software Kurzweil 3000 en la clase de Conversación y composición IV para desarrollar las destrezas de la escritura. A pesar que el curso antes mencionado desarrolla dos destrezas principales que son la escritura y la capacidad de escuchar, el presente proyecto se centra en el desarrollo de la habilidad de la escritura. Los recursos multimedia se han difundido ya que estudiantes y profesores los usan según sus necesidades. La tecnología es un recurso importante y es importante estar alertas del uso adecuado que se le debe dar en el aula. Para se lo mas objetivos posibles los estudiantes de Conversación y composición IV fueron consultados para dar su punto de vista, observar su progreso y expresar su perspectiva sobre el uso de estos recursos antes, durante y después de ser aplicaos en ellos. Para cumplir con este cometido se llevó un record y se utilizaron instrumentos como encuestas, entrevistas pre-pruebas y post-pruebas para recolectar datos.   Para analizar los resultados del presente proyecto se proveen gráficos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Además profesionales en la rama de educación proporcionaron experiencias personales acerca del uso de recursos multimedia en la clase.

PALABRAS CLAVES:

Multimdia, Recursos, Prezi, YouTube, Proyector, Destrezas de escritura, Gráficos, Internet.

Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres
         Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

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Av. 12 de Abril, Ciudadela Universitaria, Teléfono: 405 1000, Ext.: 1311, 1312, 1316
e-mail cdjbv@ucuenca.edu.ec casilla No. 1103
Cuenca - Ecuador

Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres
Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

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Camilo Andrés Delgado Pérez

100243803-2

UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA
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Camilo Andrés Delgado Pérez
100243803-2

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DEDICATION

I would like to thank God for the life I have and the blessings that He has given me. I dedicate this thesis to my best friend, Christian Moscoso, who passed away and was unable to graduate with me, leaving a huge scar in my life. I am tremendously grateful to my father and mother for never giving up on me and for their tireless dedication to my education; without them, I would not have made it this far.

Camilo

I would like to thank God for my life and for giving me such amazing parents and family. I am honored to have you as my advisers, and wise counselors. This thesis is dedicated to a very special person in my life, Mama Luisa. I cannot imagine life without you. I am deeply thankful for all your patience, support, and love.

Sandy

Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres
Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

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INTRODUCTION

Laura Machuca sets the scene of education today by stating the dilemma facing all educators: "Contents of the XIX century thought by teachers and strategies of the XX century with students and resources of the XXI century" (Machuca). The society we live in nowadays is not the same as the one of 100 years ago. Education is a field that has been affected over time too. In the past, teachers were the only people who had the knowledge and the students were treated as simple receivers of the teacher's knowledge. However, today students can keep on learning outside the classroom by using multimedia resources without the constant control and help of a teacher.

Multimedia resources can be found in different ways, especially through the Internet. They can be used for all learning levels in order to develop listening, speaking, reading, writing, namely, the four skills of English learning. It is important to analyze and know how to choose the best multimedia resources according to the teacher and students' needs. When the teacher decides to use these resources as one of his or her tools in the teaching-learning process, there are some aspects to consider before doing so. There are some advantages of using these resources in the classroom, such as giving both the teacher and student the freedom to learn on their own, find interesting topics, have different points of view according to a specific subject, become curious, and increase creativity. Nevertheless, some limitations also appear such as, the financial situation, institutional support, and not enough preparation in order to use multimedia resources on behalf of the teachers. These are characteristics that need to be analyzed before making the decision to use these resources.

In short, the world is in constant evolution and education cannot be an exception in this time of change. Therefore, it is important to consider that multimedia resources can become a great aid for teachers and students as long as both of them are aware of its implications and limitations.

Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres
Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

Chapter I: The Problem

1.1 Topic

Benefits of multimedia resources in the EFL classroom and the integration of Kurzweil 3000 software as an aid for the conversation and composition IV course at "Universidad de Cuenca."

This research focuses on the benefits that multimedia resources can provide in the improvement of EFL learning process focusing on writing skills.

1.2 Description of the problem

It is necessary to remember the traditional teaching method in which, according to Prof. Kuzu, "teachers serve as the source of knowledge while learners serve as passive receivers" (qtd. in Boumová 11.) This should no longer happen since technology allows everyone to share knowledge. The century people live in right now is surrounded by technology which can be included in education. According to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), there are institutions that are willing to adapt to a technological classroom; however, their financial situation makes it difficult to achieve this goal (32).

In order to get enough information about the usage of multimedia resources in the University of Cuenca, the students of Conversation and Composition IV course mentioned that they would like that teachers use these resources more frequently in classes. The students stated that teachers mostly use booklets, copies or handout and the usage of multimedia resources in classes are pretty limited. They also said that if teachers use these types of resources, they will find the classes more meaningful and interesting because of their familiarity with these resources. Through this research it will be demonstrated that the usage of Multimedia resources is a valuable tool that improves writing skills.

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1.3 Justification

It is important that teachers realize and incorporate technology in their classes. As Reid explains "Many of the major institutions of our society have changed and the way we live our daily lives has been impacted. However, the impact on education may just begin[ning] to be felt as teachers integrate this new technology into their teaching" (30). In education, technology has brought in efficient techniques to increase the effectiveness of the learning process of English learners.

For these reasons, this research of the ¨Benefits of Multimedia Resources in the EFL classroom and the Integration of Kurzweil 3000 software as an Aid for the Conversation and Composition IV Course at "Universidad de Cuenca¨ aims to present the benefits of using technology in a classroom and the possible effects that this can produce. Although the Conversation and Composition IV course develops all four skills, the research focuses on writing skills and how multimedia resources can become an aid for this class. Even though this research focuses on university students, technology is a tool that can be used from elementary school all the way through university.

Some multimedia resources include overhead projectors, computers, magic boards, Internet, and laptop as technological devices. Even though some institutions want to include these elements into their educational process, not all institutions have the opportunity of incorporating these latest resources in their classrooms. It needs to be remembered that some educators suggest that technology should be incorporated in class while others disagree (Daniels 6.) One of the multiple benefits that technology provides is that it gets students' attention, for example, when a teacher uses a projector to explain a unit or topic. This is a more efficient way than the basic chalk board or whiteboard which can make learning dull and boring. In the process of including technology in an EFL classroom, we can find some limitations that challenge the application of this strategy. The UNESCO observes that the high costs of technology and services can become a problematic and need to be taken into account (27-28).

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In order to examine the effects of multimedia resources on the teaching of EFL, the authors decided to use the software called Kurzweil 3000 which has already been employed successfully to improve writing and listening skills (company quote). As it is described on the official company web page, this software comes packed with a dictionary, and thesaurus, as well as contains some other interesting features, for example, an extraordinary reading tool that pronounces each word or the whole document with an additional aid for spelling words to improve all four skills both for English Language Learners (ELL) and native speakers.

Research Question

How useful can multimedia resources and specifically the software Kurzweil 3000 be in order to improve the writing skills of students at the University of Cuenca?

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective
- To determine to what extent the Kurzweil 3000 software is beneficial in the EFL classroom
- To provide different multimedia resources and analyze the students' reactions about them
- To improve writing skills

1.4.2 Specific Objectives
- To support the use of multimedia resources in order to develop students' learning of English
- To use appropriate technology in the English class

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- To implement Kurzweil 3000 software as an aid to monitor and analyze the progress of the students' writing skills

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Chapter II: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Multimedia Resources

According to research carried out under the auspices of UNESCO, it appears that teachers have developed the skill of using different technologies; however, they do not always know how to use these skills in the classroom (8). The purpose of this research is to take stock of the benefits of multimedia resources that, according to Matthew Aruch, former professor of technology at the University of Cuenca, are tightly bounded with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) devices such as projectors, tablets, laptops (personal communication). However, it is what these devices can provide that is going be analyzed rather than the devices themselves.

The device that is most used in ICT is the computer. The emergence of this tool in education has brought teachers and students an aid for their everyday educational support. Not only is it important for students to have access to computers, it is also an essential tool for teachers that needs to be used appropriately after the required level of teacher training (UNESCO 32). In addition, the Internet is the main use of computers that have provided people with vast amounts of information about anything on the World Wide Web. The educational environment without the Internet would be different in many ways, because the Internet provides students with a wealth of information related to their studies.

2.2 Impact of Broadband on education

A study commissioned by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce on The Impact of Broadband on Education focuses on the positive effects that the Internet has on education (Davidson and Santorelli 1). They emphasize that among the many technologies that have been heralded as a transformative solution for education in the United States – e.g., radio, television, and the computer – broadband has

perhaps the greatest potential. This technology provides students, parents, administrators, and educators with a platform for enabling a wide range of innovative tools, services, applications, and hybrid approaches to teaching and learning. (Davidson and Santorelli 1)

The Internet can offer easy access to a wide range of tools like dictionaries, translators, and encyclopedias for students to use for their educational needs. For instance, take a web site like Canvas that offers teachers a page where assignments, commentaries and grades can be posted for any course or institution in an organized manner. It has the ability to upload and download documents for the benefits of teachers and pupils.

Broadband-enabled technologies can enhance instruction by diversifying the delivery of education and facilitating access to distance learning programs (Davidson and Santorelli 4). For instance, teachers have a wide range of resources they can use to help students in their lessons. Many institutions have integrated distance learning courses into their curriculum to increase the reach of education to those who are not able to attend classes in the conventional way. With internet access, teachers can provide video conferences where students can get a virtual classroom experience.

¨For example, a study by the American Psychological Association found that low-income children who used the Internet on a regular basis performed better on standardized tests of reading achievement and had higher grade point averages than [did] children who used it less¨ (Davidson and Santorelli 4). The study's findings shed light on the opportunity for the internet to serve as an equalizer in education and a tool to improve the performance of students, regardless of their economic status.

The Internet can help students of any income level access a multitude of educational resources from across the globe. At the same time, it can help teachers provide a better and more interactive learning experience as they prepare students for competition in the job market of the future.

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Consequently, the Internet has connected society and increased educational opportunities for individuals across the world. Students with Internet access are not confined by their geographical location or their economic situation; they can access research, lectures and presentations from the best professors in the world and experts in their field. Through websites, teachers are able to keep the virtual classroom open, providing students 24 hour access to lessons and other educational resources to supplement the learning experience inside and outside the classroom. From rural and remote areas to urban centers, from impoverished to wealthy communities, the Internet cuts across barriers and gives any student vast opportunities.

2.3 The benefits of Desktop Presentation Programs (DPPs)

As technology has become part of our daily lives, it has also become part of education in the learning process. Teachers have had a difficulty in where to start as many do. Microsoft Power Point has become one of the best known software utilities for presenting presentations. It is a software that can be used for inserting texts, images, backgrounds and sounds into a presentation set up to be presented to an audience.

The benefits of Desktop Presentation Programs (DPPs) such as Power Point, Prezi and projectors, as a special device, in the classroom stand out and provide visual aids for the students. Starting from using colors to enrich the text or add colorful backgrounds and graphics in slides, these software programs help students' learning more than using the old-fashioned chalk on the board (Daniels 44). Slides, for example, can be especially engaging when used for well-structured presentations.

Power Point has become part of today's education captivating students with its functions. Its flexibility nurtures the objective of the presentation with color templates, animations, sounds, pictures, hyperlinks being among the features that will benefit the user.

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Daniels says that ¨One of the most important features of the newer versions of DPPs is the ability to export slides to the World-Wide Web. By uploading slides to the Web, students can have access to the slides outside of class. This also allows the slides to be used as part of distance learning courses that are Web based¨ (44). With the help of this feature, students can get hold of important information that was given earlier or to continue with a distance learning course. It provides help for those who need more time for reviewing slides and jotting down skipped or missed information from the last view. Another important aspect is that slides can be uploaded to and shared on the website called Slide Share. This website contains many Power Point presentations that are uploaded by teachers, students, or anyone that has a registered account.

In order to see if students learn more effectively with DPP materials, a set of core questions in a survey carried out at the end of a final exam was given to students in Principles of Macroeconomics and Intermediate Microeconomic Theory. It was administered to classes taught in 1996 without DPP materials and both classes taught again in 1997 with DPP materials (Daniels 50).

Table 4.
Usefulness of Slides as Indicated by Students (%)
Principles of Macroeconomics Course and
Intermdiate Microeconomics Combined

	Lower half of students	Upper half of students	All students
Not useful	0%	4%	2%
Somewhat useful to useful	59%	44%	51%
Very to extremely useful	41%	52%	47%

Figure 1 As table 4 shows, the usefulness of slides as indicated by students on both classes showed that the majority of students in both halves of the class preferred the slide presentations (Daniels, 54)

The study demonstrated that the students that were taught with DPP materials attended classes more often than to those that were not taught with DPP materials.

2.3.1 Limitations of Power Point presentations

Some educators have drawn attention to the limitations involved in using Power Point slides. Professor Voss asked her students during her "Effective Presentation" workshops if their professors use Power Point presentation; the students answered yes, but they also said that this does not always lead to more engaging delivery. The students added that teachers tended to focus on the…technical aspects… of the presentation and not on the audience. They remarked that the slides were "lacking substantive content" ("Power Point").

For these reasons, Voss gives some advice when using power point presentation. She recommends the following: "keep your [p]oints simple, use images and animation when appropriate, don't read to your audience, print out the slides as a handbook so your audience can take notes, have a backup plan in case [the] technology does not work, see if someone can click for you so you can focus on your audience" ("Power Point").

Bumiller points out that in the U.S military, Power Point has been used quite often for military planning in conflicts in the Middle East. It has become part of the commanders' daily lives. General McMaster said in a telephone interview "It's [slide] dangerous because it can create the illusion of understanding and the illusion of control…some problems in the world are not bullet-izable" (qtd. in Bumiller "We Have Met"). The improper use of Power Point slides is clearly highlighted in this example. Structuring a Power Point slide presentation consists of summarizing the key points that will express the main idea in bullets to be understood more easily. However, as General McMaster stated there are certain things in life that cannot summed up as bullet points. The majority of

Power Point users tend to assume that it is a program in which you just add information and present it to an audience with fancy animation and sounds. That is not the way it works. The main objective is not to fill slides with a large amount of text; it is meant to set up a given topic in an appropriate and simple manner.

2.4 Features of Prezi

Another useful multimedia resource that is within the DPP family and is very useful is Prezi; its official webpage states that it was developed in 2009 as an online program that organizes ideas in a mind map and let you insert templates, images, and videos anywhere. The most appealing feature about it is that it has a zoom-in feature that catches the attention of the audience. All of the functions and visual effects have an impact on kids and absorbs them into this great program. Also, since Prezi is an online program, it allows the user to save Prezi presentations for the public to view. For students, it gives them the opportunity to review recent assignments for their educational needs. To make it even better, those who have slides on PowerPoint can easily insert it into Prezi with a PowerPoint import tool (Luzet 1).

The theory behind Prezi is that our ideas are not linear, but rather bundles of interconnected concepts that are better captured as a whole with many parts. Prezi allows the user to illustrate the relationship of concepts to one another¨ (Orlando 1). In other words, it is like a mind map altogether set up with templates and designs to capture the viewer's attention while maintaining a structured topic all in one place.

2.4.1 Drawbacks when using Prezi

Like with any other presentation program, there are also downsides to Prezi if using it incorrectly. Some aspects, like exaggerating the use of the feature that zooms in and out, can make the audience (lose interest, and adding too much text downgrades the use of Prezi (Abrams et al. 105). For the

presenter, it is best to prepare the material beforehand and ask an observer to provide feedback on the negative and positive characteristics in order to fully accomplish the goal of the presentation for the audience. One has to be mindful of not filling the slides with too much text as this will result in the audience losing interest. Organizing your ideas and making concepts clear will eliminate that problem from happening.

In conclusion, Power Point and Prezi have made their way into education providing benefits for both student and teachers. If used in an appropriate manner, they can satisfy the learning needs of the students and improve the teaching standards of educational institutions that are committed to change.

2.5 Using Projectors in the classroom

All of the previous resources have something in common. In order to be seen by many students at the same time, projectors are required. Akanegbu reminds us that ¨Educators have been using projectors to integrate technology into classrooms since the late 1800s, and today's projectors maintain the same basic purpose: transmitting images onto a surface¨ ("Vision of Learning"). Nowadays, projectors have become part of institutions, companies, and organizations worldwide facilitating the way things are presented. Due to its clear and big picture, it can be set up anywhere where there is space and a wall to project the image onto. Educational institutions have benefited greatly from this outstanding device.

Projectors are a key component in the current classroom setting. They improve audience attention, retention and reduce class preparation time. As the great inventor Thomas Edison once said "Books will soon be obsolete in the public schools. Scholars will be instructed through the eye. It is possible to teach every branch of human knowledge with the motion picture. Our school system will be completely changed within ten years" (qtd. in Akanegbu).

Autores: Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres
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This is actually happening now in education all over the world. Textbooks are being used, but projectors now are an important aid in the today´s classrooms because they are able to transcribe presentations on a big screen.

The researchers of a case study at Portland State University on projectors in education emphasized the positive effects. Glen Pullen, an audiovisual (AV) specialist at the school, stressed that "Projectors are a pedagogical investment. They add enough to the typical lecture to easily justify their investment." Janet Hamilton, associate professor of finance in PSU's business school, agreed, saying that "Projectors allow us to educate our students far more effectively and efficiently than with simple overheads" (qtd. in O'Donnell 15).

The main difference between an overhead and a projector is that the overhead does not have the ability to connect to a computer, making it far less useful in today's world. The projector is an investment that educational institutions are making in order to facilitate the learning process of the students. One must remember that it is only an aid and a guide for a classroom.

2.5.1 Benefits in the classroom

Hamilton thinks projectors can also help professors save time once a lecture has been put into digital form. "On an ongoing basis you can save maybe 50% of your preparation time because of digital technology and the ability to make changes easily" (qtd. in O´Donnell 15). Time is an important matter that teachers need to consider when teaching. It is something clearly visible. For example, take the amount time it takes to write a couple of sentences that you want to expose on the whiteboard. Now try having those sentences already in a computer and just projecting them to the wall. It is a major difference; the teacher could use that time while the sentences are projected to explain the topic better or simply improvise and add additional feedback that will foster the students' learning process. There are obviously certain lessons or topics that are better handled with the old whiteboard, for

example, students could participate by coming up to the board and choosing the right answers.

Philips recently worked with Quality Education Data Inc. (QED) to survey 500 educators and media specialists in U.S. public schools to learn more about technology and equipment trends in K-12 classrooms (Groot 22). The survey was conducted in order to evaluate the role of projectors in the teaching-learning experience. The authors were curious about them as visual aids, the flexibility they provided their attention grabbing quality. The survey showed that 90.8% of the respondents used projectors for multimedia presentations with 89.2% using it to project computer screen images for teaching (Groot 23). These statistics provide clear, positive evidence on how projectors are being used at schools for teaching. Presentations are the most popular tasks that are put together using projectors. Due to their simplicity and great image, projectors are a fundamental component in the today's classrooms.

2.6 Characteristics of Kurzweil 3000 software

Kurzweil 3000 is a ¨Comprehensive reading, writing and learning software solution" (Kurzweil). It is great for students with learning disabilities or any disorders that make learning complicated. The characteristics of this software help the improvement of reading fluency as it has a built-in human voice reader that repeats highlighted words for comprehension and remembering. It is great for pronunciation and it also has a function that spells each word read by a human voice. It includes a dictionary, thesaurus and a translator. Having all these functions in this software makes it useful in every sense. There is a function to scan documents and use them for listening and reading activities. Teachers are able to insert text notes, bubble notes, sticky notes and foot notes. The use of Kurzweil ranges from elementary school to college students. The downside for this software is the cost. It is around two thousand dollars, but for institutions with a decent budget, they should be able to acquire it. The amount

of functions and ease of control makes this software a useful tool for teachers to help the most struggling learners (Aimeen).

2.7 YouTube as a multimedia resource

The Internet has provided unparalleled opportunities to find almost any information that we are searching for. YouTube, the well-known video sharing site offers further assistance for education. This web page is a video sharing site where videos can be uploaded by users and viewed by anyone on the website. There are videos about different topics that the user is free to watch. YouTube may be considered unhelpful if used in an inappropriate manner, but there is a way of putting aside that fear by carefully managing this website. Students and teachers can watch a vast selection of videos on educational topics for their educational needs. ¨Schools across the country commonly block access to YouTube, shielding students from the irresistible distractions¨ (Strom 1). This is a common problem for many educational institutions because many videos that are uploaded on the site make minds wander off and could be considered a waste of time. However, before blocking or filtering, educators should evaluate the material to be found on YouTube, as it constitutes an exceptional resource for learning.

2.7.1 YouTube in Education

About a year ago, Google started the program called YouTube for Schools. The program consists of a network in the institutions where teachers can add specific videos, erase commentaries and link videos that relate to the topic for students to get access to (Strom 1). This is a great initiative, because teachers can now be sure that their students are not just losing time watching inappropriate videos, but engaging in visual media as an aid for their learning process. As Strom stated, there is a way of integrating YouTube in schools to get the most out of it both for teachers and students. Robert Gulick, director of

technology in the Washington Local Schools in Toledo, Ohio, said, "If we didn't have a system for filtering it, we couldn't partake, but we do now, and at a time of declining resources, it is a great way to find additional materials" (qtd. in Strom). The program created by Google has put aside the fears of teachers, and now is the time to get the most appropriate educational oriented videos into the classroom to build up a database day by day for the institutions to achieve their educational goals.

Stokes mentions another development: ¨A small group of teachers nationwide is replacing in-class lectures with short online videos students watch at home. This flip-flop of homework and lecture from which the model gets its name, "the flipped classroom", leaves class time open for students to complete their assignments with their teacher standing by to offer one-on-one help¨ ("How YouTube is Changing"). Teachers have managed to find different ways to interact with students in a different way in order to make their learning different from the same old techniques. For example, in Indiana's St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School, Troy Cockrum, who researched the "flipped classroom", has applied it for two months and is now saying that the initiative is working (qtd. in Stokes). It is up to the teachers to continue with the same methodology that they have used for decades or to make the change for their own benefit as well as their students. Like in all aspects, it is a matter of choice whether teachers want to embrace a different methodology in their classrooms or add new methods for students to explore and familiarize themselves with new technological advances like YouTube.

In conclusion, multimedia resources are a great aid for teachers and students; however, it is important to be aware of the advantages and limitations that these resources have. In addition, the aim of using these tools is that both the teacher and the students can use them appropriately and effectively in their EFL classes.

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Chapter III: Methodology

3.1 Basic methodology

In order to gather information, action research was carried out to generate and produce information about the use of multimedia resources in the EFL classroom and the usage of Kurzweil 3000 software. The gathering of the data took place in Cuenca-Ecuador at the University of Cuenca during three periods of two hours from July 23rd to July 25th of 2013 with ten students with an age range of 22 to 25 years old; all students were taking the above-mentioned course of Conversation and Composition IV and became the participants this research.

3.2 Data Gathering Techniques

Data were gathered by using surveys and interviews as relevant research instruments.

3.2.1 Interview

The interview was conducted with Eng. Doris Suquilanda, who works in PYDLOS (Programa de Población y Desarrollo Local Sustentable) and is responsible for the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) area. She is very familiar with the use multimedia resources in the classroom. She gave an account of her personal experience using these resources as well as the advantages and disadvantages of them. Moreover, her contribution helped to clarify some of the issues at stake. The interview took place in her office located on the second floor of the above institution. The interview consisted of 10 open questions. The questions and the transcript of the interview has been included as Appendix 1.

3.2.2 Survey

A survey was administered to the students of the Conversation and Composition IV course in their classroom. The questionnaire consisted of 10 yes/no items (see Appendix 2) . The questions were meant to gauge the students' perceptions regarding the usefulness of multimedia resources in their academic lives. We also asked them whether teachers used these resources, and if so, how frequently. It should be noted that at the end of each class, the students who were present were asked to complete a survey about that day's class. This survey was sent directly to their Facebook account. Once the questionnaires were sent back, they were automatically analyzed by the surveymonkey.com software and then converted into quantitative graphics.

3.2.3 Pre-test.

The pre-test was used to establish the level of knowledge students had at the beginning of the course. It consisted on of 9 questions that included multiple choice options (multiple answers), multiple choice (one answer only) yes/no questions, rating scale (choose a response according to a category organized in hierarchical order) (see Appendix 3.)

3.2.4 The post-test

The post-test consisted of the writing of a persuasive paragraph, which was graded according to a rubric included as Appendix 4. The post-test was administered on the last day of the research project after having all the information about persuasive paragraph. This was a tool to check what was the students knowledge after being exposed to multimedia resources

3.2.5 Variables.

Variables such as resources, time, and characteristics of the research are considered as important. Some of these variables affected the hypothesis and

the further results of the investigation. One special resource that was required was the Internet which affected the way the research was conducted since a free wireless connection was required. However, this was difficult to arrange for because of the low signal or no signal connection for the computers the students were using. Time was another limitation since classes did not always start when they were scheduled for. The fact of having to spend time on repeating and rearranging an aspect that was unclear before affected the normal flow of the classes. Moreover, some students did not complete the surveys they were asked to complete and this obviously affected the results.

3.3 Data Collecting

A survey was administered to the students of the course before the classes started. It was meant to give us an idea about the familiarity of the students with persuasive paragraphs. Once the students had finished the classes, they were asked to complete a survey in order for the authors to find out if the contents were well understood. We also asked them to provide some feedback on multimedia resources. At the end of the last session the students had to write a persuasive paragraph which was graded according to a rubric.

3.4 Data processing

The tools for gathering information, especially for the evaluations and surveys, and the creation of statistics were taken from the websites surveymonkey.com and Facebook.com in order to evaluate the data as well as present them statistically. The students received the survey through their Facebook accounts, and the questionnaires were completed anonymously. Another important tool was a personal laptop with Excel that helped to process the statistics quantitatively and present them as graphics.

3.5 Ethical Aspects.

Finally, all the students that participated in the research agreed and gave consent to work with the researchers, be observed and answer the questions that were later presented graphically.

Chapter IV: Results: Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Interpretation of the interview

The interview with Eng. Doris Suquilanda was valuable because she (gave an account of the different points of view about the usage of multimedia resources. She said that these resources should be used as a tool, and not as an objective in itself. Once teachers decide to use multimedia resources, they have to make sure they are well-structured and have a clear objective. She says that sometimes it is easy to get overexcited when using these resources. However, teachers have to focus on their goals. She also mentioned that there are advantages in the sense that a lot of materials available on the Internet are free of charge.

One needs to remember though that there are some limitations. For example, not all the people have access to these resources. And there is no Internet access in some rural areas such as Chaucha or Cumbe. Eng. Suquilanda says that even though some resources are free, they are a little difficult to manage; even though, it is also necessary to get used to them. She gave a clear example of the usage of these multimedia resources. She says that at the University of Cuenca, teachers and students use the EVA (Virtual Setting of Learning) platform, which is a virtual setting for learning in the software called Moodle. Teachers can upload videos, images or links that are already on the web. Assignments are also uploaded and then submitted by students. Both teachers and students have to persist so that they familiarize themselves with this platform.

4.2 Interpretation and analysis of the survey

It is important to mention that at the end of every class the students were asked to fill in a questionnaire about the session of the day. The aim was to find

out if the classes and the tasks were clear, if students had any suggestions or comments and also to keep records of attendance.

4.3 Results of the pre-test

The following graphics present the results of the pre-test administered to 20 students of the Conversation and Composition IV Course (see Appendix 3). The purpose of this survey was to learn how much students knew about persuasive paragraphs.

Graph 1

Students' awareness of persuasive paragraph
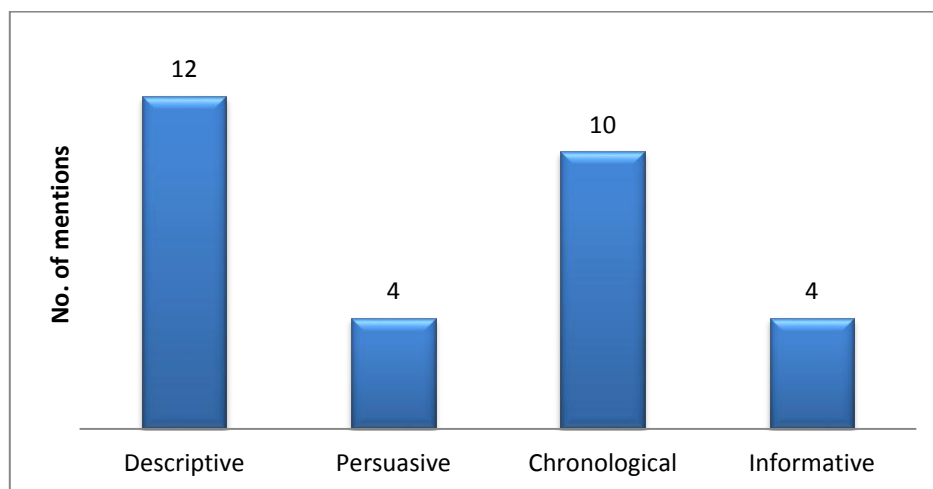
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 1: Which type of these writings do you know? (You can choose more than one.)

In Graph 1 we can see that informative and persuasive writing are the types of texts that students know the least. This fact gave the researchers an advantage in order to measure knowledge that was newly acquired.

Graph 2

Students' use of persuasive paragraphs.
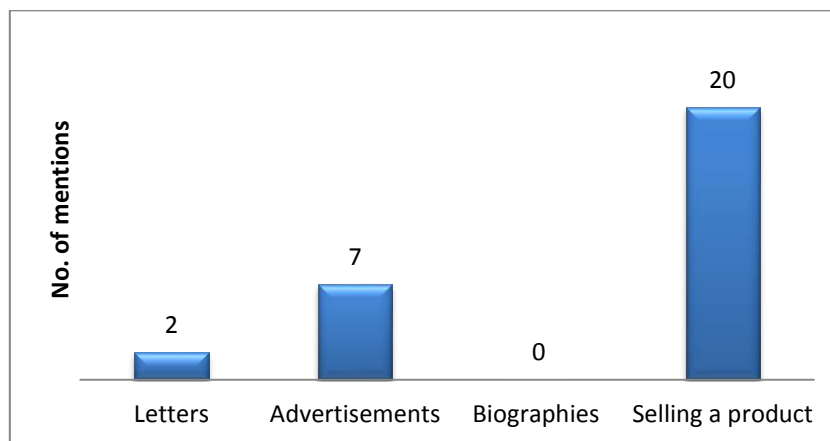
Graph 2 demonstrates that the students would mostly use persuasive writing when selling a product and for advertisements. Few students consider writing letters as a way of persuading. Actually, the classes went on to prove how letters can also be used to persuade the reader.

Graph 3

Students' awareness of counter-arguments

Source: Researchers' survey

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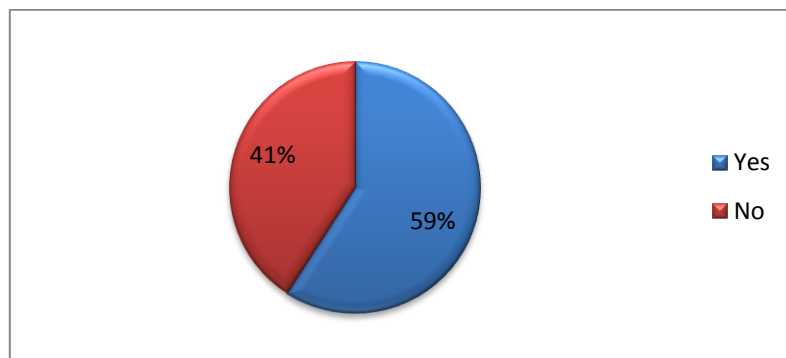
Question 3: Do you think using a counter-argument (an argument that is the opposite to your belief) is a good idea when writing persuasive papers?

Graph 3 above shows that more than 40% of the students would not consider using counter-arguments in a persuasive paragraph. One of the objectives of the classes was to prove that counter-arguments are necessary for various reasons within a persuasive paragraph in order to give more reliability to the paper.
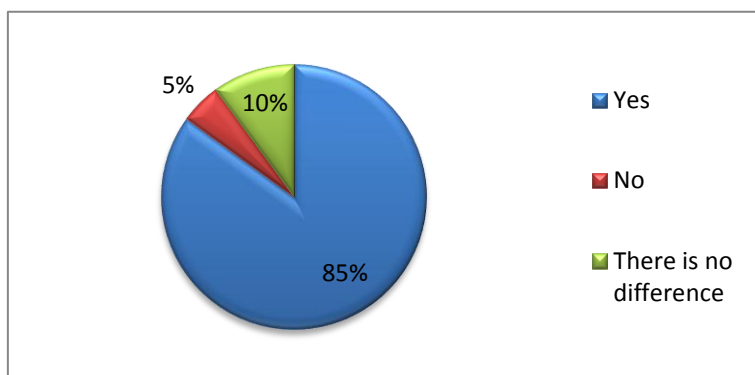
Graph 4

Students' consideration of multimedia resources as a tool for comprehension

Source: Researchers' survey

Question 4: Do you think the usage of video and multimedia resources (projector, slides) would help you to understand in a better way a topic like persuasive paragraphs?

Graph 4 shows that most of the students find the usage of multimedia resources in the classroom useful. This demonstrates that these resources are well received by the students. This was an advantage for the classes that were given since the tools to be used were the resources mentioned in the question.

4.4 Analysis and interpretation of the 1st day of class.

The following are the graphics of the first day of class on July 23rd (see Appendix 5). It is necessary to mention that 2 out of the 10 students did not return the survey. For this reason the results were affected.

Graph 5

Students ranking of the usage of interactive graphic organizer
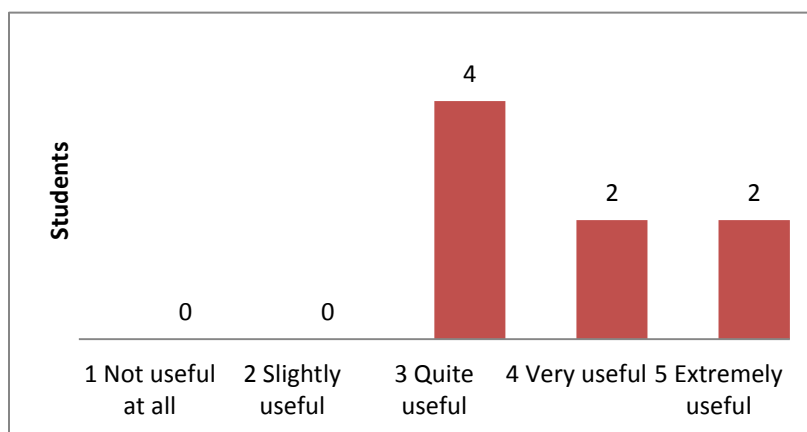
Source:
Researchers' survey

Question 5: From 1 to 5 was the usage of the interactive graphic organizer useful?

Graph 5 represents the usefulness of the usage of an interactive graphic organizer. The students described the interactive graphic organizer in positive terms with 50% describing it as "very useful" or "extremely useful". None of the students perceived the graphic organizer as an ineffective tool.

Graph 6

Students' perception of projector in class
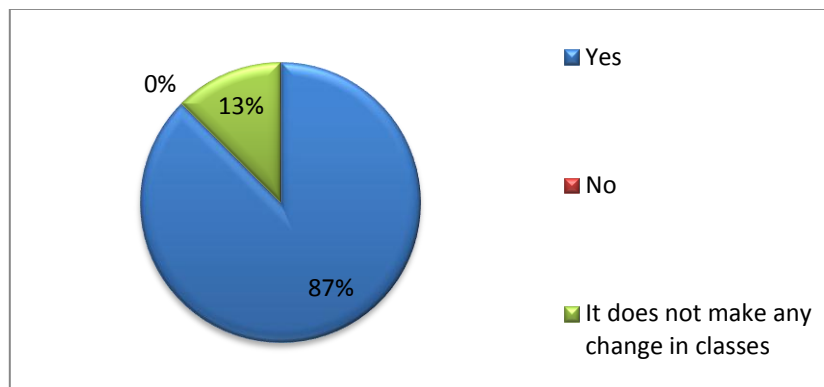
Question 6: Do you like the usage of the projector in class? Can you tell
why?

As seen in Graph 6, most of the students (87%) responded affirmatively
about the usage of projectors in class.

They gave different reasons for their answers which are described
below.

- The class is more interesting
- Because it makes the lesson interesting
- Because it is better than the whiteboard
- It releases teachers from being bound to the whiteboards to present
  information in an easy way.
- Because it was more interesting

Based on the responses, it seems that projectors are considered as a good
resource both for teachers and students.

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Graph 7

Opinion of students about Kurzweil 3000

0%

25%

75%

- ■ Yes
- ■ Moreless
- ■ No
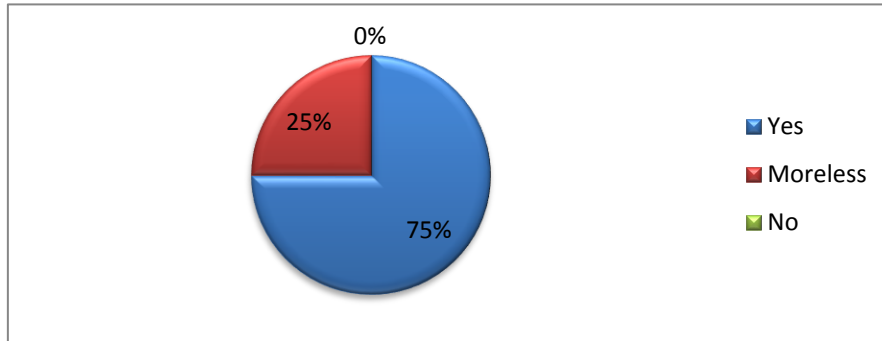
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 7: Do you think the use of Kurzweil was useful?

Kurzweil 3000 software was used from the start of the research project. Graph 7 shows that 75% of the students considered it useful. None of the students considered it useless. This chart demonstrates that Kurzweil was a well-regarded technological resource in class.

Graph 8

Comprehension of the Youtube video

Students

| | 3 | 3 |

0   1   1

1 Not easy at all   2 Slightly easy   3 Quite easy   4 Very easy   5 Extremely easy
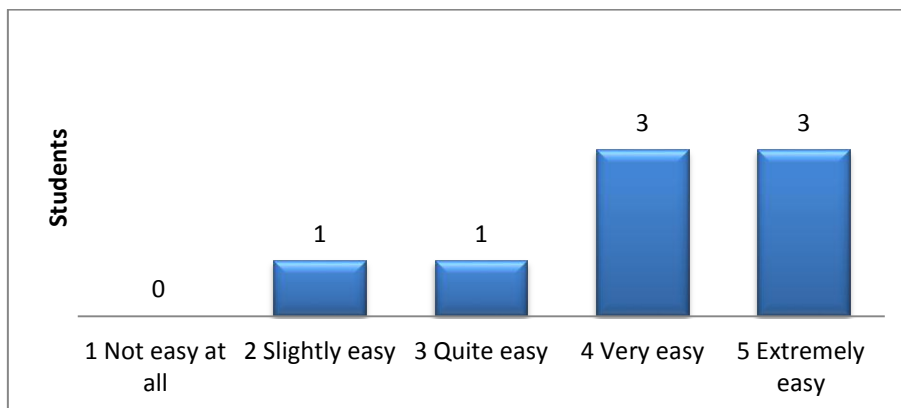
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 8: From 1 to 5 was the video easy to understand?

The class included a video from Youtube which was shown with the aid of the projector. Students ranked the video from 1 to 5. Graph 8 demonstrates

that most of the answers were "very easy" (38%) or "extremely easy (38%)". It is important to mention that the students were aware of the tool because of their familiarity with it.

Graph 9

Students' opinion about using the contents learned in further projects.
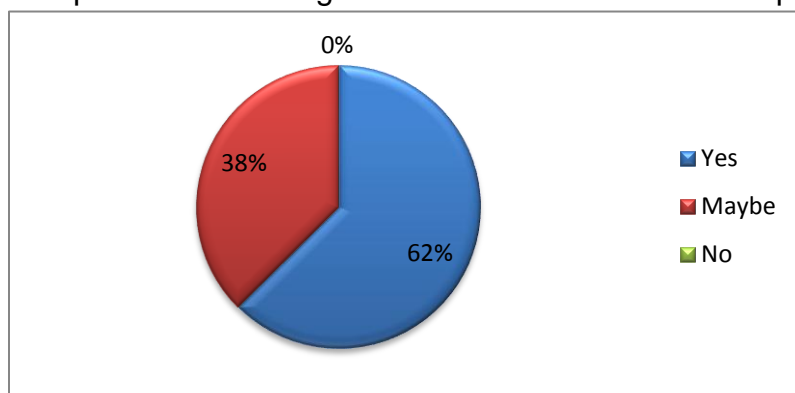
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 9: Do you think you will use the information you received today in homework or research projects?

Graph 9 shows that more than half of the students (62%) consider the class they received would be useful for further assignments. We can assume that even though students only had an experience of 2 hours (it being the first day of the treatment) the contents they were provided with were beneficial. Moreover, all the contents were given through multimedia resources which could explain the students' reactions.

Graph 10

Students' perception about the class.

Students' perception about the class pie chart:
- 0% Not interesting at all
- 12% Not very interesting.
- 25% Interesting
- 63% Very interesting.
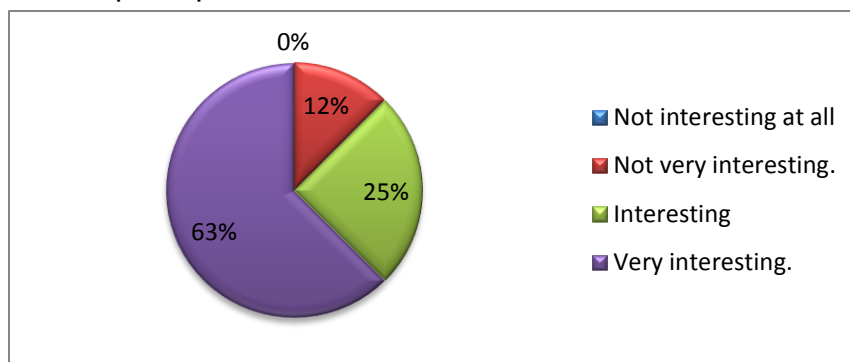
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 10: Was today's class interesting?

Graph 10 shows that almost two-thirds of the students (63%) responded that the class was very interesting. Another 25% found the session interesting.

4.5 Analysis and interpretation of the 2nd day of class.

The following are the answers to the survey of the class on July 24th (see Appendix 6.) It is important to mention that 1 out of the 10 students did not return the survey. Therefore, the results were affected.

Graph 11

Description the students gave to Prezi
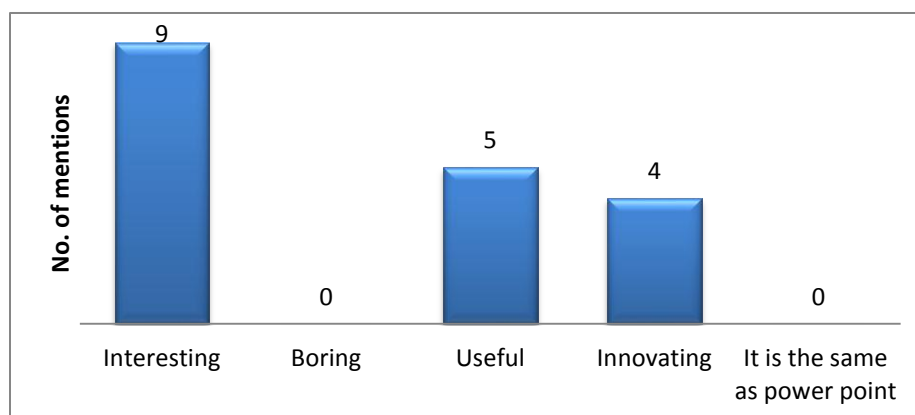
Question 11: How can you describe the use of Prezi today? You can choose more than one option.

As can be seen in Graph 11, the students described the use of Prezi in positive terms ranging from "interesting" (9) to "innovating" (4). This demonstrates that using this tool can engage students since it did not receive any negative descriptions. This feedback is probably only possible if the program employed is well-structured and focused.

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Graph 12

Students' express the use of multimedia resources in class.

0%

Yes

No

100%
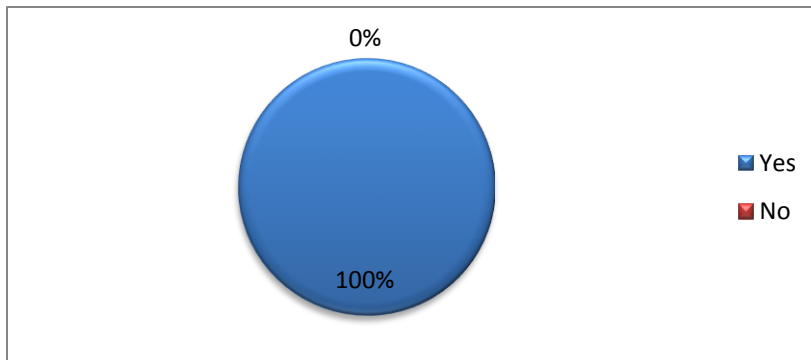
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 12: Do you think having resources such as projector, videos, and Prezi in class, make a difference? Can you give a reason?

Graph 12 shows that all the students (100%) think multimedia resources make a difference in the classroom. The reasons given are described below:

- The resources gave us more explanation because they use graphs, color and layouts
- Using these resources makes the class more meaningful
- The class is more active
- It is original and it is a different way to catch the reader's attention
- It makes it more interesting classes

There are variables that affected the survey because not all the students submitted the survey; this was a limitation for the results, since it proved to be impossible to take into account everybody's opinion.

Graph 13

Students' opinion about counter-arguments

0%

100%

- Yes
- No
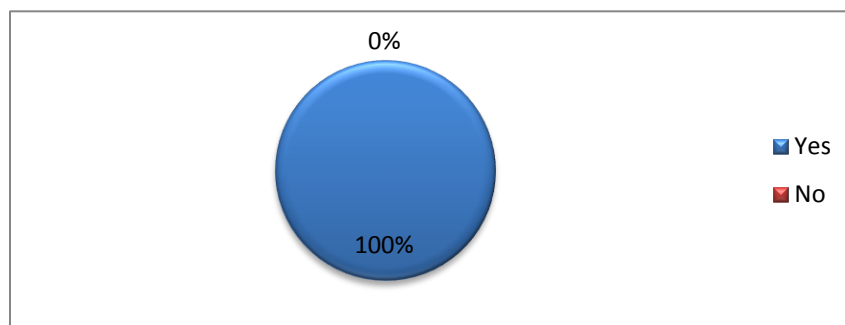
Question 13: Should counter-arguments be taken into account in the persuasive paragraph? Can you give a reason to your answer?

As can be seen in Graph 13, all the students (100%) considered that counter-arguments have to be used in persuasive paragraphs. The reasons the students gave for using them are mentioned below:

- Counterarguments make you become more honest with the other person'sposition.
- Counterarguments should be included because you can use the other person's position.
- They are important because you are being more honest about the other person's position and they make my position look stronger.
- It important to mention counterarguments because you need to show the other side's arguments and take advantage of them.

It should be noted that once the basic characteristics about persuasive paragraphs were given, at the end of the sessions all the students had a different point of view about counter-arguments from the initial one in the pre-test, where 41% of the students declared that they did not consider using counter-arguments important.

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Graph 14

Students express the usefulness of the day's class
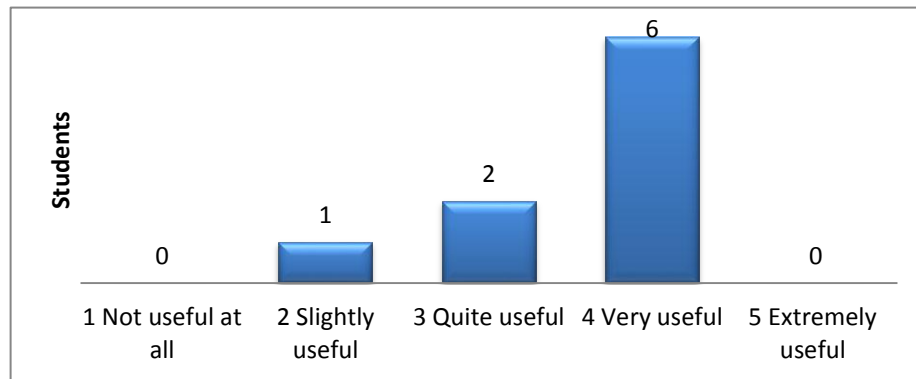
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 14: From 1 to 5 being 1 the least and 5 the highest score how useful was todays' class?

Graph 14 shows that more than 60% of all respondents (6 students) deemed the classes "very useful". None of them thought that they were not useful at all. Once again, it is worth mentioning that all the tools that were used were multimedia resources.

Graph 15

The students mentioned how useful have been the class.
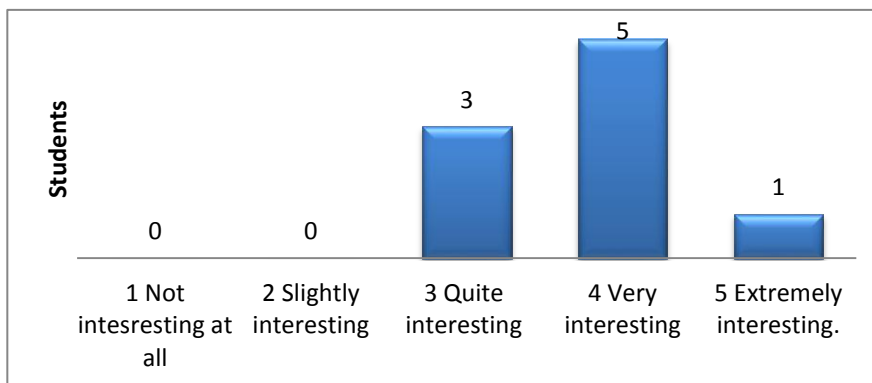
Question 15: From 1 to 5 being 1 the least and 5 the highest score how interesting was today's class?

Graph 15 demonstrates that the students' opinions regarding the classes ranged from "quite interesting" (3) to "very interesting" (5). This is a favorable ranking taking into account that the classes lasted 2 hours without a break, which in some cases could have made them tiring.

Graph 16

Multiple choice question on persuasive paragraphs
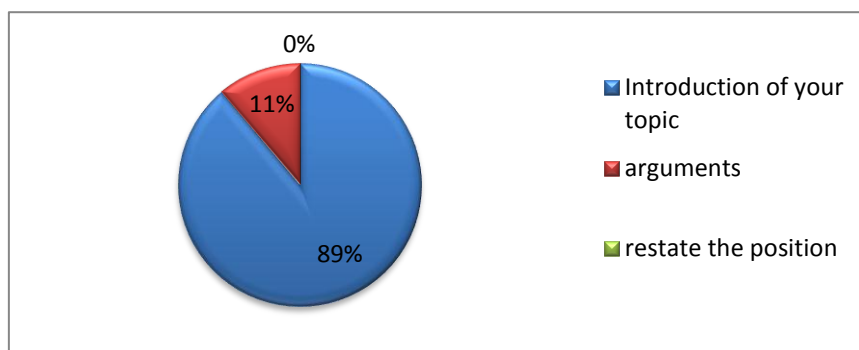
Question 16: What should the introductory paragraph include?

On Day 3 of the treatment, students were tested on their understanding of persuasive paragraphs. Graph 16 demonstrates that the large majority (89%)

have come to understand the role of the introductory paragraph. Most of the students got the main idea that the introductory have to include the position. Only 1 student said that arguments should be included in this part of the paragraph. None of the students considered that a restate of the position goes in the introduction.

Graph 17

Students' knowledge about components of a body paragraph

<div align="right">
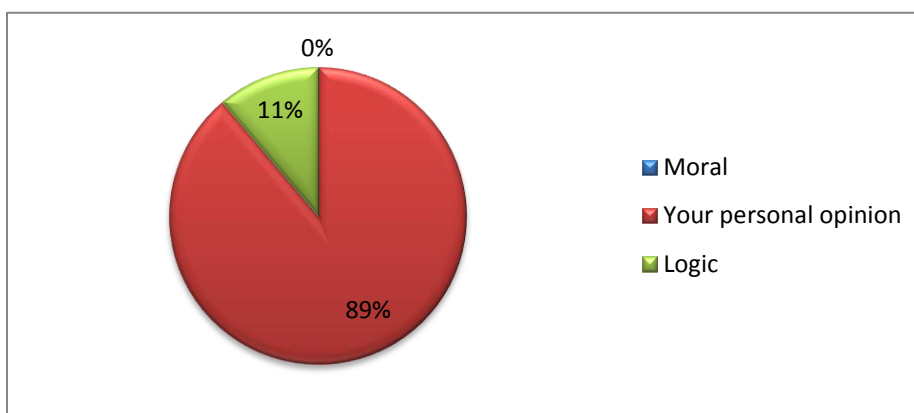
Source: Researchers' survey

</div>

Question: Which of these evidences you should not include in your body paragraph?

Graph 17 was phrased in a slightly tricky fashion. Most of the students (89%) agreed that it is the personal opinion that should not go in the body paragraph. The results reflect the fact that it was explained to the students that the personal opinion is only placed in the introductory paragraph or in the conclusion when the position is restated.

4.6 Analysis and interpretation and analysis of the 3rd day of class

The next graphics are from the last day of class held on July 25th to see the questions refer to (appendix 7). It is important to mention that 2 students out of 10 did not return the survey. For that reason the results were affected.

Graph 18

Overview of the students' conception of multimedia resources
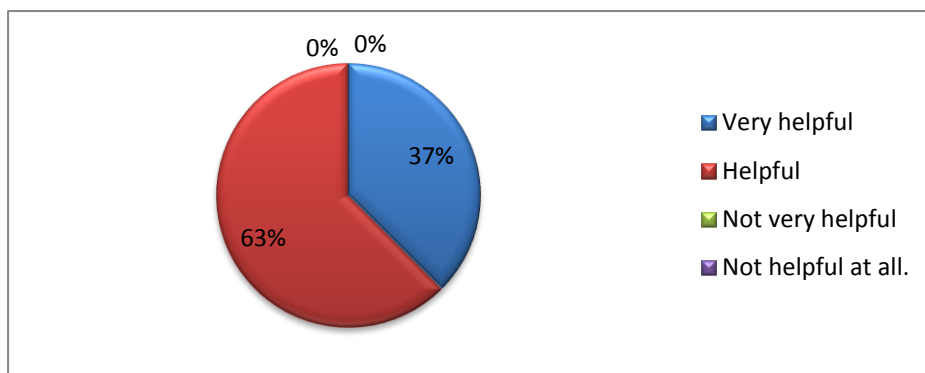
Source: Researchers' survey

Question 18: During these classes how useful have been the use of multimedia resources?

As is evident from Graph 18, students consider the use of multimedia resources during classes "very helpful" (37%) and helpful (63%). No student gave a negative answer about the use of the resources. They also gave some reasons for their options that are mentioned below:

- They give extra information to the class.
- They are interesting and they mentioned that like them
- This is something else other than just the teacher, whiteboard and worksheets
- There is a different point of view for the topic rather than just listening to the teacher's lecture.
- The lesson became really interesting.

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Graph 19

It shows where students look for material.
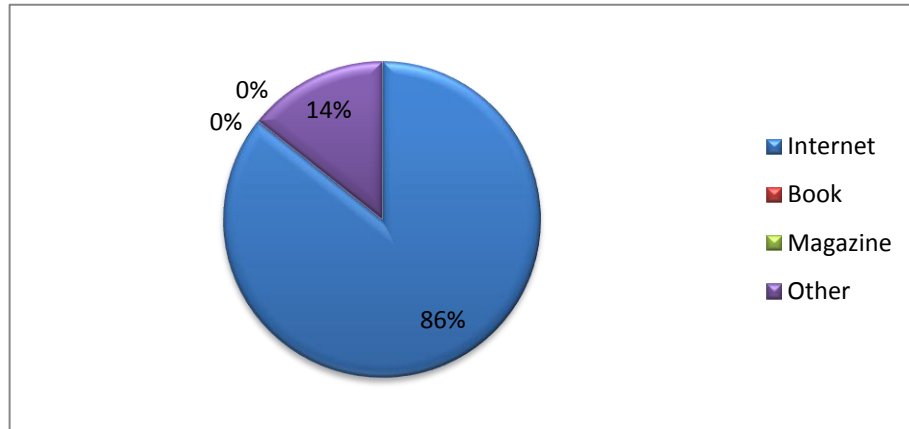
Source: Researchers' survey

Question: Where did you find the resources for today's debate?

For the last day of class, the students were asked to look for information for a debate they would have in class.

Graph 19 demonstrates that most of the students found information on the Internet, and only 1 student mentioned that the information was found in another source, namely a newspaper.

Graph 20

It shows if it was or not easy to look for information on the Internet.

0%

100%

■ Yes
■ No
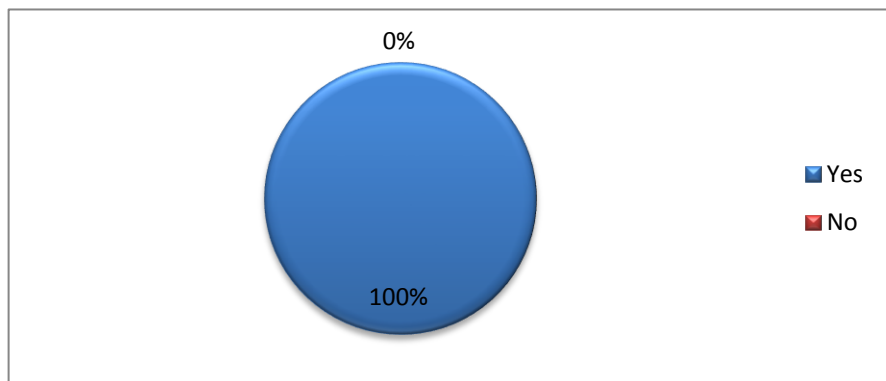
Source: Researchers' survey

Question: Was it easy to find the sources in the Internet for today's debate?

As is seen in Chart 20, all the students found it easy to look for information on the Internet. This may suggest that the Internet is a tool that can be used for a quick investigation in class, especially for debates like in this case.

Graph 21

Usefulness of the debate done before writing a persuasive paragraph
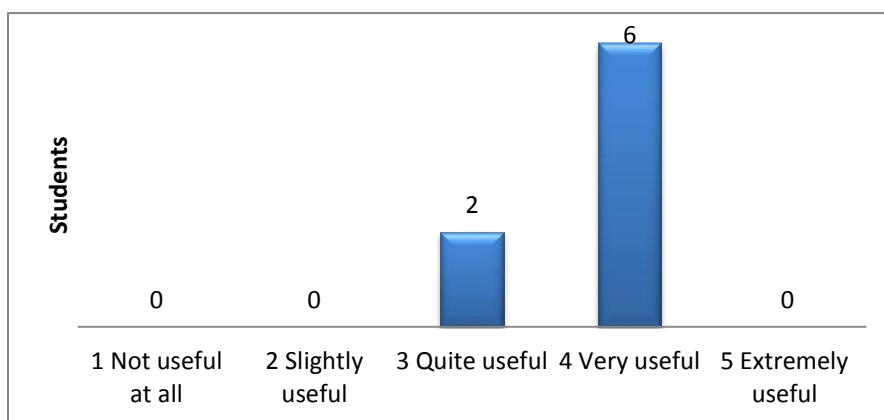
Source: Researchers' survey

Question: From 1 to 5 being 1 the least and 5 the highest score, was useful today's debate in order to write the persuasive paragraph?

In order to help them write a persuasive paragraph, the students participated in a debate. Once the debate was over, the students wrote the

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paragraph. Graph 21 shows that this strategy was useful for the students in order to accomplish their assignment since 25% deemed it "quite useful" while 75% found it "very useful".

Graph 22

The students provided their opinion about having Kurzweil 300 in class.
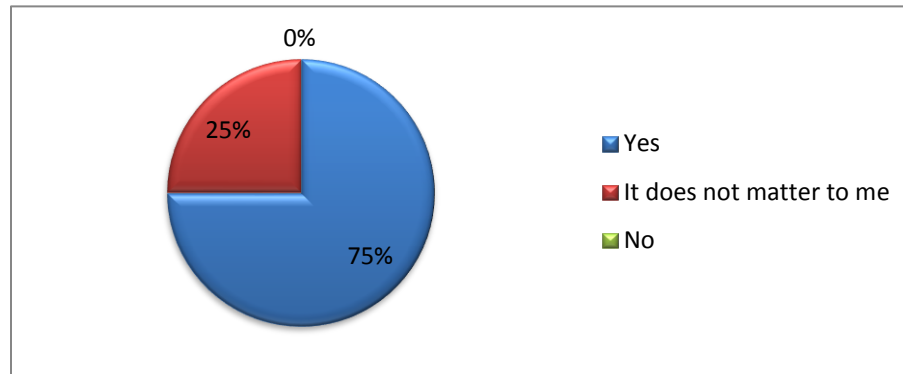
Question 22: Finally, as a student would you like that teachers work with Kurzweil 3000 (software to improve skills)?

Graph 22 demonstrates that the use of Kurzweil 3000 had a 75% approval rate among the students. The rest of the students (25%) felt that using this software is not relevant.

Graph 23

Students' attitude about multimedia resources
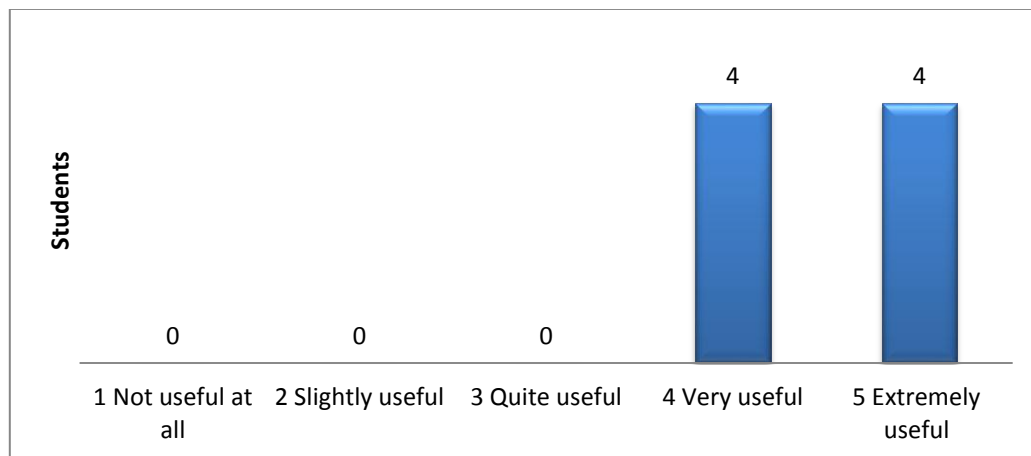
Question 23: From 1 to 5 being 1 the least and 5 the highest score, how useful were Prezi and videos during the classes?

Graph 23 shows that, at the end of the classes, the students thought that multimedia resources were highly useful: 50% said they were "very useful" with the other half stating that they were "extremely useful". This proved that these types of resources are effective tools to be used in this class.

Graph 24
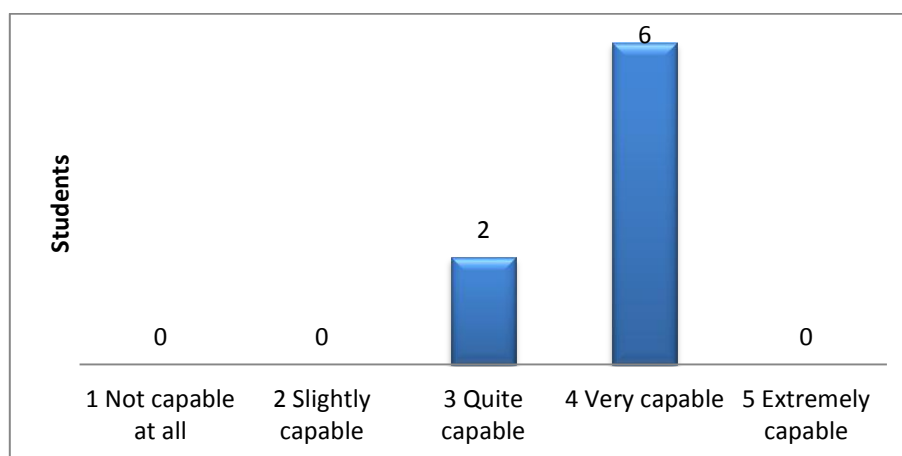
Students' opinion about their writing skill in order to write a persuasive paragraph

Question24: Now that the classes have ended. From 1 to 5 being 1 the least and 5 the highest score, can you tell if you feel more capable to write a persuasive paragraph according to what we have seen?

Graph 24 demonstrates that at the end of the sessions the more than half of the students thought that they were a lot more capable of writing a persuasive paragraph.

4.7 Post-test

The purpose of the classes was for students to get enough knowledge of the characteristics on what a persuasive paragraph should be. For this reason, the test set for them was writing a persuasive paragraph that was graded according to a rubric containing the features that were presented during the sessions. This was considered the post test.

4.7.1 Samples of Post-test

Here are two samples of the persuasive paragraph done by two of the students.

It can be seen the use of question to catch the reader's attention. However, the paragraph is about contraceptives and not about hanging out with friends.

We can observe the clear position of the student

Here the student uses evidence that he / she supports the position

The student is appealing to the readers feelings or emotions

A counter-argument is taken into account and then an argument is given to support the position

Finally the student restates the position in the conclusion.

Do you like to hang out with your friends? If you like it, do not get pregnant at early years. The way to avoid this situation is by taking contraceptives. Contraceptives should be given freely to teenagers. According to INEM 20% of teenagers between 16 and 25 years old are mothers in Ecuador. Would you like to see your daughter walking with a baby at 16 years old? I do not think so. People think if teenagers are given contraceptives, they will have sex every time, but it is better if they have sex with responsibility than taking the risk of getting pregnant. Teenagers should be given contraceptives to have a better and happy life.

Figure 2. Student 3 paragraph

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The student uses questions to engage the reader

There are two mistakes. A grammar and punctuation

Even though the student mentions an opinion of the web pages, there is no evidence of them

There are statistics but there is not a source

The student does not clarify how pregnancy should be prevented, if by giving contraceptives or not?

A counter-argument is used to make the position stronger

Having sex it is so cool nowadays that everybody does but why is it dangerous to do it if you are under 16?

Some webpages says that encouraging young people to have sex at an early age is a problem. In some statistics the 34% of people are against this idea because they think if young people like children under 16 ha ve sex will produced unwanted pregnancy and sexually diseases.

In short, even if it's true that most of the children under 16 are already having sex and are not taking into account this important point that is called prescribed contraceptives. I think that is more important to prevent unwanted pregnancy and sexually diseases at an early age like 16 years old.

Figure 3 Student 1 paragraph

4.8 Interpretation of the students' post- test

All the students wrote an introduction where they usually wrote a question to catch the reader's attention, state a position and tell the reader what the paragraph was going to be about.

In the body of the paragraph, the participants used facts, statistics, and they appealed to emotions. The problem found here was that even though students remembered the statistics, not all of them mentioned the source from where they got the information from. It is important to mention that all the students used a counterargument. This is a very significant change because according to the pre-test, 41% of the students considered using this element within a persuasive paragraph unimportant.

In the conclusion the students restated their positions and summarized their evidence. Finally, the students created a paragraph defending the prescription of contraceptives for teenagers under 16, while others defended the opposite position which was that doctors and nurses should not prescribe contraceptives to teenagers under 16. The grade of the post test was from 12 to 18 according to the rubric, which specifically grades the contents seen in class, to make the grades more objective and to provide some feedback to the students.

Chapter V: Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

By the end of the classes, different conclusions, limitations and as a result of this, recommendations surfaced. The aim of the classes was that the students had to write a persuasive paragraph in order to defend a position.

5.1 Conclusion

The students considered the use of multimedia resources helpful in order to learn some elements of the persuasive paragraph. It is important to mention that within three days and two hours of class every day, it was possible to achieve this goal. This is due to different reasons, such as the students' participation, the use of multimedia resources, the use of social networks, like Facebook to complete the surveys, and the use of online resources that were helpful for both the teachers and the students. In short, the students had a positive attitude about the use of multimedia resources. According to the surveys, they would like that their teachers employ these types of resources in classes. The same was true for the Kurzweil 3000 software. The students mentioned that they would like this resource to be used in their classes.

5.2 Limitations

During the research project, a number of aspects came to light. During the classes, the authors encountered some problems that posed certain limitations on the carrying out of the project. First, it would have been better if the Internet signal strength in the Philosophy Faculty had been more stable as well as speedier, since a lot of more information could have been found during class. Second, even though the objective was accomplished, if we had been able to hold more sessions, the investigation would have been more thorough.

Third, because of the remodeling of the faculty's building, the noise was a limitation and interfered with the classes.

5.3 Recommendations

The research study has shown the positive aspects of using multimedia resources in English Language Teaching (ELT). This means that the introduction of such tools should become more widespread in the coming years. It needs to be stressed though, that these resources should be used with caution. Educators need to be mindful of the fact that resources like YouTube can be a double-edged sword and it would need to be carefully monitored at educational institutions.

Using the Kurzweil 3000 software had special benefits and teachers should not shy away from using this or any other cutting edge educational resource. It is also felt that multimedia resources could and should be used with younger students, not only with university students.

Further research could be carried out with a larger sample at other educational institutions in order to establish whether these resources are as useful as it appears from the present project. Generalizability would be enhanced if similar research was carried out in other countries whose context may be different. Running similar projects over a longer period of time would also help enhance the validity of the present piece of research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview questions and transcript

Interview with Eng. Doris Suquilanda.

1. How do you see technology in education today?

Nowadays technology is a very powerful tool that can improve the teaching learning process, but we always have to keep in mind that technology is a tool, the use of technology is not an objective in itself. Technology supports the learning process. I always considered that teachers need to have a clear objective, have everything well-structured along with the contents and incorporate these technological tools in order to fulfill the teaching-learning process. A lot of times, we get confused by technology or get excited with the use of technology and lose sight of our final objective, when we need to have that clear at first. Now with all this technology and all the advances that have resulted in fast-paced social change, I think that there are great opportunities for education.

2. Do you think that the old education system without the technological tools was able to achieve favorable results?

Each human invention starting from the invention of fire to the making of paper, each period in history has different aspects and each aspect is important in that time period. Now we are in a different time period and new things surge and we need to adapt to them.

3. Education has had substantial changes. Do you think education was better before or now?

Like I said, education has always changed according to the innovations of the day. In any case, I don't think in terms of being better or worse, rather everything accommodated the time period and its technological advances. With technology, we have broken geographical barriers, now we have access to other sites, access to visit museums that are on the internet, things that no one thought of before and now we have more resources and I think education needs to adapt to these changes. For example, beforehand the teacher was the only one that had access to a book. Nowadays, students have even more access to information than teachers. The role of the teacher will change, these days the teacher is a facilitator who guides students in this teaching-learning process; however, in the use of technology students often surpass their teachers. Education has never been better or worse, it has been adapting to society continuously.

4. "La letra con sangre entra" (the letter goes in by blood) gave results in education or was it the absence of technology?

I don't know. I think everything goes in line with the time period. Before it was like that, and I suppose that was the model, and I imagine it gave results because, after all, it was the people that were brought up like that who generated the changes that have been experienced by mankind to date. By blood it enters - I don't agree that it was the best option but I suppose in that

time period it went like that and we are only in the world as it is today, because all those people were educated according to the rules of the times they were living in and still went on bringing about the advances that we enjoy today.

5. Do you believe education has a "battle of the classes"?

I think that we have considerable differences of access which has an impact on each social class, but the latest statistics that the government published say that illiteracy has fallen to 6%. I personally think that there is still a huge difference between social classes when it comes to accessing education. Overall, rural areas are the ones that have not benefitted from a wider access to education. Now, there is another kind of illiteracy here, namely digital illiteracy. Here in urban Cuenca we have major opportunities to access education at all levels, but in the suburban areas were they don't have these services like computers or access to the internet, they will have less opportunities. This makes the people in the suburban areas move to the urban areas. Social classes do differ a lot in the educational context.

6. Education without technology - is it an impossible education?

I think it is important to incorporate technology in all the educational courses in order to guide ourselves with software that supports the different content in each course. The way I see it is that education nowadays is impossible without technology since it is widely spread in society as a whole.

7. What are the instruments used by a teacher during the English Learning Process?

For example, there are tools that I am just doing with my students like collaborative work, group work and research topics that we can work on simultaneously with students from other countries relying on these tools. The advantages of these tools are that we can use them in education free of charge. The disadvantages or obstacles in using technology would be the access to that technology since not all will have the same opportunity to use this tools.

The major advantage that we have at the University is technology and internet which provides access to a vast range of information.

8. What instruments do you consider the most suitable for the practice in the English Learning Process?

Well, there are a variety of tools like a lot of free software in our country that we should take advantage of. I think that the use of "open coded" software is a little complicated, but we still we have to get accustomed to it. For example, a variety of instruments that a teacher can use inside the classroom are: textbooks, books, digital libraries, images, video and audio files. Other tools like YouTube or Flicker provide many resources that can be used in our teaching-learning process. Moreover, tools like video conferences can help us connect with people from other countries, for example students and researchers and establish alliances that strengthen our education. All these tools, like I said, provide a

great opportunity for teachers. We should remember that we, as teachers, have to learn how to use these resources in order to achieve our objectives. The University of Cuenca uses EVA (Virtual Setting of Learning) which is based on a software called Moodle and this strengthens the teaching-learning process. This software permits connectivity in different roles being a great tool both for teachers and students. Teachers can upload content as well as evaluate students through the homework posted. This platform has other advantages for communication, tools like chats, forums where both students and teachers can set a topic and or begin discussing different topics. Other tools like Google docs permits collaborative work, since a group of people can be working on the same document simultaneously. For instance, group work could be a problem most of the time since getting together physically is not always preferred by everyone. The solution is that with the internet students and teachers can work simultaneously on the same assignment discussing a topic with the support of these instruments.

Moreover, all the digital libraries and the libraries that keep academically acknowledged documents are a great tool. I tell my students to find information in places where the documents have been reviewed and approved by the academic community. My advice to them is not to use references that are untrustworthy, like Rincon del Vago, but to look up things in the university library since it has subscriptions to several of these libraries that are available to all teachers and students of the University.

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9. In your experience, what is of best application of technology in class?

I think that nowadays due to the wealth of information that we have access to through the internet, we have to use methodologies to make our students critical since there is a huge amount of information, but a lot of it is garbage. If we don't teach our students to be critical, and to evaluate the information gathered they will end up with garbage. I think that is one of the things that we have to encourage so that the students can analyze and select trustworthy information. We recommend that they should use academic sources for their research. They also have to learn to become autonomous learners in order to succeed in our ever changing world. Technology changes constantly and teachers must be adapting daily to accomplish the objectives together with their students.

10. If there were a change to be made in education, which one would it be in your opinion?

Well, that's complicated, I've had the opportunity to be work here at PYDLOS with primary school and middle school teachers. Observing teachers taking these computerized tests through the internet showed that there is a great generational gap. Namely, there are young teachers, but also older teachers both in primary and middle schools. This generates a gap in the sense that young people and kids come along with the technological skills that enable them to manage technology easily. On the other hand, there are the teachers of the older generation, who didn't have this opportunity, and this generates a

difference. If there was a chance to change something, it would be to get the best of both worlds by joining the older and newer teachers together so they learn from one another simultaneously. Another change would be to create communal centers where technology could be provided for the community.

Appendix 2: Survey for the students of the Conversation and Composition IV Course

Circle one of the following

1)   When the teacher uses the projector does it help you understand better?

                 Yes   No

2)   Do you think more multimedia should be used in the classroom?

                 Yes   No

3)   Do you like when teachers incorporate technology in the classroom?

                 Yes   No

4)   Do power point slides help you understand a topic better?

                 Yes   No

5)   Does technology have a negative effect in the learning process?

                 Yes   No

6)   Would you purchase a software that will help your pronunciation and writing?

                 Yes   No

7)   Do you feel comfortable around technology when it comes to learning English?

                 Yes   No

8)   Would you like to have classes besides teachers using the whiteboard?

                 Yes   No

9)   Would you like to have laptops during class for research?

                 Yes   No

10)   Do multimedia resources help you clarify things when you are lost?

                 Yes   No

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Appendix 3: : Pre-test.

Pre-test (What dou you know about persuading?

1. Which type of this writngs do you know? (You can choose more than one)

☐ Descriptive

☐ Persuasive

☐ Chronological

☐ Informative

2. In which situations would you use persuasive writing?

☐ Letters

☐ Advertisements

☐ biographies

3. In which type of writtng do you try to convince someone what you say is true?

◯ Descriptive

◯ Persuasive

◯ Chronological

◯ Informative

4. In order to persuade someone , which of these evidences will you use? (you can choose more than one)

☐ Facts

☐ Emotions

☐ Feelings

☐ Moral

☐ All of them

5. How often do you use graphic organizers to outline your ideas?

◯ Always

◯ Sometimes

◯ Ocasionally

◯ Hardly ever

◯ Never

6. Do you think using an counterargument (an argument that is oposite to your belief) is a good idea when writing persuasive papers?

8. From 1 to 5 being 1 the less and 5 the highest score. Do you think you are able to state a position and defend it?

1	2	3	4	5
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

9. Do you think the usage of videos and multimedia resources(projector, slides, smartcellphones) would help you to understand in a better way a topic like the persuasive writing?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ There is no difference

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Appendix 4: Evaluation Rubric

	Below Standards (1)	Approaching Standards (2)	Meets Standards (3)	Exceeds Standards (5)	Score
Position Statement	There is no position statement.	A position statement is present, but does not make the author's position clear.	The position statement provides a clear statement of the author's position on the topic.	The position statement provides a clear, strong statement of the author's position on the topic.	
Attention Grabber	The introduction is not interesting AND is not relevant to the topic.	The author has an interesting introduction, but the connection to the topic is not clear.	The introduction has a hook or attention grabber, but it is weak, rambling or inappropriate for the audience.	The introduction has a strong hook or attention grabber that is appropriate for the audience. This could be a strong statement, a relevant quotation, statistic, or question addressed to the reader.	
Support for Position	Includes 1 or fewer pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences).	Includes 2 pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement.	Includes 3 or more pieces of evidence (facts, statistics, examples, real-life experiences) that support the position statement. The writer anticipates the reader's concerns, biases or arguments and has provided at least 1 counter-argument.	
Grammar & Spelling	Author makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Author makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	
			Total Score:		

http://zunal.com/webquest.php?w=202220

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Appendix 5: 1st day of class.

3. Do you think you will use the information you received today in homework or research projects?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ maybe

Survey

Hello partners. Please I would like you to score todays class. Please be as honest as possible.

1. Was today's class interesting?

○ Very interesting

○ Interesting

○ Not very interesting

○ Not interestig at all

2. Was the information you received today useful?

○ Very useful

○ Useful

○ Not very useful

○ Not useful at all

5. Do you like the usage of the projector in class? Can you tell why?

○ Yes

○ No

○ It doesn't make any change

4. From 1 to 5 Was the usage of the inteactive graphic organizer useful?

	1 not useful at all	2 slightly useful	3 quite useful	4 very useful	5 extremely useful
	○	○	○	○	○

○ Yes

○ No

○ Moreless

7. Did you see any problems in the usage of the technological devices? Can you tell which ones?

○ Yes

○ No

can you tell which were the limitations with the technological devices?

[   ]

8. From 1 to 5 Was the video easy to understand?

	1not easy at all	2 slightly easy	3 quite easy	4 very easy	5 extremely easy
	○	○	○	○	○

6. Do you think the use of Kurzweil was useful?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Moreless

7. Did you see any problems in the usage of the technological devices? Can you tell which ones?

○ Yes

○ No

can you tell which were the limitations with the technological devices?

[   ]

8. From 1 to 5 Was the video easy to understand?

	1	2	3	4	5
	○	○	○	○	○

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Appendix 6: 2nd day of class.

24/07/2013 Class

1. How can you describe the usage of the Prezi today? you can choose more than one option

☐ Interesting

☐ Boring

☐ Useful

☐ Innovating

☐ It is the same as power point

2. What should the introductory parragraph include?

○ introdution of your topic

○ arguments

○ restate the position

3. According to today's class. how can you catch your reader's attention? you can choose more than one option

☐ questions

☐ anecdotes

☐ scenario

☐ all of them

☐ no one of them

4. Which of these evidences you should not include in your body parragraph?

○ Moral

○ Your personal opinion

○ Logic

○ Emotions

5. Should counter arguments be taken into account in the parragraph? Can you give a reason to your answer?

○ Yes

○ No

why?

☐

6. From 1 to 5 being 1 the lest and 5 being the highest score. How useful was today's class?

1 not useful at all	2 slightly useful	3 quite useful	4 very useful	5 extremely useful
○	○	○	○	○

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7. From 1 to 5 being 1 the least and 5 the highest score. How interesting was today's class?

1 not interesting at all	2 slightly interesting	3 quite interesting	4 very interesting	5 extremely interesting
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

8. Do you think having resources such as the projector, videos, and Prezi in class, make a difference? Can you give a reason?

◯ Yes

◯ No

can you give a reason to your answer?

[   ]

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Appendix 7: 3rd day of class survey.

3rd day of class

1. Where did you find the sources for today's debate?

◯ Internet
◯ Book
◯ Magazine
◯ Other

What other source did you use?

[   ]

2. Was it easy to find souces in the internet for today's debate?

◯ Yes
◯ No

3. From 1 to 5 how useful was today's debate in order to write the pearsuasive paragraph?

1	2	3	4	5
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

4. During this classes how useful have been the usage of multimedia resources? Can you give a reason?

◯ 1. Very helpful
◯ 2. Helpful
◯ 3. Not very helpful
◯ 4. Not helpful at all

can you give a reason to your answer?

[   ]

5. Now that the classes have ended, from 1 to 5 being 1 the lest and 5 the highest score can you tell how capable are you to write a persusive parragraph according to what we have seen?

1 not capable at all	2 slightly capable	3 quite caoable	4 very capable	5 extremely capable
◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

6. What suggestions do you have for improving these classes?

[   ]

7. Finally, as a student would you like that teachers work with Kurzweill 3000 (software to improve skills)?

○ Yes

○ No

○ It doesn't matter to me

can you give a reason to your answer?

[   ]

8. From 1 to 5 being 1 the least and 5 the highest score. How useful were prezi, webquest and videos during these classes?

| 1 not useful at all	2 slightly useful	3 quite useful	4 very useful	5 extremely useful
○	○	○	○	○

Appendix 8: You tube video

Name of the video: Persuasive Writing.

Objective: Show through a video the characteristics of persuasive writing.

Description: The video provided the students the characteristics of the persuasive writing. It also mentions what persuasive writing should include. The video includes music, images, advertisements, descriptions, and explanations related with the topic.
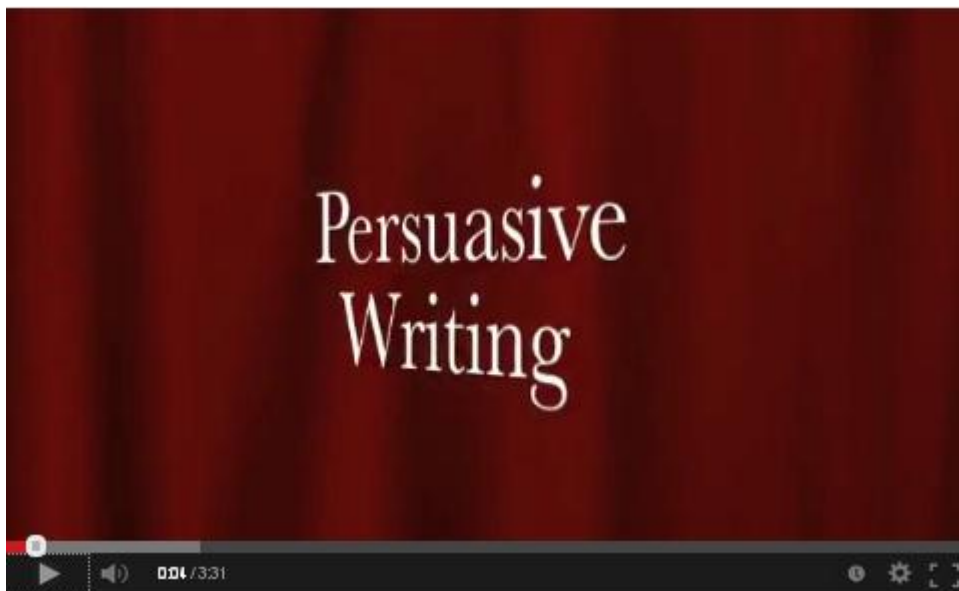
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaGJNxCxB-s

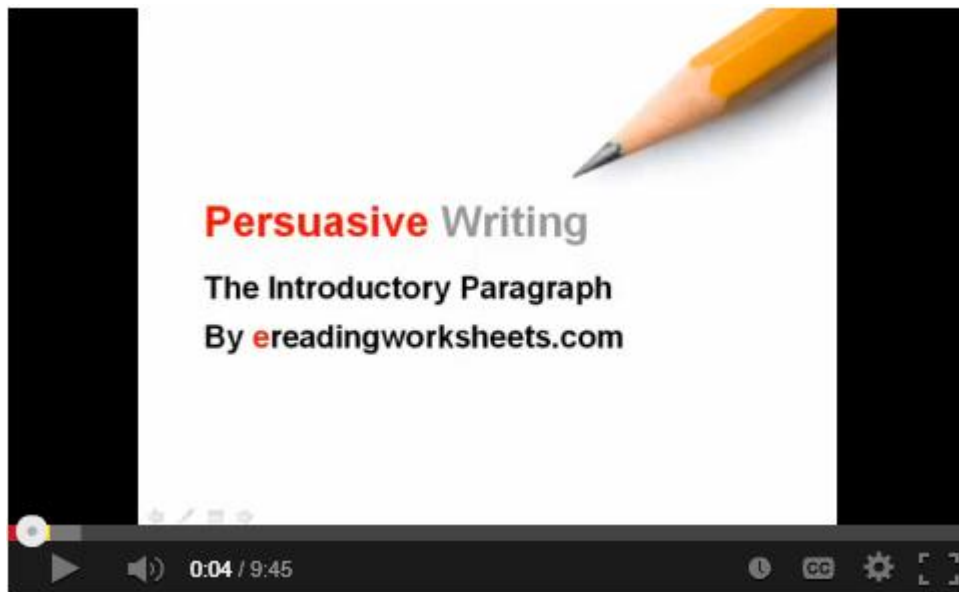**Autores:** Delgado Pérez Camilo Andres
Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

Appendix 9: You tube video

Name of the video: Persuasive writing: the introductory paragraph.

Objective: Explain the students the different arguments to use in the introduction of the paragraph.

Description: The video presents the different ways to catch the readers' attention by using an effective argument at the beginning of the introductory paragraph. All of this is accomplish with the aid of examples and explanations in the video.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3COR_IKG2c

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Muñoz Vallejo Sandy Yadira

Appendix 10: Prezi

Name of Prezi: Persuasive paragraph process.

Objective: It connected all the ideas developed during the class.

Description: This *Prezi* presentation was used to create a bound with all the contents given through the classes. It was a useful tool since it used sources from other pages without living the original website.

http://prezi.com/pwio96dvjnew/persuasive-parragraph-process/

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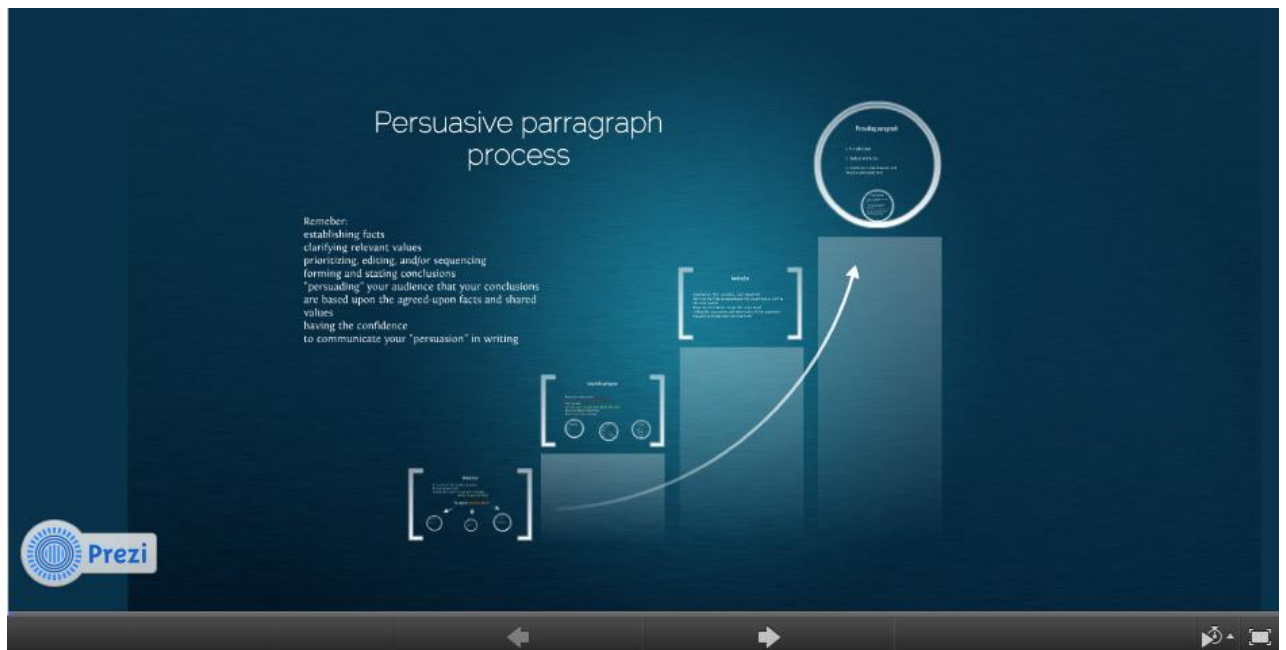
Appendix 11: Sample worksheet.

Name of worksheet: Sample of persuasive paragraph.

Objective: Identify the different components of a persuasive paragraph.

Description: The students have to identify and mark with different symbols the different parts of the persuasive paragraph. This was done in order to ask the students analyze this letter and remember the characteristics of this type of writing.

Underline the topic, circle the reasons, double underline the evidences and put in brackets the counterarguments

Dear Governor Davis,

I suggest that we should have a law that tells us not to leave trash on beaches. If there is a law already in place, then I suggest we take strong measures to enforce the law.

I think this because a lot of people leave trash on beaches and eventually the trash will get picked up by the tide. When this happens a lot of animals die. Some become or are close to becoming extinct. Every day and night tons of sea animals die because of trash!

Here are some reasons why we should have or enforce this law. Lots of people don't pick up trash, mostly plastic bags. Turtles eat jellyfish, as you may know, but what I'm getting at is that plastic bags look like jellyfish in a turtle's eyes. Then when the turtle swallows the bag it chokes because the bag is so thick. The turtle then dies. Another problem is the plastic six-pack soda rings that are left on the beach. When seagulls poke their heads in everything you know that they're going to get into trouble. Well, they do. In fact, some seagulls get their beaks stuck in these plastic soda rings and then they die from starvation. Also, the seals are very curious animals and they will sometimes try to eat two liter plastic soda bottles that float out with the tide. This can make them sick or even kill them. Another really big reason to outlaw trash on beaches is the fact that California has the most beautiful beaches in the world. People come from all over the place to visit our coastline. How sad it would be if they left thinking we didn't care about our own beaches and allowed people to throw trash anywhere.

Here is an example of how we can clean our beaches. I remember every summer when we go to the beach we have a picnic

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lunch. With six people in my family we can sometimes create a lot of trash. My mom always brings a 'trash bag' and when we are done eating we have to put every scrap of trash in the bag. We even clean up the beach in our immediate area and put other people's trash in our bag. I am a Girl Scout and my mom is a Girl Scout Leader. We live by the creed: "Leave a place better than you find it". But anyone can do this … you don't have to be a Girl Scout! At the end of our day at the beach, we take the trash bag out to the parking lot and place it in a trash can.

Some people might think that they should not have to clean up. Perhaps they think that is somebody else's job. But nobody wants to go to a stinky, messy, polluted beach . . . and the animals that live there do not want to have a messy home. I am sure that the Great State of California has some sort of law that makes it illegal to leave trash on the beautiful beaches. What I'm wondering is why that law is not enforced. If it is too costly to have people patrol the beach and give tickets to those who leave their trash behind, then maybe it's time to consider not allowing people to bring food or beverages to the beaches. I would be sad to see that happen, though, because I enjoy a picnic lunch on the beach.

Think of it – a junkyard! No beach deserves to be raided with trash, so please consider the idea of making a law to stop people from polluting our beaches or please consider enforcing this law if there is one. I know that you make the best choice you can!

Sincerely, Lizzie