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**The Talk for Writing method and its impact on pupil
results**

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Abstract

In Catalonia there is an increasing interest in children's writing as it seems to be one of the reasons for school failure. The same problem exists in England. One example is Ladypool Primary school. It uses the Talk for Writing methodology to teach their primary students. Mainly, this method wants to help children to improve and progress in reading and writing skills. The aim of this article is to observe and analyse how this method is used and if there is a progression or impact in children's abilities in English and other subjects. To work on this research, I observed an entire Talk for Writing process, which is recorded in a diary, two different interviews and the analysis of two Ofsted Reports on the school. It can be affirmed that Talk for Writing helps children as they progress and improve their results in English throughout the process.

Key Words: Talk for Writing, English, Teaching, Literacy, Thinking Skills

Resum

A Catalunya hi ha un interès creixent en els escrits dels infants, ja que sembla una de les raons relacionades amb el fracàs escolar. El mateix problema existeix a Anglaterra. Un exemple és a Ladypool Primary school. Aquesta utilitza el mètode de Talk for Writing per ensenyar als seus estudiants de primària. Principalment, aquest mètode vol ajudar als infants a millorar i progressar en les habilitats lectores i escriptores. L'objectiu d'aquest article és observar i analitzar com s'utilitza aquest mètode, si hi ha algun progrés o l'impacte que té en els infants en l'anglès i altres assignatures. Per treballar en aquesta recerca, he observat un procés sencer de Talk for Writing, que ha estat registrat en un diari, dues entrevistes i l'anàlisi de dos Ofsted Reports de l'escola. Es pot afirmar que el Talk for Writing ajuda als infants, ja que progressen i milloren els seus resultats en anglès al llarg del procés.

Paraules clau: Talk for Writing, Anglès, Ensenyament, Alfabetització, Habilitats de pensament

Resumen

En Catalunya hay un interés creciente en los escritos de los niños ya que parece ser una de las razones relacionadas con el fracaso escolar. El mismo problema existe en Inglaterra. Un ejemplo es en Ladypool Primary school. Esta utiliza el método de Talk for Writing para enseñar a sus estudiantes de primaria. Principalmente, este método quiere ayudar a los niños a mejorar y progresar en las habilidades lectoras y escritoras. El objetivo de este artículo es observar y analizar cómo se utiliza este método, si hay algún progreso o el impacto que tiene en los niños en inglés y otras asignaturas. Para trabajar en esta investigación, he observado un proceso entero de Talk for Writing, que ha estado registrado en un diario, dos entrevistas y el análisis de dos Ofsted Reports de la escuela. Se puede afirmar que el Talk for Writing ayuda a los niños, ya que progresan y mejoran los resultados en inglés a lo largo del proceso.

Palabras clave: Talk for Writing, Inglés, Enseñanza, Alfabetización, Habilidades de pensamiento

1. Introduction

I am interested in learning more about how writing can be taught because, in my experience, this is a skill that very few people have mastered. Because in my 5th Year at University I was required to do a placement abroad, I decided to investigate how the school that would be hosting me worked on writing skills. This is when I discovered the Talk for Writing methodology.

The school is Ladypool Primary School in Birmingham, and they have been using Talk for Writing (T4W) since two years ago. The Ofsted Report produced in 2015 rated the school as “requires improvement”. One of the reasons was that pupils did not have enough opportunities to edit their writings accurately and they made spelling mistakes. They also have not been reading enough and some of them did not read with full understanding and used limited vocabulary which was consequently affecting their progress. Since the school decided to implement the Talk for Writing (T4W) methodology, the latest Ofsted Report produced in 2017 rated the school as now “good”. One of the reasons it has improved was that “pupils progress in reading, writing and mathematics and also they enjoy learning and developing necessary skills for the next educational stage”.

Doherty (2016) explained that “Talk for Writing has had an outstanding impact on schools. Typically, schools have found that children initially double their rate of progress and, [...] many schools have moved from dire results to outstanding success”. One example done was in St George’s Primary School in London, where around 67% pupils are on free school meals, they follow the introduction of Talk for Writing (T4W) and the school rose from dire results to achieving 96% of level 4 in all areas. Consequently, Talk for Writing (T4W) methodology may be helping children in all subjects because of what it involves.

In Catalonia the same interest exists in improving writing. The “Ara escric” programme started in 2011 aims to reduce functional illiteracy as it was one of the most important problems that education had. Consequently, it wanted to improve children’s writing. “Ara escric” programme argues that writing lets you “Desenvolupar coneixement, participar en la societat i desenvolupar el potencial personal” (p.16). Continuing with this idea, the programme also explains that writing is involved in our everyday life, for example in daily routines. In Catalan schools writing is really important for these

reasons and as “Ara escric” says, “Un dèficit en competència escrita és... una de les portes d’entrada a l’exclusió social” (p.10).

Fox (2017) argued that Talk for Writing “is powerful because it is based on the principles of how children learn. [...] There is a clear enthusiasm among the schools and staff who use the programme. This enthusiasm was mirrored by changes in the pupils’ writing over time” (p.12). Is this true? Is T4W also useful and powerful in Ladypool Primary school? How are they using it? Does it improve children’s writing? From all these questions and my personal interest, the research question I will investigate is the following: How is the talk for writing method used and what impact do teachers consider it has?

2. Theoretical Framework

To talk about writing and how Ladypool Primary school teaches it, is necessary to explore theoretical concepts related to it. There has been a clear evolution from treating writing as a technical ability to seeing writing as an element that involves structuring your thoughts and ideas. This means the necessity to connect thinking and writing skills as it helps us to organize and structure our ideas.

2.1 Process and Product Approaches

Process and Product are two different approaches that have been used to teach writing skills. The former is defined by Kroll (2001) as:

The “process approach” serves today as an umbrella term for many types of writing courses... What the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than a single-shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts (pp. 220-221).

The author explained that the Process Approach is about drafting and improving these drafts in a collaborative way to produce a final text as ,good as possible.

On the other hand, there is the Product Approach which, as the name indicates, focuses on the final result. As Steele (2004) explained, this is considered a traditional approach in which students mimic a model text which is presented and analysed in the first steps. Children have to focus on analysing grammar aspects and rules of the text which is considered really important in this approach. Product Approach finishes when they write the final draft in a fluent and competent way.

Steele (2004) also talked about these two approaches and argued that they have a common aim: to achieve the best product possible which is considered the essence of each writing approach.

To continue, Steele (2004) proposed a grid to compare the two approaches:

Grid 1: Product vs Process Approach

Process approach	Product approach
Text as a resource for comparison	Imitate a model text
Ideas as a starting point	Organisation of ideas more important than the ideas themselves
More than one draft	One draft
More global, focus on purpose, theme, text, type, i.e., reader is emphasised	Features highlighted including controlled practice of those features
Collaborative	Individual
Emphasis on creative process	Emphasis on end product

Later on, a study was done at the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (2014) in which the authors compared the approaches to analyse which is more useful for teachers and for students.

Rahim, Salam and Ismail (2014) argued that teachers started using the Product Approach in the 1970s, which consists of imitating a model text focusing on grammatical errors and emphasising the final product. The process they followed was always the same, but they did not learn to analyse the structure, something which is also really important.

During the 1980's, teachers decided to adopt the Process Approach considering it a creative approach in which students learn writing skills by doing different drafts in a collaborative process. Mainly, it focuses on the structure of texts, the purpose and also the audience instead of the grammar rules and mistakes. The main disadvantage appeared when the teachers realised they had to mark lots of drafts by each student because if not, the approach did not work. Rahim, Salam and Ismail (2014) affirmed that teachers did not have enough time.

Considering all these aspects, during the 1990's teachers went back to the Product Approach because it was easier for them in terms of time and completing the syllabus.

Rahim, Salam and Ismail (2014) argued that these approaches have advantages and disadvantages and this was the reason why teachers mixed them in order to adapt to the students. As the authors said, "Several research results prove that the combination of

product and process approach helps learners to achieve a better capacity in writing ability” (p. 6).

The authors explained that it is essential to create different language activities by adapting the main characteristics of the two approaches to create the best approach adapted to the students. Because of this, Rahim, Salam and Ismail (2014) argued that “designing activities by blending the Process Approach with Product Approach will be more effective rather than selecting one approach” (p. 6).

Some elements of the process approach, such as coherent links and structuring ideas appear to be connected with the whole idea of thinking skills. Taggart, Kidley, Rudd and Benefield (2005) explained that,

“Since 1999, thinking skills have been included in the National Curriculum alongside “key skills” such as those to do with communication and information and communications technology (ICT). Thinking skills are expected to be developed at all key stages and centre on: information – processing skills, reasoning skills, enquiry skills, creative thinking skills and evaluation skills” (p.1).

The importance that thinking skills started having was because of the amount of functionally illiterate people. The National Literacy Trust estimates that 5.1 million adults in England are functionally illiterate which means that they have reading age of 11 or below and can understand only short and familiar texts.

2.2 Thinking Skills

Kelly (2011) defined thinking skills as “the mental activities you use to process information, make connections, make decisions, and create new ideas”(p.1). Thinking skills are also used in different moments, for example, to solve problems, organize information, and make plans, among others.

Thinking skills are important when used effectively. Kelly (2011) explained that “Good thinkers see possibilities where others see only obstacles or roadblocks. Good thinkers are able to make connection between various factors and be able to tie them together. They are also able to develop new and unique solutions to problems” (p.1). This quote explains that good thinkers are able to connect thinking to other skills, such as writing. A good thinker can write coherently following a structure they have thought.

Robert Fisher is the author of the article “Stories for Thinking” who did a study about different types of stories and the relation they can have with thinking skills. The aim was to use narratives to develop thinking, learning and language skills through stories.

Fisher (1996) explained that in education, one of the most important aims in terms of literacy is that children learn to read and write. Literacy is defined by Fisher (1996) as “the ability to think, reason and communicate within a particular social context” (p.16). Consequently, he thought about the best way to teach literacy to children considering thinking skills as an important issue because as he argued that “we need to focus on the ways of thinking that are involved in the many uses of literacy in school and in the community” (p.16). From this point, the “Stories for Thinking” programme appeared.

This programme consists of proposing different types of stories in which children can reflect and discuss what happens in the story. Fisher (1996) explained that “Stories are not only powerful in the affective domain, but also provide potentially complex challenges for cognitive processing” (p.18). For this reason, stories can be a good way for children to develop their thinking skills. In order to work on that, the teacher has to choose texts that contain good content because this should be linked to specific questions to discuss later.

There is an example that Fisher (1996) explained to do with children between 7 and 9 years old. Children have to ask a question about the text they have read and they will vote which is the best question to discuss. The teacher also has to choose one of the student’s questions. From this point, all children start discussing and explaining their answers. At that moment all the children are developing their thinking skills in order to argue the answer they are explaining. All students agree that it is very useful to stop and think because it is the way in which they can start thinking coherently and argue everything they say. Fisher (1996) argued that “as the children get more experienced in the process they will ask more questions, and their insights in discussion will delight and surprise you” (p.25). So, as they grow, the questions and answers have to be deeper, more profound and complex to continue developing their thinking skills.

Fisher (1996) affirmed that studies of the most literate and able children show skills they have acquired that less successful students have not acquired. He explained that they have more “knowledge of literary forms, [...] skills and strategies for processing

literary knowledge, including the ability to question [...] and the ability to apply and transfer their knowledge”(p.17).

To sum up, Fisher (1996) argued that “Any story or book that children read can become a story for thinking if a teacher or reading partner follows the story up with questions and themes for discussion” (p.24). It is really important that the teacher follows a process to help students to think and discuss by asking questions related to the story.

By using thinking skills, children learn to think in a structured and coherent way which can be used in all subjects. This means that they need to order all the ideas before writing them.

As the article explained, children learn how to work on thinking skills and how to develop them while they are working on Stories in Literacy time. This is what happens in the Talk for Writing (T4W) methodology, in which children work the entire process using thinking skills first and writing skills later. So, let’s turn to the T4W method.

2.3 Talk for Writing

Talk for Writing (T4W) is a methodology that links thinking and writing skills. Thinking skills are closely related to writing skills because as Kelly (2011) defined, thinking skills are “the mental activities you use to process information, make connections, make decisions and create new ideas” (p.1).

T4W methodology involves elements of the two different approaches mentioned before: Process and Product. In terms of the Product Approach, Steele (2004) argued that it is an individual approach in which children can only write one draft, for example when they do the Cold and the Hot Write. Related to the Process Approach, children can write several drafts before the final writing. It is a collaborative approach which is used throughout the process before writing the final draft.

Talk for Writing has three different stages. At the beginning, there is a “Cold write” in which the teacher asks children to write a type of text without previously working on it and without teaching anything. Using these texts, teachers plan all the lessons and knowledge they need to focus on with their students in order to help them improve in that genre.

From that point, they start with the first stage called imitation. It is about imitating a story or text following the structure it has. This means that the teacher gives an example of what they have to do at the end of the entire process. During this stage there is an activity to help children organise all the ideas of the text in a coherent and structured way. It is called a story map and is done by the teacher and students. It consists of organising all the key elements of the text by drawing and writing the main things that happen in it. It also helps students to have clear all the content. As Corbett and Strong (2017) explained, this is the most important stage because it gives structure and language input to children which is really important for them in order to complete all the stages of the process.

The second stage is innovation. This consists of creating new versions of the initial text in order to improve it and start creating their own version taking into account all the knowledge they have acquired. To finish, there is the independent stage in which children have to make up new story texts based on the first one they worked on at the beginning of the process. In this last stage, children write their “Hot write” in which they demonstrate all the knowledge they have acquired.

Christopher Fox (2017) did a study in 2017 in a New Zealand school to help boys to improve their marks. He observed that boys had worse marks than girls and he wanted to apply the T4W methodology to help them.

He decided to implement T4W and observe if boys and girls could improve their marks in all subjects, as happens in other schools. Fox (2017) explained, “I could see the T4W writing process and the student’s attainment in all subjects. The evidence in their books was amazing.” (p.7). In fact, he observed that T4W was helping New Zealand students because they were developing thinking skills which helped them progress in writing but also in other subjects. The ERO (Education Review Office) External Evaluation of the New Zealand school argued that “The school achievement information shows sustained good performance in reading, writing and mathematics over five years, where many students are achieving at or above the National Standards”.

Fox (2017) found some data from UK Schools that are using T4W and it showed that this methodology is helping them.

The 2008 Ofsted Report on St Matthew's School in Birmingham, stated that the improving standards in English are helping pupils to make good progress in other subjects. The Ofsted Report affirmed that nine out of ten pupils come from minority ethnic groups. It also explained that three fifths of the pupils speak English as an additional language. This information shows us that the school has to work hard with students because most of them do not have English as a first language and they also have more difficulties than other children. In 2015 the Ofsted Report on the school rated it Outstanding, and it said that "The teaching of writing is particularly strong and pupils are very confident writers by the time they leave. The school is now focusing on getting more pupils up to such high level in mathematics" (p.1).

The example of UK school shows us that the T4W methodology was implemented to help students improve in Literacy and in other subjects and consequently, some years later they showed very good results.

Throughout the process, teachers have to be involved with children, trying to offer the best texts and ways of teaching. Fox (2017) identifies some key factors in the school success that are really important. First of all, it is important that teachers follow the entire process and the stages as the model indicates. Children also need high-quality texts with a good structure, patterns, vocabulary, sentence openers and other elements that can help them to learn about that genre. All this vocabulary and the structure have to be adapted to children so they can understand and learn from each aspect by, for example, creating a story map. As the whole process is complex and implies a lot of attention to children, Corbett and Strong (2017) recommend that it is a good option to have a teaching assistant or other adult in the class to help students. Furthermore, they considered that schools should spend 90 minutes per day and 5 days per week working on the T4W process in order to guarantee the efficacy.

Fox (2017) argued that "Children for whom English is an additional language and children who received free school meals made similar progress in their writing attainment to other children" (p.13). This is really important because these children have more difficulties in their homes and consequently in their studies, and these results indicate that T4W helps them to improve like the other children. Fox (2017) meant that T4W helps all students regardless of their needs and backgrounds. Fox (2017) also considered that "T4W represents a new synthesis of teaching practices, focused on the

extensive use of classroom talk to help children become familiar with a range of text genres” (p.12).

3. Methodology

Ladypool Primary school is a public school in Sparkbrook, Birmingham. It was built in 1885 and designed by the architects Martin and Chamberlain. The school has changed over the years and in the 1970's it was expanded. Now, the school offers Nursery, Reception and Primary education and there are about 450 students.

In terms of where the school is, there is a large ethnic minority population because some years ago, Asian people began to arrive in Sparkbrook and Sparkhill. Nowadays in Ladypool Primary school 87.6% of pupils have English as an additional language. The latest Ofsted Report also reported that "Almost half of the pupils are of Pakistani heritage. The proportion of pupils believed to speak English as an additional language is more than four times the national average" (p.9). 32.2% of the children are entitled to free school meals.

This research focuses on five students in Year 2 to analyse how they work on writing, if they improve using the T4W method and what results they obtain in writing but also in other subjects. To investigate this, I followed the entire T4W process and all the activities they did throughout, focusing on an analysis of the first and the last written texts.

To do this research, I used the interpretative paradigm. Perez (2008) explained that the interpretative paradigm involves some detailed descriptions of some moments or situations that you can analyze, taking into account the attitude, behaviour, thinking, experiences and others. In this research, I worked on a Case Study because I analysed children's writings throughout the T4W process, so I used the interpretative paradigm as it is qualitative and it focuses on experiences and sessions observed, interviews and document reviews.

I analysed five out of twenty two Year 2 children's writings. I decided to analyse five because they had the clearest handwriting important in terms of reading the text, and the presentation they had. This is important because I have to understand the elements of the text to be able to analyze them. I choose only five children because they were in all the lessons and they participate actively throughout the process which made them easier the activities proposed because they were really involved. Another reason of doing the analysis in Year 2 was because they were following all the steps of the process, such as,

doing the story map while older children skipped it. I consider important to understand the whole process and how it works, and the best way is observing and analysing an entire process with all the activities it has.

There are different tools to use in research, such as a diary, document review, focus group, interviews and observations. The ones I used are observation, interviews, diary and document review. Focus group is about interviewing between 6 to 12 people who have common interests but I did not use it as I only focused on the Year 2 teacher and the Literacy teacher at the school.

First of all, observation is useful to see how the school organises the lessons and how teachers teach everything, for example, if they follow all the stages, how they plan lessons, if they adapt lessons to children and how everything is done in each session. To work with this tool, I used a grid to write all aspects I considered important during the lessons I could observe. To record all these aspects, I used the diary tool to write the systematic observation of the sessions. This was a good way to order all the information and analyse what the school is doing and what the theory says.

Another tool is the interview. This is a good tool to use in this case because the teachers who were interviewed explained everything from their point of view and it is interesting to compare their knowledge and what they try to do with the main theory and the observation I could do.

The last one is document review. I use this tool to analyse the Ofsted Reports of the school and see the differences in the results when they start using T4W and when they did not use it. This helps me to analyse and understand better the importance and the efficacy that T4W has in this school.

Consequently, these tools can help me to understand better what the teachers and students are trying to do and at the same time, analyse all the information considering the differences and similarities that everything related with the theoretical framework explained by the authors of the T4W methodology.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 How is it done?

From the observations I did in the Year 2 class, I could observe all the activities and the steps they follow throughout the T4W process. Steele (2004) argued that the T4W method involves elements of two different approaches: Product and Process Approaches. I observed that these two have some aspects in the T4W method.

They started the first day listening to the Story of Hansel and Gretel. The aim of the session was to be familiarised with the narrative structure. From this point, they had to write their own narrative story taking into account the images they have in their books. This was the Cold Write, the text they had to do considering their knowledge about that genre. In this case, this text is done individually, so as Steele (2004) explained, this is related to the Product approach. After, they made a story map to represent all the actions and important moments of the story in an organised way. Steele (2004) argued that the organisation of the ideas is also involved in the Product Approach. Corbett and Strong (2017) explained that the story map helps students to organise all the ideas of the text in a coherent and structured way. Doherty (2016) also argued that the story map is a visual support that helps children to internalise the key ingredients of the text. In case of Ladypool Primary school, the story map was done by the teacher and the students at the same time. It helps children to organise the ideas but it may help them more if they could do it by themselves. However, Ms. Hussain, the literacy teacher, explained that the story map is done every year with every genre except in Year 5 and 6. She considered that they spend too much time doing it and it is not necessary with the oldest children of the school while it is really necessary with the younger ones.

Later on, they focused on the main parts of the story and how it is divided: opening, build up, problem, resolution and ending. They did also another story map to explain what happens in each part. Doherty (2016) called this part “boxing up” in which children start to understand the structure of the text and how it works. It is also a good opportunity to clarify all the content they have to write in each part of the text.

Another session presented to the children was about learning adjectives to describe a picture and also the setting description needed. They did a poster all together to explain the Hansel and Gretel story by using different adjectives. Children had to copy the same

text but changing the adjectives. Another activity was related to conjunctions in which children learnt different conjunctions to connect ideas that they can use throughout the text. There is also another activity done during this second stage in which the teacher gave a sheet with lots of sentence openers that children can choose to write their own texts. They also commented and explained the meaning of each one and how children can use them.

Doherty (2016) argued that it is important to promote more advanced activities to help them improve with vocabulary and phrases of the text. So, they start the innovation stage as they improved the text and wrote a new setting description by using the appropriate vocabulary and conjunctions they have worked on.

To continue with this second stage, children have a new setting they have to describe by using all the adjectives, conjunctions and vocabulary they have learnt. Corbett and Strong (2017) explained that it consists of creating new versions of the initial text to start creating their own version. In this case, they have to do it autonomously. Doherty (2016) explained that during this stage, children should be encouraged to swap their work with a responder partner in order to discuss it and improve it later. To help them, they have a sheet with some questions they have to answer throughout the text, for example, how are they saved? Where do they go? Children have to complete all these gaps by thinking about their own story. This is when the last stage begins. Doherty (2016) recommended some activities to work on with children, such as the one proposed by the teacher in which children have to structure all the ideas they have in order to write them later considering all the aspects they want to explain. From this aspect, Steele (2004) talked about the Process Approach in which children work in a collaborative way with the teacher. In this case, they did an activity to prepare themselves to be ready for the independent text. It was a collaborative activity in terms of sharing ideas with the classmates and the teacher. However, all the texts that children did throughout the activity were only checked by the teacher and the other students did not know anything about the other classmate's texts. Consequently, this was not a collaborative activity because there was only the teacher marking and helping each student to improve.

Later on, it was time to start with the Hot Write, in which they had to write an independent text by using all the knowledge they had acquired. In this case, Steele

(2004) argued that the autonomy and individual work is based on the Product Approach. In Year 2, it took about three sessions to finish with the Hot Write. Doherty (2016) explained that this section should end with a whole class discussion about all features that work in the texts and the ones that could be improved. In this case, it was only the teacher who corrected all the text and made some comments to children on specific aspects to improve. From this Hot Write, the teacher knows the learning of each child, so as Steele (2004) argued, she emphasises the end product which is part of the Product Approach. Ms. Hussain, the literacy teacher of the school also argued that “the final mark is based on the hot write definitely because we look on how they do the text independently without any help from us and we compare it to the cold write to see the differences and the progress they have made”. There is also the Year 2 teacher, Ms Hassan, who explained that “the end product is so much more improved compared to the Cold Write”.

To work throughout the process, teachers in Ladypool Primary School did English 4 days per week for one hour each time. Corbett and Strong (2017) recommended that they should spend 90 minutes per day and 5 days per week working on T4W process. However, both teachers argued that they did not have enough time to work on this methodology as much as they wanted. They also affirmed that time is a big disadvantage in this methodology because it takes a lot of time to work on all the stages and do all the activities that the children have to do before the Hot Write.

The Ofsted Report produced in 2015 explained that the school needed to improve the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. One of the reasons was because they did not have enough opportunities to edit their writing accurately and they also made unnecessary spelling mistakes. On the other hand, in the latest Ofsted Report they had improved this aspect and others that made children progress and improve in English and Maths. It also affirmed that the quality of teaching is much better.

4.2 Results in writing

In this part, I will analyse the extension of the texts that children did in their Cold Write and also in their Hot Write. The graph below shows the amount of words that the five children had written.

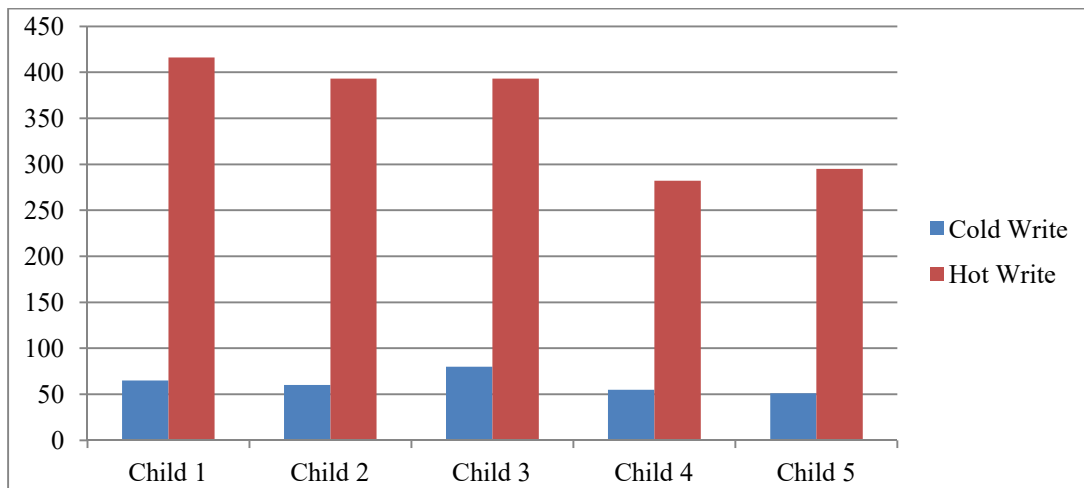


Figure 1: Comparison of length of initial and final drafts

As it shows, all children wrote from 50 to 80 words in the Cold Write and since they have acquired more knowledge and learnt vocabulary, adjectives and conjunctions throughout the process, they were able to do the Hot Write using between 280 to 416 words. Fox (2017) argued in his study that “The evidence in their books was amazing” (p.7) and it was also in these children’s books. He also explained that, based on the study he did, T4W helps all students regardless of their needs and backgrounds. This graph shows us that all these children, from different ethnic minority communities and different backgrounds could improve a lot throughout the whole process and they were able to write a Hot Write applying all knowledge they have acquired.

To continue, I focus on the vocabulary used, such as, the adjectives, conjunctions and the complexity of them. Mainly, the teacher focused on sentence openers, adjectives used and conjunctions. In the next grid, there are the specific words and sentences that children used in their Cold Writes and later on, in Hot Writes.

Grid 2: Comparison of Linguistic variety and quality of initial and final drafts

	Adjectives	Sentence Openers	Conjunctions
Cold Write	-Braved, relaxed, scared, small, tired	-Once upon a time, one sunny day.	-Because, but, and
Hot Write	-Chewy smooth toffee, tall spooky trees, black frightening shadows, creepy, scary, sticky, tasty crunchy toast, dark dense forest, amazing wonderful gingerbread castle.	-Once upon a time, a long time ago, one snowy night, after a while, far, far away, one gloomy night, one spooky night, early the next morning, one creepy night.	-That, so, after, because, but, and, when.

As the table shows, there is a clear difference between the Cold Write texts and the Hot Write ones in terms of complexity and the words they used to explain the story.

There is also a clear difference with the quality of these two texts. In the Cold Write they used simple sentences with a subject and verb to explain all things or problems throughout the story. All of them are also very simple stories without many difficulties or problems to solve. On the other hand, the Hot Writes they did were much better as they used exclamations, apostrophes, question marks and metaphors. All sentences are more complex and they used lots of adjectives, conjunctions and also some adverbs.

To work on all these aspects to help children improve their final texts, teachers have to use different resources while they are following the T4W process and all the stages it has. From this, Ms. Hassan explained that they used “comprehension resources, for example, in one story about the shopping basket, I used a real basket and plastic fruit to show to children”. It is a good way to help them learn in a real way using materials to understand the concepts and consequently the genre of that text because as Fox (2017) argued “T4W represents a new synthesis on teaching practices, focused on the extensive use of classroom talk to help children become familiar with a range of text genres” (p.12).

To finish with the analysis of the children’s texts, I observed the structure of them in order to know if they follow a clear and organised structure or not. All these texts are

organised in different paragraphs. From the activities they did, like the boxing up, they have clear the structure and all the parts that the text needed. The difference between children was only in the vocabulary they were using to express what they thought.

Ms. Hassan argued that younger children tend to stick to the example text so all hot writes are very similar as observed. All children write more or less the same amount of words but they were free to use the vocabulary they considered more appropriate in each case. This was the main difference I observed in the texts.

4.3 Results in other subjects

The latest Ofsted Report of Ladypool Primary School rates the school “good”, so it has progressed from two years ago. It explained that “The work in pupil’s books and the school’s assessment information shows that current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders also ensure that skills progression is consistent year-on-year in other subjects, such as science, history and geography” (p.7). So, it argued that children are improving more in all subjects since two years ago and this could be because of the way of teaching and the methodologies used, like T4W, that help children to structure their thoughts and ideas.

Ms. Hussain, the Literacy teacher explained about the impact that T4W has in other subjects. She explained that “T4W is all about discussing and sharing ideas [...] first they have to think and share ideas in their heads”. She considers that structuring your knowledge and all the ideas before you write is basic to helping them do it clearly and coherently. In relation with the other subjects, she argued that “It is also good in other subjects, for example in Maths because when we ask a question they need to think and explain the answer. So they need to explain their thinking. The same happens in Topic, when they have to write, for example, a letter for a Soldier. They need to think about it and explain their thinking using all the knowledge”. The last Ofsted Report also argued that “Children make strong progress in the early years and achieve well across all areas of learning” (p.7). As T4W was introduced at Ladypool in 2015, it may be one of the aspects that helped students to achieve these results.

Ms. Hussain affirmed that T4W has a structure that helps students to organize all their knowledge and follow the steps they need to order the contents in all subjects. The latest Ofsted Report also argued that, “The most recent school assessment information shows

that pupils currently in school are now making good progress in all key stages” (p.7). This means that children in all key stages are progressing in a good way, so the methodology may be helping them in that sense.

Teachers observe results every day because in other subjects, children do the same thinking process before doing some activities, as in the T4W process. The Year 2 teacher, Ms. Hassan, also explained that “it’s very good at seeing the progress the children have made and it gives weaker writers ideas for their own writings”.

5. Conclusions

In this research, I present evidence on children's progression using T4W method, for example, the graph on page 18 which shows a clear improvement between the first and the last written text. It helps students to improve their writing abilities. Teachers also argued that the structure that this methodology has helps children to structure and order their ideas and this helps them in all subjects. However, because of the time I could not see more extensive or significant results in terms of how this methodology is involved in other subjects.

There is no evidence about the opportunity to work on some stages and specific activities without following the whole process that can have good results. It would be interesting to observe other schools to know if the methodology is also working and helping students and also discover if they follow all the stages and activities proposed by the authors or not.

In case of Ladypool Primary school, the results obtained are amazing as children progressed a lot throughout the process and they were able to write in a more confident way by using all the knowledge they have learnt. In Catalonia children from 6 to 7 years old are not able to write these type of texts so it would be interesting to implement some activities that this methodology has in our education system to know if Catalan children can also improve their results.

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