



# **BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA**

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## **FACULTAD DE LENGUAS**

**A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE GOALS OF THE WRITING SKILL ON THE  
LEI PROGRAM AND ITS RELATION WITH THE CEFR**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
LICENCIADA EN LA ENSEÑANZA  
DEL INGLÉS**

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**A discourse analysis of the goals of the writing skill on the LEI program and its relation with the CEFR**

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## *Abstract*

Interest in academic writing bids fair in our days to become a key feature when exploring higher education. Especially in English Language Teaching (ELT), writing practices enfold mechanical concerns, but at the same time social and cultural issues at different levels. This investigation attempts to shed some light in this issue. The general purpose of this study is to explore the writing skill in the curriculum of the Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI) at the Faculty of Languages of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. The specific objective of this study is to compare this program's goals in regards to writing to those proposed by the Common European Framework of References (CEFR).

Though, it may not be evident to the outside viewer, students in this Faculty experience a complex dependency in regards to their skills in English language writing. Some of the reasons may be found in the discourse proposed by the curriculum. Besides using a quantitative methodology of comparison in regards to the programs to identify and illustrate the differences and similarities between both documents, this investigation includes also critical discourse analysis as a qualitative approach.

General findings suggest that discourse in documents may need to be re-examined in depth in order to better appreciate its implications. Specifically, in the comparative analysis findings suggest that there are more differences than similarities between these curriculums' writing goals. Discourse analysis suggests that the promotion of critical writing, writing fluency and empowering the students may not be stated adequately in the documents under study.

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# I INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

***“Writing means sharing. It’s part of the human condition to want to share things- thoughts, ideas, opinions” Paulo Coelho.***

This claim induces the idea that writing fosters the ability to develop our interaction by explaining and supporting a specific type of social communication, namely literacy. The writing skill is an essential skill in the development of learning independently of any area of study. Literacy is a paramount competence in institutional education. Very especially in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) writing improves a great deal self-regulating learning. For this reason, writing is a compulsory skill to learn and develop professionally in order to communicate and understand different types of text.

The Faculty of Languages as a major institution is dedicated to the training and formation of English language teachers. The B.A. in English Language Teaching holds a special part in its programs about writing. Probably one of the concerns may be that the writing skill may not be adequately focused on the programs and in the different courses (curriculum planning). As a result, students might not obtain enough training to write complex texts and achieve the intended goals. Hence, I believe that it is important to reconsider the intended outcomes of the programs as well as compare them to those of the Common European Framework, which has become a norm and standard to the goals of the acquisition of English as a Second Language.

Thus, this study aims to compare the writing goals of both programs from a mixed method approach.

## 1.2 Context of the research

The Faculty of Languages at the BUAP trains students to become EL teachers. In order to approach this objective, the B.A. offers five specific courses of English as a Target language and five shorter workshops to complement. The subjects are: English Target Language I, ETarget Language II, ETarget Language III, ETarget Language IV and ETarget Language V; Workshop I (Speaking & Listening), Workshop II (Reading & Writing), Workshop III (Listening & Speaking), Workshop IV (Reading & Writing) and Workshop V (All skills). Most of the courses are related with the writing skill, however, Workshop I and Workshop III focus specifically on Listening and Speaking, therefore these two courses are not considered in this study. Except those two, all other eight programs include a direct relation to writing in their programs. Thus, this study includes the exploration of these eight curriculums planning.

In general, it has become necessary to implement activities and strategies that help students to develop the writing skill at all times, even at the end of the B.A. In fact, analyzing the programs of the Workshops and Target language courses, very important factors seem to be missing. It may be assumed that these could have an impact on the problems students face when developing the writing skill. Thus, this research takes place at Faculty of Languages BUAP and the programs analyzed are those within the subjects where the writing skill should be developed.

There are many studies that are closely related with this topic, for example Jimenez (2013) conducted a study based on the writing strategies. In this research, he reports the different strategies that students use in their writing assignments. To explain this, he guided a research on the teaching writing strategies where he found that writing strategies seem to

be the most significant at the moment of composing texts. In addition, Gonzalez (2013) emphasizes the importance of feedback in the development of writing; she points out key topics as academic writing and problems associated with feedback.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The general purpose of this study is to explore the writing skill in the curriculum of the LEI and compare its goals in regards to writing to those proposed by the CEFR. The specific objective of this investigation is to identify and illustrate differences and similarities between both documents utilizing a mixed method. Quantitative data is reported by means of graphs and statistics and the qualitative examination uses a critical discourse approach.

In order to analyze the curriculum of the LEI, the objectives in regards to writing in eight programs are explored: Target Language 1, Target Language 2, Target Language 3, Target Language 4, Target Language 5; Workshop II, Workshop IV and Workshop V, which belong to Miverva plan.

### **1.4 Research questions**

This investigation aims to answer the following research questions:

- What general findings may be found by comparing the syllabuses of the B.A. in E.L.T at the School of Languages and the levels proposed by the CEFR?
- What are the similarities between the writing goals and objectives of both documents?
- What are the differences?
- What may be some critical-pedagogical implications of the findings?

## II LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Chapter overview

In this chapter, a description of the most relevant concepts of this study are provided. The first part offers the main statements of the CEFR in regards to the writing skill. In the second part a review of the educational processes focused on the writing skill are explained. Following the curriculum analysis, a specific description of the purposes that the course contains is included, and the syllabus that is intended to stipulate the different tasks in the goals and objectives. Finally, a critical pedagogical framework to explore the findings is specified, which enlightens the qualitative part of this study.

### 2.2 The CEFR- Background

The common European Framework of Reference for Languages has been active since 1971. It involves the contribution of many members of the language education across Europe. As reported by the council of Europe, the CEFR “describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively”. Furthermore, they emphasize “the Framework defines levels of proficiency which allow learners’ progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis”. Consequently, the CEFR is an essential part of the curriculum development, due to, the languages syllabuses have to be established following the references of this framework.

### 2.2.1 General competences

The CEFR take into consideration some general competences of a language learners, these have reference in particular with their knowledge, skills and existential competence as well as their ability to learn. As stated in the Common Reference Levels, there are three global scales:

*Chart 1 The Common European Framework of References*

Copyright: The CEFR webpage retrieved from: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>

Proficient user	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent user	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences

		and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic user	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

These stages have been used by different language programs to standardize their purposes and goals along the different levels of proficiency.

## **2.2.2 Writing Skill competences according to the CEFR**

Concerning the subject of written production activities, the language learners as “writers” are expected to produce texts which are admitted by one or more readers. Enclosed in this, the CEFR provides three general descriptive scales of different types of writing. These are, Overall Written Production, Creative Writing and Reports and Essays. Specific details of each of these scales are described below.

### **2.2.2.1 Overall Written production**

The CEFR offers a description of different activities that are related with different stages of development and level of proficiency in the types of texts that the learners have to produce. These activities are reported in terms of the levels A1-to-C2. For overall written production, descriptions are the following:

C2: Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points.

C1: Can write clear, well-structured texts of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.

B2: Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesizing and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.

B1: Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.

A2: Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because'.

A1: Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences.

As we can see these descriptions provide a general view of the expectation of writings students must be able to produce for general writing. However, the specifications do not mention clearly the number of words or specific grammar points. The following criteria explains the descriptions for creative writing.

#### **2.2.2.2 Creative Writing**

The CEFR claims that this category allows the learner to write free texts, using not a formal language but appealing to the students' creativity. The descriptors are the following:

C2: Can write clear, smoothly flowing, and fully engrossing stories and descriptions of experience in a style appropriate to the genre adopted.

C1: Can write clear, detailed, well-structured and developed descriptions and imaginative texts in an assured, personal, natural style appropriate to the reader in mind.

B2: Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.

Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write a review of a film, book or play.

B1: Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest.

Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text.

Can write a description of an event, a recent trip – real or imagined.

Can narrate a story.

A2: Can write about everyday aspects of his/her environment, e.g. people, places, a job or study experience in linked sentences.

Can write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.

Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job.

Can write short, simple imaginary biographies and simple poems about people.

A1: Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do.

As may be seen, in this criterion the descriptors include a bit more details about the specific details that are expected from a writing and in some cases the explanations of the expectations include more detailed information.

### **2.2.2.3 Reports and Essays**

The final category in the CEFR for writing, involves academic writing in a formal language. The main purpose is that learners develop clear texts. It is important to mention that even when the descriptors include the adjective clear, there is no evidence of agency requirement. This means that the descriptors, at least, do not clearly entail students to use their personal voice in their writings.

C2: Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, complex reports, articles or essays which present a case, or give critical appreciation of proposals or literary works.

Can provide an appropriate and effective logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points.

C1: Can write clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues.

Can expand and support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples.

B2: Can write an essay or report which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail.

Can evaluate different ideas or solutions to a problem.

Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

Can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources.

B1: Can write short, simple essays on topics of interest.

Can summarize, report and give his/her opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.

Can write very brief reports to a standard conventionalized format, which pass on routine factual information and state reasons for actions.

The descriptors above have all been taken from the CEFR information in the open access website. Those descriptors have been offered to provide a general perspective of the writing requirements; many language programs are based on when working with the writing skill. In the following parts, I offer a more detailed explanation of what is writing, what a competent writer is and how the perception of it has changed over time.

## **2.3 Writing**

‘Writing’ may be seen from different perspectives. According to Byrne (1997), when we write, we use graphic symbols: that is, letters or combination of letters which relate to the sounds we make when we speak. Moreover, “Writing is not a natural activity. All physically and mentally normal people learn to speak a language. Yet all people have to be taught how to write. This is a crucial difference between the spoken and written forms of language. There are other important differences as well. Writing, unlike speech, is displaced in time” (White, 1988).

### **2.3.1 What is a competent writer?**

Regarding the writing skill we have to consider the concepts that define a good writer. Reid (1993) holds the view that the integration of both fluency- and accuracy- oriented work will enable student writers to develop the communication strategies and academic writing skills needed for successful academic work. Besides, Hyland (2002) expresses the view that writing expertise is the ability to adhere to style-guide prescriptions concerning grammar, arrangement and punctuation. In other words, a good writer is able to integrate cognitive process and the domain of specific knowledge.

On the other hand, we can not ensure that a competent writer is one that is read more. In other words, you may not be a good writer, but you may have a good publisher. In this sense, in the academic field, we can develop skills and abilities to write and gain fluency and accuracy, and even develop a personal style. We may also gain knowledge in grammar, punctuation and organization but the question remains if we can prove that competent writers have more readers.

### **2.3.2 Writing in teaching education**

The writing skill is exceptionally important within the formal teaching field. Hyland (2002) emphasizes that ‘Teaching writing from a textual perspective involves raising students’ awareness of the relevant rhetorical strategies available for realizing different text stages, accomplishing cohesion, adopting an appropriate tenor, and for managing information flow’. Furthermore, Byrne (1997) comments that ‘written work serves to provide the learners with some tangible evidence that they are making progress in the language’. In fact, teaching writing involves facilitating classroom activities designed to promote writing fluency and empower the students within a process classroom.

Both researchers affirm that writing includes a set of skills that may be developed in the classroom. However, the issue of empowerment and agency when writing remains a bit under studied from this perspective. There may be still a need for teachers to re-think the manner we approach writing in the classroom activities and perhaps focus a bit more on the personal-expression, agency and freedom of speech from a pedagogical approach.

One concerning implication in this study is that students of EFL may not be provided with enough preparation on the writing skill throughout the years they spend learning the language. There is a need to examine how the writing skill is approached in the foreign

language classrooms considering that when students are at intermediate level, they are still engaged in the same simple activities like descriptions or narrations and other basic writing activities. This cause considerable problems for them to later create texts with a literary focus. Furthermore, even with advanced students there is a seldom attention to implement activities that promote literary creation or complex and argumentative texts.

Cenrikawaty, Mukhaiyar, Yasin and Manaf (2020) remark that a reform in teaching writing is essential to effectively approach creative texts. For these authors, it is important to emphasize these three factors in order to create a successful learning process in writing: lesson plan, the media and the English writing material. In addition, they also suggest that the writing learning process should be interactive, inspirational, enjoyable, challenging and encouraging for students' motivation to engage them to participate actively and at the same time give enough chance to creativeness (Ibid, 2020). Taking all those elements into consideration then, the educational purpose may be reached.

Moreover, Cimasko and Reichelt (2011) affirm that the practice of reading to write as a pedagogical perspective is crucial. They discuss the implementation of a program that focuses on writing tasks based on the reading of literary texts. They also mention that a key goal of any writing program must be to prepare students to think critically about the texts they read to respond to and write about them insightfully and argumentatively (Ibid. 2011). This means that possibly the development of these abilities (reading and writing) from elementary to higher education represent a welfare to foreign language learners. As educators, we must keep in mind that since reading corresponds to the acquired knowledge, new words and open intellect of the world they are exposed to, we should take extremely seriously the responsibility to select our reading and writing materials.

### 2.3.3 Elements of a writing Pedagogy

Hyland (2002) argues that there are certain elements in the teaching of writing that must be considered in order to discuss any pedagogy toward this skill. He points out that these elements are:

**The writer:** Basically, this boils down to two important points. We need to regard writing as a cultural activity, and to engage students in the writing process.

-Issues of proficiency, first language background, and prior experience

Participants have their own ideas of what 'good writing' consists of based on their prior disciplinary, cultural or social experiences, and these expectations are internalized as different writing patterns.

-Cognitive and motivational factors

Successful writing instruction requires an awareness of the importance of cognitive and motivational factors, which means teachers should provide relevant topics, encourage cooperation with peers in planning and writing tasks, and incorporate group research of various kinds.

-Knowledge of topic

in addition, while not all students compose in the same way, they will need realistic strategies for generating plans, researching topic information, rough drafting and gradually refining both content and form.

-The role of composing process

many teachers offer students training in composition strategies which can be transferred across situations, helping them to brainstorm, draft in stages and to separate rhetorical revising from grammatical editing to accommodate their restricted communicative.

**The text:** A major weakness of purely writer-centered approaches is that students are often given little advice on how to structure their writing experiences according to the demands and constraints of target contexts.

-Authenticity of purposes and writing tasks

there is often an emphasis on writing or discover one's thoughts rather than to appropriately express them; students thus need to acquire strategies of engagement and response to a community's discourses.

-Number and variety of writing assignments

A portfolio is a collection of student writing, of various entries written over time, which represent the goal of the program.

-Genre modelling and exploration

Primarily, we learn to write through writing, but what we write must be related to the genres we will have to produce and the contexts in which we have to produce them.

-Rhetorical and lexico-grammatical consciousness rising

Teaching writing from a textual perspective also involves raising students' awareness of the relevant rhetorical strategies available for realizing different text stages, accomplishing cohesion, adopting an appropriate tenor, and for managing information flow.

**The reader:** Effective writing instruction involves guiding students to an awareness of their readers, and the interactional strategies, background understanding and rhetorical conventions these readers are likely to expect.

-Orientation to specific target discourse communities

Classroom audiences are important as teachers play a central role in responding to students writing while peers can be trained to provide effective feedback.

-Need for real and multiple audiences

Teachers and students also need to be sensitive to task- specific and community-specific issues, and teachers can help students to anticipate the needs and expectations of particular groups of readers

-Awareness of appropriate levels of involvement and interactional strategies

This can be achieved through think aloud reader protocols of their texts

-Importance of feedback and audience response

Tasks which require students to address different goals and audiences or by researching real audiences (Johns, 1997) importance of feedback and audience response.

Clearly the methods briefly set out here are something of a pedagogic wish-list which will be modified by the exigencies of real-classroom situations and the specific needs and circumstances of real learners. But while these ideas may not be fully applicable in any particular context, they do represent a fusion of research-based practices which seem to improve writing and which we should try to incorporate in our courses where possible.

Even when Hyland takes into account the reader as a variable in the writing process, I believe the issue of publishing and advertisement remains under estimated. In the academic field, and especially in teacher education programs, most writing syllabuses focus on the mechanics of writing but do not generally emphasize the issue of developing a personal style, agency, empowerment or freedom to express. The closest to these issues we can find in writing programs is the concept of critical thinking, which has somehow become trilled. In the following lines, a specific connecting point between teaching writing in teaching education is illustrated. There is also a deep description of the main concepts underlying this study; such as curriculum, syllabus, goals and objectives.

## 2.4 Curriculum design

Curriculum design in teacher education programs is a wide theme that has various interpretations. For example, White (1998) states that it “refers to the totality of content to be taught and aims to be realized within one school or educational system”. Additionally, in agreement with Rodgers (1973) “this includes not only what pupils learn, but how they learn it, and how teachers help them learn, using what supporting materials, styles and methods of assessment, and in what kind of facilities”. As can we realize, curriculum design does not only focus on what students are expected to learn also how they will learn it, this involves methods, materials and evaluation. Curriculum, more widely refers to all aspects of planning, implementing, evaluating and managing an educational program (Nunan 1988).

In this sense, curriculum development in the case of writing may need to be updated, changed and improved constantly, something that does not actually happen. In fact, when analyzing the writing part in programs, it is very common to see that very few issues have changed over time in the same programs. Curriculum should offer the following:

A. in planning:

1. Principles for the selection of content- what is to be learned and taught.
2. Principles for the development of a teaching strategy-how it is to be learned and taught.
3. Principles for the making of decisions about sequence.
4. Principles on which to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of individual students and differentiate the general principles 1,2 and above, to meet individual cases.

B. In empirical study:

1. Principles on which to study and evaluate the progress of students.
2. Principles on which to study and evaluate the progress of teachers.

3. Guidance as to the feasibility of implementing the curriculum in varying school contexts, pupil contexts, environments and peer-group situations.

4. Information about the variability of effects in differing contexts and on different pupils and understanding of the causes of the variation.

C. In relation to justification:

A formulation of the intention or aim of the curriculum which is accessible to critical scrutiny.

Thus, while curriculum designers are more likely to take a long-term perspective, setting out plans for semesters and years, teachers and materials writers more often do their detailed planning in relation to lessons or units of work that serve their day-to-day purposes. In other words, curriculum design provides a framework to approach writing development but it is teachers who finally make the necessary changes for improving or degrading the programs. Nunan (1988) states; "Of course, no curriculum will ever be totally subject-centered or totally learner-centered. However, even within institutions in which teachers and learners have minimal input into the curriculum development process it is possible to introduce elements of learner-centeredness. It is worth considering the ways in which your curriculum might be modified to make it more learner-centered".

While curriculum refers to the general organization of the contents of a school or educational system, the syllabus is referred to as the specific work for a particular class. Below a deeper explanation.

#### **2.4.1 Syllabus**

Syllabus is a concept based on the needs analysis of a course. According to White (1998, p.4) "A syllabus is the specification of the work of a particular department in a school or college,

organized in subsections defining the work of a particular group of class”. Besides, Johnson (1989, p. 28) claims that “Syllabus design is thus the process by which linguistic content- vocabulary, grammar, notions, functions- is selected and organized”. With these descriptions we note that creating a syllabus involves the determination and classification of what is to be taught. All this within the linguistic content.

In the case of writing, it may be assumed that the syllabus must be based on the particular needs of the students and the specific situation. This may be more the ideal situation but not the reality. Most syllabuses do not actually change the content to be adapted to the students. It is much more common that the syllabus is used over and over again by different groups of learners and they and teachers must adapt themselves to the syllabus but not the opposite.

#### **2.4.2 Goals**

Goals could be defined as a broad section within the curriculum design field; they are the bases to construct the objectives of a determined course. From the perspective of Brown (1995) “Goals are general statements concerning desirable and attainable program purposes and aims based on perceived language and situation needs. These perceptions may be based solely on a formal needs analysis”. Also, he affirms that “The process of defining goals makes the curriculum developers and participants consider, or reconsider, the program’s purposes with specific reference to what the students should be able to do when they leave the program.” In fact, goals could be determined as wide descriptions of the program intentions, these have to be established from a needs analysis, as well as, they are developed in the sense that the learner will achieve a specific proposal or behavior inside and outside of the academic settings.

The previous explanation is relevant because in this study a comparison between the goals and objectives of ten different syllabuses is offered in order to illustrate the similarities and differences.

### **2.4.3 Objectives**

Objectives are clear statements that explain the expected knowledge outcomes of lessons. White (1998) defines as objectives “The pedagogic intentions of a particular course of study to be achieved within the period of that course and in principle measurable by some assessment device at the end of the course”. As well, as Brown (1994) states “objectives: provide the building blocks from which curriculum can be created, molded, and revised”. Therefore, objectives are specific aims that the course is expected to accomplish in definite time and these have to be measured with an evaluation when the course is over. This process consists of two general types of objectives: Instructional Objectives and Educational objectives. Each of these include a specific sub-categorization of objectives, as may be seen below.

#### **2.4.3.1 Instructional objectives**

Instructional objectives are precise and a general outline of the learner’s behavior after instruction. According to Brown (1994) “Instructional objectives are specific statements that describe the particular knowledge, behaviors, and/or skills that the learner will be expected to know or perform at the end of a course or program”. These objectives could be defined as precise utterances that specify the type of behavior which is to be contemplated when the course finished. At the same time, they have three essential characteristics as indicated by Mager (1975, p.23); performance, conditions and criterion. Each of these explained below.

#### **2.4.3.1.1 Performance**

Component of the objectives probably included in the fact of what the students are able to do or what the learner will be able to do. Objectives that are framed in such terms will reflect qualities, skills, or knowledge that each student should attain by course end without necessarily specifying the route by which she or he will get there. In other words, if need have been determined, students can normally be made a concept of terms of what the students are able to do when they have closed or given a course.

#### **2.4.3.1.2 Conditions**

Expressed by the conditions under which the performance is expected to occur. Mager (1975) claims that “Thinking through the students must be able to perform is useful, but often the clarification of what it means “to perform” will only occur when the conditions that surround the performance are described”. Looking at another way, the conditions include the fact that the student are only responsible for certain learning. Conditions in a way limit the expectation of the performance to occur only under these conditions.

#### **2.4.3.1.3 Criterion**

This part of objectives refers to the quality or level of performance that will be taken into consideration to regard the objective as accomplished. According to Mager (1975) “stating the level of accuracy that will be considered to succeed (or pass) on a given objective can be problematic. Hence, cut points and the collapsing of scores across objectives are issues that must be faced, and criterion levels within the objectives may become very important.” Indeed, the criterion level of suitable performance is allocated at 80 percent certainly for this objective.

Generally speaking, the criteria for writing objectives may be exemplified when we look the different levels of performance from A1 to C2 levels.

### **2.4.3.2 Educational Objectives**

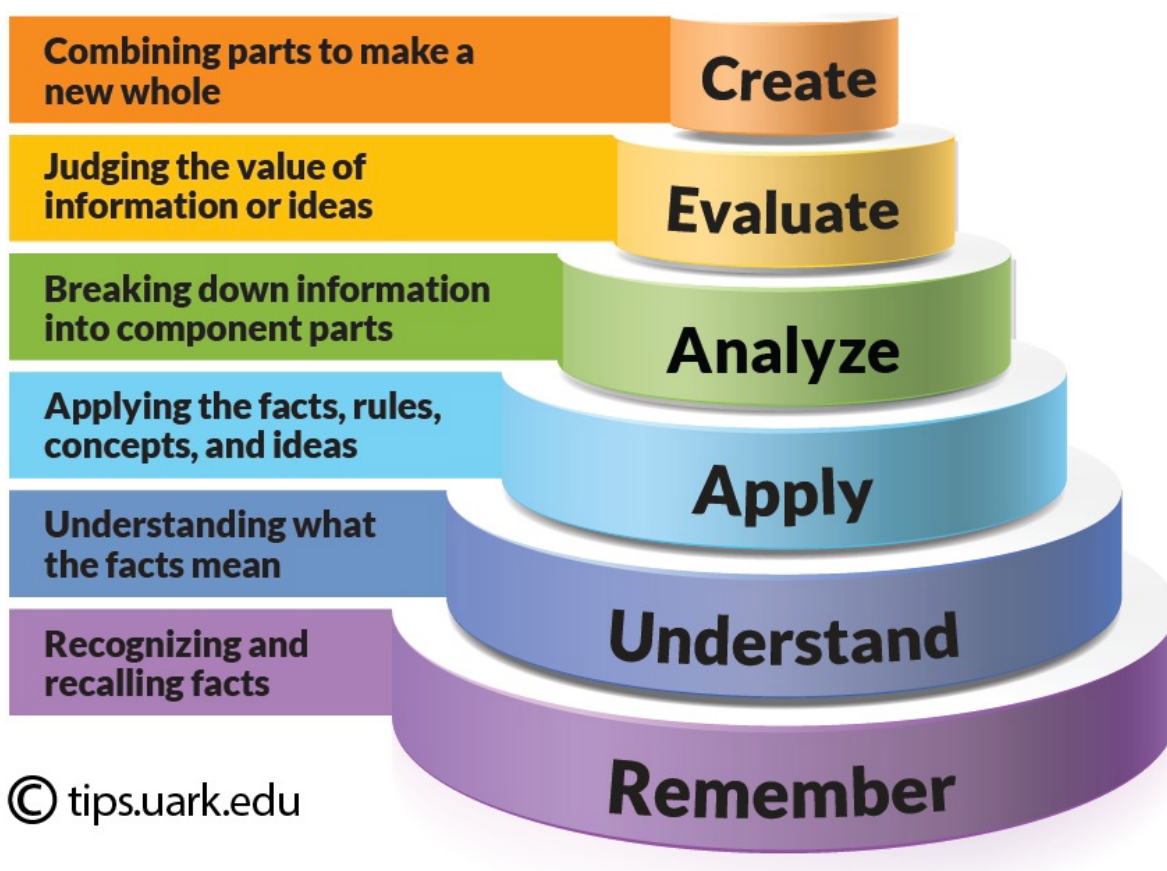
Educational objectives are generally determined from curriculum theory which defines what students will be assumed to know by the end of the program. Bloom (1984) established “By educational objectives, we mean explicit formulations of the ways in which students are expected to be changed by the educative process. That is, the ways in which they will change in their thinking, their feelings, and their actions”. These are based on previous learning experiences and open the way of new contents bases in their needs and interest and, consequently, students will change their behavior.

Educational objectives then involve specific behavioral changes that may ideally affect social relationships, they enclose two categories explained below:

#### **2.4.3.2.1 Cognitive Objectives**

These objectives which deal with the recall or recognition of knowledge and the development of intellectual abilities and skills include directed outcomes. Bloom (1984) divided the cognitive objectives into six distinct levels, each level building on those below and representing a progressively higher level of cognitive activity. They contain outcomes which are related to the acquisition and application of knowledge and understanding. In other words, they form the learning pyramid. A diagram of these levels is offered below.

*Diagram 1. Bloom's taxonomy*



Even when Bloom and co-workers offer a clear hierarchization of the levels of learning development in the diagram above, they also provide a clear description of the issue some writing studies have left side, namely personal voice. Bloom describes this issue as the Affective domain.

#### **2.4.3.2.2 Affective objectives**

These objectives are concerned with attitudes and feelings which are carry about as a result of training process. Bloom (1984) claims that “The affective domain was also sub-divided into a number of distinct, hierarchical levels”, as shown in Chart 2. This work was carried out by Bloom and his co-workers.

## *Chart 2 Affective Objectives*

- Level 5 : Characterisation - integrating one's beliefs, ideas and attitudes into a total, all-embracing philosophy.
- Level 4 : Organisation - making adjustments or decisions from among several alternatives.
- Level 3 : Valuing - committing oneself to taking up an attitudinal position.
- Level 2 : Responding - showing active interest in something.
- Level 1 : Receiving - developing an awareness of something.

As may be seen, affective objectives are supposed to include changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciation and adequate adjustment. In a way, affective objectives may be perceived as subjective and not tangible. However, from the writing perspective we may say that the affective objectives may become a breakthrough in the general formation of writing development. And, ideally, these objectives may be the main outcomes to develop when teaching writing, writing for change. The last part of the literature review in this study has to do with providing a more critical approach to develop writing.

### **2.5 A critical approach to writing**

Writing practices enfold mechanical concerning, but at the same time social and cultural issues at different levels. For critical pedagogy (Freire, 1996) education must lead to changing societies for better. Furthermore, in the language education area “Authority and power are manifested and perpetuated by the ways language is used and the purposes for which it is used” (Auerbach, 1994). This means that writing as a form of expression may be a powerful weapon to let express or silence learners.

In writing programs, students are usually required to read and report what others (recognized writers) think. As Hernández (2004) suggests teaching how to read but not how to write is a kind of barrier and a way of silence that makes students slaves of their fade knowledge and

conscience. He later clarifies that, it is not enough to teach students how to read, it is more important and essential that they learn how to write, but specially how to express their ideas, how to investigate and how to rise their voice and language appropriation.

In this study, two writing syllabuses are compared to illustrate their differences and similarities. However, as stated in the purpose, a central issue in this investigation is to re-direct the focus of writing development to the agency of teaching writing to give learners authority, intellectual independence, freedom, identity and capacity of thinking and disposition for change.

In the following chapter, a description of the specific methodology in this study is described and the findings and conclusions.

### **III METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents a description of the overall research design. It is stated the choice of methodology and the explanation of that selection. Besides, it includes a deep description of the research context detailing the place and the documents under study. Furthermore, the chapter contains an explanation of the data collection process, likewise the specification of the instruments and the reason of choosing them. Finally, the data analysis with a description of it is offered.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

After analyzing a theoretical support for the study in the last chapter, this research follows a case study methodology based on a mixed approach. This means that the study gathers data, then examines and presents the data involving quantitative and qualitative information (Cresswell 2012). This investigation builds on research done into comparing the CEFR objectives for writing with the Syllabuses in the Curriculum from English as a Target language and English workshops of the School of Languages using a mixed research method. Therefore, the discussion of the findings is specifically illustrated using a Discourse Analysis (Schiffrin, Tannen, Hamilton, 2005), which aims at revealing socio-cultural characteristics of the texts under study rather than the text structure (Ibid. p. 353). In this sense, the analysis of the discourse in the syllabuses is explored grounded on the sociocultural practices of the context of learning English to become English educators. This methodology attempts to provide a suitable tool to impact the design and development of writing programs for teacher education programs in the area of writing.

In words of Nunan (1992), this research is a systematic process of inquiry consisting of three elements or components:

(1) a question, problem or hypothesis. In this case; What are the elements that may be considered similar or different in both syllabuses?

(2) data. I take into account two documents, the CEFR writing objectives and the objectives stated in the English as a Target language and English workshops' syllabuses at the B.A. In ELT of the Faculty of Languages and,

(3) analysis and interpretation of data. The main purpose in this study which is carried out by illustrating and interpreting the findings.

### **3.2 Choice of Methodology**

As mentioned by (Creswell, 2012) a case study is a specific method to explore in depth a program, event, activity, process, as well as one or more individuals. In agreement to (Norman, Denzin and Lincoln, 1998), case studies are part of the scientific methods, but their purpose is not limited to the advance of science. Whereas a single or a few cases are poor representations of a population of cases and poor grounds for advancing grand generalizations, a single case can establish limits to grand generalization. Specifically, I conduct a case study based on a discourse analysis by means of programs examination. This discourse analysis uses illustrative tables of comparison and contrast to explain and interpret the data.

### **3.3 Research Context**

This research was carried out at the School of Languages at a University in central México. The specific documents under analysis are the English language syllabuses: from Target Language I to Target Language V and the English Workshops syllabuses as well. It is relevant to mention that this study took into consideration the syllabuses used during the period of the *Modelo Universitario Minerva* 2013-2017. As may be seen later, these language syllabuses of the School of Languages may seem to have not enough concordance with the CEFR objectives, even when they claimed they did, specifically in relation to the writing skill.

The documents that were compared review only the part of the writing skill, similarly the objectives and competences particularly in writing skill established on the CEFR are taken into account. As a student of the Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (LEI) program, I can say that objectives set on the language syllabuses seem not to have similarity with the competences and objectives that the CEFR take into account. Consequently, this represents a problem in the development of the writing skill, not only for knowledge but for evaluation and standard purposes.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

Quinn (1987) states “qualitative data provide depth and detail through direct quotation and careful description of program situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors”. Furthermore, as a type of data collection he also specifies “document analysis yields excerpts, quotations, or entire passages from records, correspondence, official reports, and open-ended surveys”. The process of data collection was determined by the analysis of language syllabuses and the CEFR documents comparing each other.

It may not be so evident to outside observers but collecting the syllabuses of the School of languages was a complex issue. First, we asked some Target language teachers to share their programs. One of the identified problems was that some of the teachers said that they did not have a program, and that their program was the coursebook. It is vital to mention that only after some months, the syllabuses were sent to us through mail by a specific teacher, who was part of the Teaching Academy in the School of Languages. In the case of the objectives of the CEFR, the collection was much easier because they are open access in the website.

Once the documents were collected, they were explored, codified and some notes were made. According to Creswell (2003) “notes reflect information about the document or other material as well as key ideas in the documents”. Then documents were analyzed and represented by the language syllabuses contents and the CEFR criteria, these provided the primary material for the data collection and the real situation under study.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

The data analysis involved the interpretation of the information obtained from the syllabuses and the exploration and analysis. Firstly, the objectives established on the language syllabuses with the competences that the CEFR contemplates in the descriptors of the writing skill were compared. Secondly, specific parts of the language syllabuses that seem not to have similarity with the CEFR were analyzed. After that, a report of the problems found in concordance of the language syllabuses and the competences that the CEFR established were clarified.

This chapter encloses the main points of the methodology, such as: the type of methodology followed that, as it was explained is a case study based on a comparative documentary mixed

research. As well as, the context in which the study took place. Moreover, the process of data collection was described and the purpose of it. At the end the data analysis procedures were described justifying the selection of it.

## IV FINDINGS

### 4.1 Chapter overview

In this chapter findings are discussed and an answer to each of the research questions is provided. Some of the most relevant findings are interpreted and illustrated by means of the analysis of the data. Finally, a critical interpretation of the findings is discussed.

### 4.2 Answer to the first research question

The first research question posed in this study was what general findings may be found by comparing the syllabuses of the B.A. in E.L.T at the School of Languages and the levels proposed by the CEFR. In order to answer this question a first exploration of the objectives has been done. The main general findings may be stated as:

- Target Language 1 –this program seeks to develop simple and isolated sentences in a basic level. However, even when this subject is taken at the same time as Workshop II; this Workshop intends the learners to write situations using past and future. In a way, we can say that there is no a very clear relation between these subjects which are supposed to be complementary.
- Workshop V (B2) and Target Language 3 (B1) are both subjects taken at the same time. They propose to aim reaching different levels of the CEFR.
- The syllabus of Target Language 3 does not explain in a specific way the objectives stated in the CEFR according to the B1 level.
- Workshop V does not describe the wide range of activities according to B2 level of the CEFR.
- The syllabus of Target Language 4 intends learners to write texts that talk about family, which is an objective not found in the B2 level of the CEFR.

- The objectives in syllabus of Target Language 5 are very general. The majority of the objectives seem to be based just on the first part of the CEFR ‘Creative Writing’ It almost does not contain objectives that refer to the second part ‘Reports and Essays’.

### 4.3 Answer to the second research question

The second research question in this study is about the similarities between the goals and objectives of the syllabuses of Target Language and English workshops and the CEFR. In order to illustrate this, a comparative table of the analysis between both objectives is presented. This comparison is illustrated taken into account the levels of the CEFR. Thus, comparative tables are illustrated in sequential order from A1 to C2. It is important to mention that the objectives in the School of Languages have been taken as they appear in the documents, in Spanish, and those of the CEFR in English. The analysis and interpretation of the data is described in English too. The underlined texts in these tables means that all information was just cut and pasted from the documents without any editing.

*Table 1 Similarities (TL1-WII-A1)*

Target Language 1 (TL1) A1	Workshop II (WII) A1	CEFR A1
<p>Escribir notas y mensajes cortos y sencillos relativos a necesidades básicas.</p> <p>Escribir cartas personales muy sencillas; por ejemplo agradeciendo algo a alguien.</p> <p>Redactar descripciones de personas y lugares de su entorno.</p>	<p>Descripciones de lugares y personas.</p> <p>Narraciones de situaciones en tiempo presente y pasado.</p> <p>Redactar párrafos narrativos y descriptivos breves sobre temas como: la familia, actividades diarias, lugares, experiencias</p> <p>Descripciones de planes.</p>	<p>Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do.</p>

- In A1 level, both documents have an objective, to achieve a basic level where the tasks are writing simple phrases and describe people, places and personal experiences.

The following table illustrates the similarities in Level A2.

*Table 2 Similarities (TL2-WIV-A2)*

Target Language 2 (TL2) A2	Workshop IV (WIV) Written expression A2 Language Level C2	CEFR A2
<p>Escribir una historia o cuento. Conectores de contraste: but, however.</p> <p>Descripcion de una persona. Conectores de tiempo: while, during, for.</p> <p>Escribir una historia.</p> <p>Llenar formatos.</p> <p>Como escribir una postal.</p> <p>Describir un lugar.</p> <p>Redactar una biografia.</p> <p>Redactar cartas formales.</p> <p>Conectores if, when, while as soon as.</p> <p>Cartas formales e informales.</p> <p>Escribir un ensayo acerca de un libro o película.</p>	<p>Desarrollara y utilizar estrategias para un desempeño apropiado en las habilidades de expresión escrita y de comprensión de un texto a un nivel de lengua intermedio (C1 de acuerdo al MCR).</p> <p>Redactara escritos sobre temas específicos de tipo académico y de la vida diaria tales como la familia, la religion, el aprendizaje de lenguas, etc.</p> <p>Redactara definiciones de temas o conceptos específicos tales como la bigamia, la eutanasia.</p> <p>Redactara ensayos breves de contraste y comparación.</p>	<p>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, living conditions, educational background, present or, most recent job.</p> <p>Can write short, simple imaginary biographies and simple poems about people.</p> <p>Can write about everyday aspects of his/her environment, e.g. people, places, a job or study experience in linked sentences.</p> <p>Can write very short basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.</p>

In this A2 level of the CEFR, some of the findings are:

- Both documents affirm that the students have to develop detailed and clear texts.
- Both documents support the idea that the students have to have the ability to write formal and informal texts in a variety of subjects.

- The use of contrast connectors like: but and however, and writing paragraphs with specific and academic topics.

The following table illustrates the criteria for the level B1.

*Table 3 Similarities (TL3-WV-B1)*

Target Language 3 (TL3) B1	Workshop V (WV) B2	CEFR B1
Redactar cartas informales Redactar narraciones Hacer solicitudes y reservaciones Redactar una carta formal Describir un lugar Redactar una biografía Identificar y usar correctamente los conectores if, when, while, as soon as. Redactar una historia Reportar eventos	Redactar textos claros y detallados sobre una amplia serie de temas relacionados con sus intereses. Redactar informes y cartas proponiendo motivos que apoyen o refuten un punto de vista.	<b>CREATING WRITING</b> Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest. Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can write a description of an event, a recent trip- real or imagined. Can narrate a story.  <b>REPORTS AND ESSAYS</b> Can write very brief reports to a standard conventionalized format, which pass on routine factual information and state reasons for actions. Can write short, simple essays on topics of interest. Can summarize, report and give his/her opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.

There are no clear similarities between the course Target Language 3 and the CEFR level B1. A few may be identified as:

Texts relating personal experiences or personal interests.

Descriptions or events real or imaginative. And,

Clear texts, without specifying what clear means.

The following table shows a comparison between the similarities between Target Language IV and the B2 level of the CEFR.

*Table 4 Similarities (TL4-B2)*

Target Language 4 (TL4) B2	CEFR B2
Hablar de su familia Expresar ideas y opinión de diferentes temas. Redacción de un artículo sobre alguna experiencia en la vida. Redacción de ensayo de comparación y contraste. Redacción de textos informales. Ensayo de opinión.	<p>CREATING WRITING</p> <p>Can write a review of a film, book or play. Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.</p> <p>REPORTS AND ESSAYS</p> <p>Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources. Can write an essay or report which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. Can evaluate different ideas or solutions to a problem.</p>

As we can see, both documents agree in the sense that student have to develop essays of opinion writings in which they reflect an argument, a reason, support or against a particular point of view. However, when further analyzed a lot more differences can be identified that similarities. For example, an interesting objective of TL4 is that learners write about their family, whereas in the B2 level of the CEFR that topic is not even mentioned generally speaking, a lot more complex topics are included in the CEFR than in the TL4 syllabus. This will be discussed later.

The following table show the similarities between the objectives in the Target Language 5 program and the B2 level of the CEFR.

*Table 5 Similarities (TL5-B2)*

Target Language 5 (TL5) B2	CEFR B2
Explica su punto de vista, exponiendo las ventajas y desventajas. Sabe construir una cadena de argumentos razonados. Utiliza conectores con eficacia. Es capaz de desarrollar un argumento ofreciendo detalles. Sabe cómo demandar cierta compensación haciendo uso de lenguaje persuasivo y de argumentos.	<p>CREATING WRITING</p> <p>Can write a review of a film, book or play. Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.</p> <p>REPORTS AND ESSAYS</p> <p>Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources. Can write an essay or report which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. Can evaluate different ideas or solutions to a problem.</p>

In this case these correspondences can be seen:

- Both documents involve the idea that students should develop texts in which learners have to discuss about a particular point of view.
- Both documents emphasize that the student could write about a variety of topics, always expressing supporting details.

As it can be perceived in the last tables, similarities between the objectives of the programs and the levels of the CEFR are not very recurring. In fact, the comparative tables illustrate that there are very few topics, objectives and descriptions that may be similar. On the other hand, many differences can be easily detected. This part is illustrated in the following section.

#### **4.4 Answer to the third research question**

The third research question in this study is about the differences between the goals and objectives of the Programs of Target Language and English workshops and the CEFR were.

In order to answer this question, the following tables show a comparison between both documents.

*Table 6 Differences (TL1-WII-A1)*

Target Language 1 (TL1) A1	Workshop II (WII) A1	CEFR A1
<p>Escribir notas y mensajes cortos y sencillos relativos a necesidades básicas.</p> <p>Escribir cartas personales muy sencillas; por ejemplo agradeciendo algo a alguien.</p> <p>Redactar descripciones de personas y lugares de su entorno.</p>	<p>Descripciones de lugares y personas.</p> <p>Narraciones de situaciones en tiempo presente y pasado.</p> <p>Redactar párrafos narrativos y descriptivos breves sobre temas como: la familia, actividades diarias, lugares, experiencias</p> <p>Descripciones de planes.</p>	<p>Can write simple phrases and sentences about themselves and imaginary people, where they live and what they do.</p>

As we can see in Target Language 1 the objective is developing simple and isolated sentences in a basic level. However, in Workshop II, the students are expected to write situations using past and future. As for the aims in the A1 level of the CEFR, learners are not expected to achieve the objectives mentioned in Target Language 1 and Workshop II.

A central issue in this study is to find a coherent relation in these documents. However, given the fact the documents of the B.A. in ELT claim that they are STRONGLY relate to the level they say in the CEFR, we can see that consistency is not exactly found, at least in this table.

The following table compares the difference in the following Target Language level.

*Table 7 Differences (TL2-WIV-A2)*

Target Language 2 (TL2) A2	Workshop IV (WIV) A2	CEFR A2
<p>Escribir una historia o cuento.</p> <p>Conectores de contraste: but, however.</p> <p>Descripción de una persona.</p> <p>Conectores de tiempo: while, during, for.</p> <p>Escribir una historia.</p>	<p>Desarrollara y utilizar estrategias para un desempeño apropiado en las habilidades de expresión escrita y de comprensión de un texto a un nivel de lengua intermedio (C1 de acuerdo al MCR).</p> <p>Redactara escritos sobre temas específicos de tipo académico y de la</p>	<p>Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences about their family, living conditions, educational background, present or, most recent job</p> <p>Can write short, simple imaginary biographies and simple poems about</p>

Llenar formatos. Como escribir una postal. Describir un lugar. Redactar una biografía.  Redactar cartas formales. Conectores if, when, while as soon as. Cartas formales e informales. Escribir un ensayo acerca de un libro o película.	vida diaria tales como la familia, la religion, el aprendizaje de lenguas, etc. Redactara definiciones de temas o conceptos específicos tales como la bigamia, la eutanasia.  Redactara ensayos breves de contraste y comparación.	people  Can write about everyday aspects of his/her environment, e.g people, places, a job or study experience in linked sentences  Can write very short basic descriptions of events, past activities and personal experiences.
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In this table we can see that both documents; Target Language 2 and Workshop IV claim to expect to develop an A2 level of the CEFR. The use of connectors in Target Language 2 seems to reinforce the objectives of Workshop IV to write essays. However, writing stories, places descriptions and formal and informal letters are not topics mentioned in the Workshop. Furthermore, both previous documents in relation to the A2 level of the CEFR show many more inconsistencies.

For example, whereas the A2 level begin with writing simple phrases and sentences about family, the former docs begin with writing stories and texts at an *intermediate level*. Another significant difference is that the last part of the A1 level of the CEFR expects learners to write *very short basic descriptions*; the other programs expect learners to write *stories and essays*.

The next table shows the differences in the Target Language 3 program and the expected level in the CEFR.

*Table 8 Differences (TL3-WV-B1)*

Target Language 3 (TL3) B1	Workshop V (WV) B2	CEFR B1
Redactar cartas informales Redactar narraciones Hacer solicitudes y reservaciones Redactar una carta formal	Redactar textos claros y detallados sobre una amplia serie de temas relacionados con sus intereses.	CREATIVING WRITING Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest.

Describir un lugar Redactar una biografía Identificar y usar correctamente los conectores if, when, while, as soon as. Redactar una historia Reportar eventos	Redactar informes y cartas proponiendo motivos que apoyen o refuten un punto de vista.	Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can write a description of an event, a recent trip- real or imagined. Can narrate a story.  <b>REPORTS AND ESSAYS</b> Can write very brief reports to a standard conventionalized format, which pass on routine factual information and state reasons for actions. Can write short, simple essays on topics of interest. Can summarize, report and give his/her opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.
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In this table, we can see that the first inconsistency found was that even when the first two columns are supposed to complement each other in order to reach the SAME level, we can see they have a different goal. The level of proficiency learners are expected to achieve with the course Workshop V is B2, whereas the level they are supposed to accomplish with the course Target Language 3 is B1, so this implies a wide difference because both subjects are taken at the same time. Thus, it is kind of difficult to obtain different levels at the end of the course when both programs seek different purposes.

Very specifically in this comparison we can see that;

- The objectives mentioned in the course Target Language 3 are not clearly explained or detailed in a specific way compared to those stated in the B1 level of the CEFR.
- Regarding the course Workshop V, the objectives that it contains do not describe the wide range of activities learners are expected to develop according with the level B1 of the CEFR.

In this case, the differences are opposite to those in the previous table. In other words, here the objectives of the program for Target Language 3 seem to be much simpler, easier and elemental than those expected to be developed in the level of the CEFR. For example, the Target Language program expects learners to use connectors, write stories and events, whereas the B1 level expects learners to write detailed descriptions and real or imaginary narrated events. Thus, the level of complexity varies greatly.

*Table 9 Differences (TL4-B2)*

Target Language 4 (TL4) B2	CEFR B2
Hablar de su familia Expresar ideas y opinión de diferentes temas. Redacción de un artículo sobre alguna experiencia en la vida. Redacción de ensayo de comparación y contraste. Redacción de textos informales. Ensayo de opinión.	<b>CREATING WRITING</b> Can write a review of a film, book or play. Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.  <b>REPORTS AND ESSAYS</b> Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources. Can write an essay or report which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. Can evaluate different ideas or solutions to a problem.

Going along with the next comparison of the syllabus of Target Language 4 and the level that the CEFR states should be achieved by learners, we can observe the following differences:

- In agreement with the level B2 of the CEFR the type of writings learners are expected to produce includes detailed descriptions with conventions and genres. However, the syllabus begins with writing texts that talk about the family. This last topic seems to

be included in basic levels but not frequently found in intermediate or advanced levels of Target language, at least not without any deeper direction or emphasis.

- Another significant difference that was found in this table is that whereas the Target Language 4 syllabus expects learners to write informal text and opinion essays, the B2 level of the CEFR aims learners to write reports with formal conventions and develop arguments and evaluate solutions to problems.

The last table presents a comparison between the most advanced level of Target language and the level B2 of the CEFR.

*Table 10 Differences (TL5-B2)*

Target Language 5 (TL5) B2	CEFR B2
<p>Explica su punto de vista, exponiendo las ventajas y desventajas. Sabe construir una cadena de argumentos razonados. Utiliza conectores con eficacia. Es capaz de desarrollar un argumento ofreciendo detalles. Sabe cómo demandar cierta compensación haciendo uso de lenguaje persuasivo y de argumentos.</p>	<p>CREATING WRITING Can write a review of a film, book or play. Can write clear, detailed descriptions on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest. Can write clear, detailed descriptions of real or imaginary events and experiences, marking the relationship between ideas in clear connected text, and following established conventions of the genre concerned.</p> <p>REPORTS AND ESSAYS Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources. Can write an essay or report which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. Can evaluate different ideas or solutions to a problem.</p>

As may be seen, the objectives stated in the course Target Language 5 are very general, they do not represent or illustrate a specific description of what type of abilities learners will accomplish at the end of the course.

With respect to this last course of English Target Language 5, these resulting differences were found:

- The majority of the objectives in the course of Target Language 5 seem to be based just on the first part of the CEFR ‘Creative Writing’. It almost does not contain objectives that refer to the second part that is ‘Reports and Essays’.
- Even when the Target Language syllabus mentions writing arguments and persuasive language, it does not mention the most salient writing objective in the CEFR, which is writing argumentative essays and solutions to problems.

These differences may cause an impact in the general perceptions of the ultimate objectives of writing. This means that whereas writing does not involve the development of research questions, inquisitive information and a critical view of any topic; the purposes of any writing program may be limited.

As we can see, the levels of the CEFR state this critical view by providing a more detailed description of the texts that learners are expected to produce, e.g. *making connections between ideas, following conventions, explaining advantages and disadvantages and highlight significant points*. However, a much more critical perspective of writing is missing, not only in the programs but may be also in the standards of the CEFR. This is discussed in the last question.

#### **4.5 Answer to the fourth research question**

The last research question in this study is: what may be some critical-pedagogical implications of the findings. In order to answer this question, the first thing we must do is to have a clear view of what writing means. As it may be expected, the perspective of what writing means and what it implies changes greatly the type of objectives, activities and strategies we aim to develop in our students.

As we can see in the comparative tables, the development of critical writing is very limited. Writing must not only include knowledge and abilities to express written language, and styles, genres and mechanical issues, writing needs to include also the development of appropriateness of the language and the acknowledgment of the freedom to think and express. In other words, a central goal of any writing program must include agency as the freedom and capacity to think, act and express in a defined world that should not be defined. This agency development may give learners an ability to choose, act and control freely their respective ideas. Thus, a vital pedagogical implication that has been identified in this study is that the development of a critical-analytical view of writing is not clearly included in the documents under study.

## V CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Chapter overview

This chapter presents the conclusions, the implications, limitations in the study and some directions for further research.

### 5.2 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to find the differences and similarities between the English programs of the B.A. in E.L.T. and the stated level that should be achieved according to the CEFR. In general, the following similarities have been identified:

- The use of contrast connectors like: but and however.
- Writing paragraphs with specific and academic topics.
- Develop detail and clear texts.
- Write formal and informal texts in a variety of subjects.
- Develop essays of opinion that reflect an argument, a reason, support or against a particular point of view.
- Develop texts to argue a particular point of view.
- Write about a variety of topics expressing supporting details.

As for the differences, some of the following were found when contrasting documents that aim to have the same objectives or standards:

- Target Language 1 –aims to develop simple and isolated sentences in a basic level  
VS Workshop II- write situations using past and future
- Workshop V (B2) VS Target Language 3 (B1). Both subjects are taken at the same time and they aim to reach different levels of the CEFR

- Target Language 3 does not explain in a specific way the objectives stated in the CEFR according to B1
- Workshop V does not describe the wide range of activities according to the B2 level of the CEFR.
- Target Language 4- expects learners to write texts that talk about family, and this is not found in B2 level of the CEFR
- The objectives in Target Language 5 are very general. The majority of the objectives seem to be based just on the first part of the CEFR ‘Creative Writing’ It almost does not contain objectives that refer to the second part ‘Report and Essays’.

Finally, some more specific conclusions are:

- Findings illustrate that there are many more differences than similarities between the LEI curriculum and the CEFR writing goals.
- The discourse of these documents needs to be examined much in depth in order to better understand how critical pedagogy may be approached in writing
- Critical Discourse Analysis also suggests that the promotion of critical writing, writing fluency, agency and empowering the students is not clearly stated in any of the documents under study.

In other words, discourse analysis mirrors an idealization of writing (form) that could be leaving aside the value of content, identity, ideology and cultural issues. It seems to be that the only fact of writing (form) and specific topics may automatically provide literacy skills and viewpoints of how it must be approached. Thus, these findings display a challenge for educators, but mainly to curriculum designers to review the value of writing

as inherently attached to developing critical writing and reading (literacy) to develop actual critical literacy programs.

### **5.3 Implications**

The main purpose in this study was to explore the writing skill in the B.A. in ELT (Faculty of Languages- training and formation of English language teachers). To describe some of the main implications of the findings in this study, we may say that writing practices enfold mechanical concerns but at the same time social and cultural issues at different levels. Therefore, Freire (1996), the critical-pedagogical implications of the findings seem to be the most significant. Ideology and discourse analysis as Giroux (2005) affirms must begin with understanding knowledge, power and ideology, in his words; “writing analysis begins by identifying practices tied to specific configurations of knowledge, ideology and power”, and “Pedagogical practices of writing represent the dialectic interaction between schools, political and economic interests that those in power determine” (1997). It is easy to control someone who has no personal identity, someone who has been guided by what leaders have imposed, someone who has adopted instead of creating their own story and their own way of thinking. What leaders need from educational society is that they remain quiet, with closed conscience, without asking neither investigate (Hernández, 2004). Finally, educators have a huge responsibility to change and improve these pedagogical practices, and one first step may be raising awareness for the need to change.

### **5.4 Limitations**

Some limitations that were found along this investigation were:

It was kind of difficult to obtain the B.A. English programs because these are documents exclusively for teachers.

The documents under study represent only part of the illustrated situation, teaching practices were not actually observed.

Any discourse analysis grants variation when analyzed in different contexts and purposes.

This discourse analysis took into account exclusively the objectives of the writing skill and the CEFR standards were taken from the webpage. Perhaps the written document may provide more detailed information that may change the findings here.

The programs under study were used only for a period of time and they change according to the University requirements. Therefore, the new and recent programs may have variations.

### **5.5 Directions for Further Research**

The data collected and analyzed for this research focused only on the writing skill and its relation with the CEFR. However, this information can be used for further research on the same topic but analyzing other B.A. syllabuses focused on the other three skills of the language. Also, this investigation may open a wide field in relation to critical pedagogy.

A more specific direction for further research may be administering questionnaires to teachers and students to explore their perceptions about this topic. This issue may generate other data and important information to the improvement of the syllabuses.

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