Effects of an 8LEM-framed strategy on ESL academic writing skills

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This research report is the result of my own work and includes nothing that was done in

collaboration with others.

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(Signature)

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Abstract

This exploratory single-case research study describes the implementation of the 8LEM model as a strategy focused on raising awareness on the essential aspects of L2 writing skills development, particularly crucial for two graduate learners. The design and analysis were achieved based on Yin's five components of case study. The study demonstrated how important it is for the interrelatedness amongst members of the educational community to exist for learning to be carried out properly, as well as the great potential of the 8LEM model for the development of L2 academic writing skills and the appropriateness of the research design used for further implementation though key adjustments should be implemented in similar contexts.

Key words: 8LEM, writing skills, autonomy, andragogy, graduate learners, case study, exploratory, single.

El presente estudio de caso exploratorio sencillo describe la implementación del modelo 8LEM como una estrategia enfocada en la generación de conciencia sobre los aspectos esenciales del desarrollo de habilidades de escritura en una segunda lengua (L2), particularmente esenciales para dos estudiantes de posgrado. El diseño y el análisis se basaron en los cinco componentes de estudio de caso de Yin. El estudio demostró cuán importante es la existencia de la interrelación entre los miembros de la comunidad educativa para lograr aprendizaje adecuado, así como el gran potencial del modelo 8LEM para el desarrollo de habilidades de escritura académica en una segunda lengua y la pertinencia del diseño de investigación utilizado para implementaciones posteriores aunque se deben implementar ajustes importantes.

Palabras clave: modelo 8LEM, habilidades de escritura, autonomía, andragogía, estudiantes de

posgrado, estudio de caso, exploratorio, sencillo.

Effects of an 8LEM-framed strategy on ESL academic writing skills

Thinking which does not include thinking about thinking is merely problem-solving,

an activity carried out very well by trouts.

(Burke, 1954, as cited in Berthoff, 1984, p. 743)

A chain is no stronger than its weakest link.

(Simpson, J and Speake, J., 1998, p. 51)

General introduction and background to the study

The purpose of this exploratory single-case study was to describe the effects of an 8LEM-framed

process-writing strategy on two graduate learners' quality of argumentative essays and on their

level of active participation in their language learning process. This section includes the

background to the study, the research objectives, the statement of the research question and

subquestions, and the rationale.

Background to the study

  The development of writing skills is highly significant for second language[1] (L2) learners, as

Harmer (2004) noted: "Being able to write is a vital skill for 'speakers' of a foreign language as

much as for everyone using their own first language. Training students to write thus demands

the care and attention of language teachers" (p. 4). The vital essence of writing outlined by

Harmer lies on the indisputably positive effect of writing systems on concrete reflection and

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[1] Though in a stricter sense, there have been significant differences in the constructs "Foreign Language" and "Second Language", taking into account that this distinction is irrelevant for the purpose of the present document, for the sake of simplicity, and to avoid further confusion, only the term "Second language (L2)" will be used.

legitimate inclusion: Basically, the transformation of the ephemeral word into something

concrete makes individuals develop their cognitive, social and critical skills to understand the

texts which depict, preserve and transform their reality while they acquire, develop or demand

legitimate and active participation opportunities granted to literate ones in decision-making

activities. However, these generally accepted benefits contrast with the grim perspective of the

actual implementation of writing tasks in our ESL teaching context deriving from "too-hard-to-

do" attitudes from most L2 teachers: "Writing is the most difficult language skill to master in

both, the native language (L1) and the second/foreign language (L2).   This is so because real

effective writing requires that we be aware of a series of aspects essential to convey meaning."

(Lombana, 2002, p. 44). In fact, Rogers (2008) has pointed out that writing is

> [A] skill that has, unfortunately, been perceived by students and teachers alike as one of a
>
> 'static' rather than 'interactive' nature, where students write without really having a purpose
>
> or a focus on the reader.   Furthermore, in this model, the role of the teacher is usually
>
> limited to correct and to only give grades (p.198).

Such –apparently, widespread perception amongst L2 teachers sets a highly biased point of

departure for the inclusion of L2 writing tasks in their lessons, an attitude which is worsened by

the assumption that a great amount of additional time-consuming activities is required to carry

out proper training in writing skills, and that being so, it is better not to do it. Consequently, the

systematic inclusion of demanding writing tasks involving more than mere summaries of the

issue dealt with in class or one-paragraph opinion 'essays' in L2 courses is eventually neglected.

What is even more surprising is that this position is more than expected by L2 learners on the

basis of generalised misconceptions, especially amongst teenagers and adults, according to

which the development of speaking, listening and –much less, reading skills are synonyms of

"real" language learning, and they consequently look down upon writing tasks as excessively

unnecessary work. This perception tends to result in *amotivation*[2] towards the entire subject, not

only towards writing itself. However, this issue should be approached in a very different light

when the learners' needs are mainly to achieve better educational opportunities, a factor which

implies the need to develop academic literacy, specifically academic writing skills, because as

Tshotsho (2006) stated:

> [A]cademic writing requires conscious effort and practice in composing, developing, and
>
> analyzing ideas. However, students writing in their L2 also have to acquire proficiency in
>
> the use of the language as well as writing strategies, techniques, and skills, compared to
>
> students writing in their native language, (L1). (p. 3)

Based on the previous outline, and in an attempt to integrate Wallace's (1998) *structured*

reflection i.e. "systematic approaches and techniques which will help us [teachers] to make sense

of our experiences" (p. 14) as a way to accomplish professional development, the researcher

noticed that teachers' and learners' *amotivation*, described by Dörnyei as "a *lack* of motivation

caused by the realisation that '*there is no point*...', or '*it's beyond me*...', (2001, p 143) towards

writing tasks was the issue to be dealt with and, for such an end, it was possible to implement an

action research initiative that would contribute to achieve enhanced understanding and improved

teaching/learning experiences with mostly positive attitudes and outcomes. These ideas were the

point of departure to the design of an entire strategy, which included a series of structured self-

access activities and involved the creation of argumentative essays by a graduate ESL course in a

public university in Bogotá. This strategy was framed by the comprehensive approach devised by

Leclercq and Poumay for the teaching and learning of any subject –i.e. *domain of learning*,

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[2] Deci and Ryan have also defined *amotivation* as: "the relative absence of motivation that is not caused by a lack of initial interest but rather by the individual's experiencing feelings of incompetence and helplessness when faced with the activity". (As cited in Dörnyei, 2000, p. 144).

which allows individuals to develop skills and to apply them to answer any question or solve any situation. In this model, motivational issues, social interaction and individual roles and performance are included in a systematic sequence resulting in the development of academic literacy and citizenship, as content is not seen detached from the social framework, but rather as an essential component for proper understanding. The core element of the model is the concept of *learning/teaching event* (LE), defined as "the joined description of paradigms […] of a learner's activity and a tutor (or teacher or coach)'s activity, these actions being complementary and interdependent, in a learning situation." (Leclercq & Poumay, 2005, p. 1). The main feature which made the 8LEM model be considered appropriate to deal with the issue of low inclusion and motivation towards writing tasks in ESL lessons was the fact that both the teacher/tutor and the learner are supposed to carry out specific roles in every learning event and they could be easily identifiable and traceable along the implementation.

Objectives

The general aim of the study was to identify the effects of the implementation of the 8LEM-framed strategy on the quality of two graduate ESL learners' academic writing of argumentative essays and in the degree of active participation along the model, and this was accomplished through the establishment of pattern matching of these trends:

1. the changes in the learners' written work in terms of readability as observed from three different readability formula scores

2. the verification of effective performance of the role supposed to be accomplished at every stage of the model.

The following are the specific objectives set for the study:

a) To identify and analyse the effects of the 8LEM strategy in a series of four process-
writing modules for graduate-level language learners.

b) To assess the effect of positive role matching on the learners' involvement and
performance in the writing modules.

c) To explore and analyse the reliability of readability formulas as indicators of writing
quality.

d) Identify the relationship between the existence of dominant 8LEM roles with critical
views expressed in reflections and essays.

e) To provide learning strategies and tools for more autonomous language learning
processes.

Research question

Thence, this exploratory single-case research study aimed at answering the following question:

What are the effects of attempting an 8LEM-framed process-writing strategy on two
graduate learners' quality of argumentative essays and on their participation in their
writing learning process?

Before stating the subquestions that derive from the main research question, the changes
made by Creswell (2007) to the two types of subquestions originally devised by Stake (1995)
should be taken into account. Stake (1995) had considered *issue* subquestions, i.e. "the major
concerns and perplexities to be resolved" (as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 109) and *topical*
subquestions, i.e. those which "call for information needed for description of the case" (p.25),
and Creswell (2007) changed the name of the latter to **procedural** subquestions, as a way to

have authors "mirror the procedures they intend to use" (p. 110). Based on this taxonomy, the

next subquestions were considered:

Issue subquestions

- *What does the 8LEM explicitly involve in terms of language teaching?*

- *Which of the 8LEM roles appear to be predominant in this context? Why? How can it be*
  proven?

- *What happens if any of the roles is not performed entirely?*

Procedural subquestions

- *How can process-writing exercises be integrated into the 8LEM?*

- *Which strategy(ies) can be used to measure essay quality?*

Rationale

    One of the general requirements for all postgraduate programmes at the National

University of Colombia is that the candidate "is able to understand texts related to the

postgraduate programme" (Consejo Académico, 2001a). The Faculty of Medicine of the

National University offers a 3-year-long speciality training programme in Aerospace Medicine

for physicians and the second year of the programme includes visits to different institutions and

universities in the United States, which is why the second language required for this programme

is English. The main objective of including English as a subject is to provide students with the

opportunity to expand the requirement onto a more practical use of language in real

communicative contexts –not only reading and understanding texts, and to develop their writing

skills in academic contexts. However, writing tasks are usually neglected by L2 teachers on the

basis of their excessive level of demand in preparation, the poor involvement of learners in their

execution and the inappropriate approach as products which usually leads to assigning a grade

without further analysis or demanding subsequent work associated to it, and L2 learners usually

take advantage of this bias to focus on the other language skills, which they usually value as

more significant for their learning process, especially amongst teenage and adult learners since,

as Haley and Austin (2003) outlined: "[T]heir past experiences may have convinced them that

writing is not a worthwhile activity because they may have had experiences that made writing

irrelevant and meaningless" (p. 244).

This study was mainly based on the idea that L2 teachers' and learners' negative opinions

about writing tasks could be challenged and improved if a complete strategy framed its

development and creation in a more meaningful and personalised manner, and Leclercq and

Poumay's (2005) 8LEM model seemed to offer an increasing level of empowerment and

appropriation suitable to achieve such objectives while the writing process was effectively

embedded.

The quality of the learners' argumentative essays was measured by means of three different

readability formulas considered suitable for the academic level under study. Besides, their

systematic use might even provide analytical trends and patterns useful for the assessment of

writing tasks in subjects other than language teaching. It should be considered the fact that they

were used in this study as one of the elements to be contrasted with active involvement in the

8LEM model as a way to establish analysable patterns, according to the *pattern matching*

technique suggested by Campbell (1969), "whereby several pieces of information from the same

case may be related to some theoretical proposition" (as cited in Yin, 2003b, p. 26).

The active involvement was analysed in terms of *positive role match*, a concept which aims

to identify the actual performance of the expected role along the implementation cycle, and relate

it to the results of the readability formulas described above, which might show the direct

relationship between active involvement and higher quality in written texts. Basically, the fact

the learner performs the role expected might mean improved quality in their text as the cognitive

and metacognitive skills required to analyse the issue assigned might have been effectively

accomplished, and they will demand the accomplishment of the expected roles by the other

members of the L2 learning group.

The benefits of this action research study can be observed from the perspectives of the

different members of language teaching educational communities committed to helping learners

improve their academic literacy skills:

- *For learners*: Being given the opportunity to approach writing tasks from a different,

    engaging perspective which allows them to play different roles, try various alternatives,

    and exchange opinions while learning about interesting topics will certainly increase both

    their sense of responsibility for achievement and their critical analysis of the activities

    themselves as a consequence of being granted a higher degree of freedom in decision-

    making, thus increasing their identification as fully-functional citizens in both L1 and L2.

- *For teachers*: The boring, time-consuming side of writing tasks could be replaced by

    challenging, interesting tasks inspired by and shared with the learners. Professional skills

    will have to be permanently fine-tuned to keep up with the challenges posed by more and

    more critical students and national and international professional guidelines.

- *For educational communities*: As part of the 8LEM, learners' active participation will

    make teaching more challenging because learners will demand coherence in the

    guidelines set, better quality in the materials, engagement with their educational

    community and with society in general as social roles will become stronger

In the following chapter, the theory related to the constructs which support this study are presented and analysed in detail, while the relationship amongst them and with the overall case study strategy is established.

Theoretical framework

This chapter will describe in detail the main constructs considered in the research study. It starts from a general review of the importance of *writing skills* for education and moves onto the field of writing skills in L2 instruction, especially as a factor for effective participation in L2-speaking communities, which is the target community of use for the participants of the study. Secondly, the background of *argumentation* and *argumentative essays* and the role of argumentation for L2 learning will be considered as a significant element of the entire study. In the next section, a brief –though comprehensive, description of Leclercq & Poumay's (2005) *8LEM model* and the most significant features applicable to the solution of the poor implementation of writing skills tasks in ESL teaching contexts like the one analysed in the study. The connection of the steps of the model will be attempted with Dörnyei and Ottó's (2001) *process model of L2 motivation*, as this relationship offers interpretive possibilities for this study, as indicators of active engagement in the learning process.

The importance of writing skills

    Education was always considered essential for modern societies to produce human capital, and it was thought to promote equality and progress as Hargreaves (2003) stated: "Schools and their teachers have been expected to rescue children from poverty and destitution; to rebuild nationhood in the aftermath of war, to develop universal literacy as a platform for economic survival" (p. 11). However socially responsible this redemptive approach might seem at first sight, it has indeed hindered progress of those coming from poorer backgrounds and promoted social control, as Ianelli and Patterson (2005) suggested: "Educational institutions and their admission, selection and certification processes may play a significant role in reducing or

maintaining social inequalities." (p. 2). This position was shared by Coffield (1999): "education is no longer viewed as a means of individual and social emancipation, but as either 'investment' or 'consumption'" (p. 485), a situation which started to change due to the impact of technologies such as the radio and the television on the lives of regular people, an impact boosted by the ever-increasing access to freer and cheaper sources of information provided by the Internet.

 In the new scenario described above, knowledge is the new currency for empowerment and the learning it implies are the two key concepts to determine whether a society is developed or developing, and this issue seems to shape a different conception of education where the redemptive schools and teachers pointed out by Hargreaves are increasingly obsolete. Knowledge constitutes the drive for the growth and development of individuals and societies, as derived from the concept of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO: "Education is a fundamental human right and essential for the exercise of all other human rights. It promotes individual freedom and empowerment and yields important development benefits." (2010, ¶1). This connection between the exercise of human right and its effect on social groups is further supported by Philips (2008), who stated that "education equips individuals with the skills and substantive knowledge that allows them to define and to pursue their own goals, and also allows them to participate in the life of their community as full-fledged, autonomous citizens" (¶1). These ideas on education emphasise two aspects: the high responsibility assigned to the authorities in social groups to provide their individuals with the practical skills and adequate knowledge so that they are subsequently led to the attainment of autonomy and, the fact that, by helping individuals make the most of themselves, they become active and responsible members of social groups. This being taken for granted, a necessary condition for education to be effective must be added: members should be provided with

opportunities to have access to information and they should be equipped with the necessary skills

to turn it into knowledge. Freire (1993) acknowledged: "information is at the core of education,

and […] it has a democratic, liberatory power that will give all members of society the equality

of access to society's power" (as cited in Doherty & Ketchner, 2005) and not only should we

strive to exercise our right to have access to quality information and to grant it to the other

citizens, but to realise that the best way to gain access is to develop proper communicative skills.

The following paragraphs will attempt to demonstrate the key role played by literacy in the

construction of citizenship, and the development of writing skills shall be considered the basis

for individual and social development. Writing, briefly defined by Rogers (2005) as "the use of

graphic marks to represent specific linguistic utterances" (p. 2) –and the subsequent literacy it

implies, is a rather important skill to grant access to information to different members of society.

Coulmas (1989) even referred to it as: "the single most important sign system ever invented on

our planet" (p. 3) and it is so valued that it has been widely accepted that the creation of writing

systems marks the boundary between prehistory and history, because the appearance of written

records made concrete the ethereal side of spoken language. But not only did writing help social

groups preserve their beliefs, perspectives and culture in general, but particularly opened spaces

for reflection on the ideas expressed by members of various social groups at different moments:

> [A]t some point in the evolution of writing systems, writing came to preserve and thereby fix
>
> verbal form across space and through time. The magic of writing arises not so much from
>
> the fact that writing serves as a new mnemonic device, [...] as from the fact that writing may
>
> serve an epistemological function. Writing not only helps us remember what was thought
>
> and said but also invites us to see what was thought and said in a new way. (Olson, 1994, p.
>
> xv)

Thence, not only does the creation of writing mark the beginning of human history, but its requirement in terms of cognitive development has propelled social progress through the development of literacy:

[b]ecause both the act of writing and the act of reading obligated people to subject their actions to the operations of thought in an endless two-way exchange, they long found it difficult (for a number of reasons) to grasp that a written text could be independent of speech (Martin, 1994, p. 78)

Fischer (2001) further analysed the implications of this cognitive development on the lives of social groups in a phenomenon he called the "Alphabet Effect": "Because of its crucial role in Classical Greek society, writing has recently been proposed as having been responsible for the development of the first democracies, since it early fostered general literacy", i.e. members of social groups acknowledged and exercised the subsequent need to acquire reading skills to have access to the written discourse, thus having a socio-political effect of empowerment and fulfilment of human dignity based on knowledge. Barthes asserted that "[W]riting was a secret tool. The possession of writing meant distinction, domination, and controlled communication [...] writing was linked with the division of social classes and their struggles, and (in our country) with the attainment of democracy" (as cited in Coulmas, 2003, p. 223), a situation which has gradually changed as more and more individuals develop basic literacy skills. Coulmas (1989) has also stated that "a non-literate modern society is a contradiction in terms" (p. 4) because the basis for modern and post-modern societies is the critical perspective individuals obtain when being granted free access to information, which would certainly be rather difficult to develop without written records to rely on. Besides, as a consequence of access, people gain understanding of the very power vested in language itself: "writing systems provide the concepts

and categories for thinking about the structure of spoken language rather than the reverse. Awareness of linguistic structure is a product of a writing system not a precondition for its development" (Olson, 1994, p. 68), and this promotes interest in literacy and furthers the development of a social group.

The connection between literacy and development was effectively expressed by Coulmas (2003): "illiteracy is a manifest sign of insufficient education, failure or economic disadvantage. Illiteracy can exist only in a literate society [...] Illiteracy is a strong predictor of poverty, both domestically, for social strata, and internationally, for Gross National Product" (p. 223). It makes governments devise strategies to empower their learners through the development of literacy skills, since it is typically assumed improvements in this respect will drive their entire society forward.

However, despite these concerns and the implementation of various alternatives, there is a generalised opinion that students are not properly trained: as early as in 1985, Rose had shown his concern about the question of literacy in the United States: "Writing is a skill or a tool rather than a discipline. A number of our students lack this skill and must be remediated. In fact, some of our students are, for all intents and purposes, illiterate" (1985, p. 341), a concern shared by Vargas (2007), who acknowledged that the problem of low-quality in academic writing for university students in Colombia is a direct consequence of their poor training in writing skills at school, a condition which, by no means, should be interpreted as negligence from the national government. In fact, according to Index Mundi (2008), the literacy level of the Colombian society is 92.8%, a good figure resulting mainly from the implementation of the government directed strategies, like the ones described in detail by the report prepared by Hurtado in 1984, whose mileposts are outlined below:

1. In 1904, education centres for male adults are established and functional.

2. A new curriculum for night school for men is approved.

3. In 1936, women who had undergone four years of primary schooling could serve as reading and writing teachers for men between 7 and 20 years old who were unable to attend school

4. In 1947, companies had to sponsor the Literacy School programme for their workers' children.

5. Night school for men over 16 and the National Learning Service (SENA) an institute to promote work-related skills, were both established in the 1950s.

6. In 1960s the government started to use the radio and television networks to deliver lessons through the Fondo de Capacitación Popular (Popular Training Fund), which continued well until the mid-80s.

7. The "Simón Bolívar" literacy campaign –also known as "Campaña de Instrucción Nacional, CAMINA" was launched in 1980 with the ambitious aim to eradicate illiteracy in two years. It succeeded in training 300,000 people.

(From Hurtado, 1984, p. 3–5)

Having the basic reading and writing skills like the ones included in the Index Mundi statistics reports mentioned above by no means results in effective management of every communicative situation and particularly the comprehension of texts which include complex wording poses a great challenge for average individuals. The subject of poor quality writing mentioned by Vargas (2007) brings forth the need to help students properly acquire these skills, i.e. help them become better, more active members of society by becoming more competent writers and –eventually, more competent readers in real-life contexts, because, as Gardiner

(1992) expressed: "Language competence is not simply a matter of the production of grammatically-correct sentences, but rather indicates the creative and reflexive adaptation of a given speech-act by particular social agents to fluid and changing social situations." (p. 11).

The quality of a person's training in their mother tongue, especially the development of writing skills, has a significant effect on their ability to produce texts –both oral and written, in a foreign language (L2), as can be derived from a research study carried by Schoonen et al. which involved 281 eighth graders in Holland: "L2 writing proficiency turned out to be highly correlated with L1 writing proficiency, more than with either L2 linguistic knowledge or the accessibility of this knowledge." (2003, ¶1). However, writing is not usually included on in L2 teaching contexts mainly because it has been traditionally thought of as a product-led process: "students write a composition in the classroom which the teacher corrects and hands back the next day covered in red ink. The students put the corrected pieces of work in their folders and rarely look at them again" (Harmer, 2004, p. 11) and since it is not motivating, it is usually looked down upon in L2 teaching. Throughout this study, the inclusion of explicit writing activities in the L2 classroom shall be supported as highly beneficial not only for linguistic development, but also as a factor of increased sense of committed and responsible exercise of civil rights. However, one of the basic requirements for effective inclusion is a change in the traditional approach mentioned above: instead of being concerned with writing as a product, activities should aim for the implementation of "writing as a process" activities, because they involve a far more comprehensive and intensive development of the three kinds of learning strategies described by Brown (2007):

Metacognitive is a term used in information-processing theory to indicate an "executive" function, strategies that involve planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as

it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension [...] **Cognitive**

strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks and involve more direct manipulation

of the learning material itself. **Socioaffective strategies** have to do with social-mediating

activity and interacting with others. (p. 134).

This approach might, however, also involve increasingly committed individual work, both

from the language teacher to perform informed, careful corrections and from the learner since

they will need to spend additional time doing self-monitoring, a current trend acknowledged by

Pinkman: "Many foreign language instructors are now concerned not only with instruction in the

classroom, but also with preparing learners to take responsibility for their own learning outside

the classroom." (2005, p. 12).

This responsibility aims at obtaining increased academic literacy based on thoughtful

reflection, a highly beneficial consequence of writing for language learners, as Kern pointed out:

[W]riting is essential to academic language learning for a number of reasons. First, in

designing meaning through writing, learners develop their ability to think explicitly about

how to organize and express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas in ways compatible with

envisioned readers' expectations [...] Second, the concrete, visible nature of writing is of key

importance in terms of the language learning process. Just as reading allows learners to

focus their attention on relationships among forms, writing allows to create and *reshape*

meaning through explicit manipulation of forms. [...] Third, like reading, writing provides

time for learners to process meaning. [....] Finally, writing allows learners' language use to

go beyond purely 'functional' communication, making it possible to create imagined worlds

of their own design" (2000, p.172)

In the field of second language (L2) learning/teaching, the considerations about literacy described above are even more significant because learners do not only need to become competent writers in terms of proper application of the grammar and lexis of L2, but, also in terms of communicative efficacy. Therefore, they are required to develop pragmatic competence to realise the differences in ways of addressing readers, identify features of socially acceptable/inacceptable texts and even layout features proper to the second language. This is clearly acknowledged by Judd (1999):

> Linguistic accuracy in a second language is important to be learned, but a person needs to achieve functional abilities in the second language as well. It is necessary to learn how to understand and create language that is appropriate to the situations in which one is functioning, employing the proper illocutionary patterns in accordance with the sociocultural parameters of the specific situation, because failure to do so may cause users to miss key points that are being communicated in either the written or the oral language and/or have their messages be misunderstood. Worse yet is the possibility of a total communication breakdown and the stereotypical labelling of the second language users as people who are **insensitive**, **rude** or **inept** [emphasis added]. (1999, p. 152).

A risk which can become even more challenging because of the characteristic of academic language mentioned by Bordieu and Passeron: "academic language is [...] never anyone's mother tongue, even for the privileged classes" (as cited in Thesen and van Pletzen, 2006, p. 6). Harmer (2004) has also stated that "[b]eing able to write is a vital skill for 'speakers' of a foreign language as much as for everyone using their first language. Training students to write thus demands the care and attention of language teachers" (p. 4). Hence, developing writing skills in a person's first language (L1) is essential not only for more effective and active participation –i.e.

empowerment, and for improved understanding of social roles as has been argued above, but it

also sets the basis to build upon their linguistic competence in a second or foreign language (L2).

Despite the need for and the benefits attributed to developing writing skills, aspects which

should make it worth of every consideration in language teaching contexts, it is actually

underrated –and even feared, in actual teaching practices in our contexts, as Arboleda (1997)

stated:

> Almost invariably, every introduction to an article about the teaching or learning of written
>
> composition in an L2 [...] starts by pointing out how hard and **even painful** it is to write,
>
> even in the native language, especially due to the characteristics proper to written discourse[3].
>
> (**emphasis added**, p. 89).

There are some additional features associated to writing, which call for a greater emphasis in

an L2 classroom. They were stated by Hyland (2002), as follows:

- Writing is *problem-solving*, and as such, demands a high degree of analysis and

  elaboration of arguments to create an effective text.

- Writing is *generative*, "writers explore and discover ideas as they write", and that adds to

  their creativity and independent work.

- Writing is *recursive*, i.e. "writers constantly review and modify their texts as they write

  and often produce several drafts to achieve a finished product", and this level of

  reflection and analysis is highly beneficial for L2 learners as it allows them to identify

  recurring grammar problems, establish differences in text structure and layout, and even

  the specific worldviews underlying the writing process in different cultures.

- Writing is *collaborative*, and this collaboration can come from various sources and

  carried out through different media. For instance, it can be provided by peers and it

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[3] Translated from the original in Spanish.

contributes to learner training procedures, it can be modelled by the teacher/tutor and

demand the development of correction techniques to move away from the traditional

assignment of a mark and mistake identification. As technology is made available to

people worldwide, the possibility to use email, wikis, shared documents, and mobile

devices for writing activities is increasingly important, convenient and even appealing.

-   Writing is *developmental*, "writers should not be evaluated only on their final products

but on their improvement", and this feature demands a rather different approach both

from teachers and from learners themselves as they become aware of the need to work

along the process to achieve improvement.   (Hyland, 2002, p. 88)

In this respect, the concept of *self-access* might prove particularly useful for the

development of writing skills, since the different aspects mentioned by Hyland are promoted

through its implementation, as Gardner and Miller (1999) had noted as a variety of elements

contributing to creating an ideal learning environment in which reflection and interaction are

sought for:

Self-access language learning is an approach to learning language, not an approach to

teaching language. [...] We see it as an integration of a number of elements which combine

to provide a unique learning environment. Each learner interacts with the environment in a

unique way" (as cited in Benson, 2001, p. 114).

The strategy used for this research study was based on a series of self-access guides[4] which

intended to provide the learners with opportunities for reflection, the development of critical

views and the personalisation of the issues proposed in each one, and all these elements were

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[4] The self-access activities designed and implemented for this research study are included in their entirety in the
Appendices K-N at the end of this document.

intended to benefit learners from the interaction fostered by their peers along the process framed by Leclercq & Poumay's 8LEM model, and, this, in turn, would eventually contribute to their argumentation and the production of the suggested academic essays.

Argumentation/Argumentative essays in L2

      Van Emerteen, Grootendorst and Henkemans (1996) considered we make use of argumentation every time "we advance arguments in defense of certain assertions or actions and when we react to arguments put forward by others". (p. 2), and they noted the following characteristics for argumentation:

1. It is a *verbal* activity, normally conducted in an everyday language [...]. A speaker or writer, engaged in argumentation, uses certain words and sentences to state, question or deny something, to respond to statements, questions or denials.

2. It is a *social activity*, which in principle, is directed at other people. [...] Thus, when people put forward their arguments, they attempt to meet the outspoken or tacit reactions of others.

3. It is an activity of *reason*, which indicates that the arguer has given some thought to the subject. Putting forward an argument means that the arguer attempts to show that a rational account can be given of his or her position on the matter.

4. It always relates to a particular opinion, or *standpoint*, about a specific subject. [...] By itself, holding an opinion is not enough to initiate argumentation. [...] Argumentation starts from the presumption, rightly or wrongly, that the standpoint of the arguer is not immediately accepted, but is *controversial.*

                                        (Van Emerteen, Grootendorst and Henkemans , 1996, p. 2)

All these features of argumentation are fairly convenient for the development of critical thinking skills and its verbal nature calls for higher emphasis in L2 classrooms, since it might imply the need for L2 learners to express the wide range of opinions, worldviews and standpoints between the target and the source culture of the L2, and the reflective nature of process writing activities offers a proper fit for its exploitation in the language classroom. Crowhurst (1990) mentioned the experience of a Canadian research study dealing with argumentative essays on the basis of these reasons: "It is important both for academic success and for general life purposes. [...] it has held a central place in western education [...] The literate, educated person is expected to be able to articulate a position on important matters". In fact, the traditional importance assigned in western education is observable in the explicit inclusion of argumentative essays in international proficiency exams and in the ESL textbooks and materials used worldwide.

Motivation-related issues

Dörnyei, undisputedly one of the most authoritative sources of information regarding the relationship between learners' psychology and motivation in language learning, made a brief distinction of the three stages the research in the field has undergone in recent years:

(a) *The social psychological period* (1959-1990)–characterized by the work by Gardner and his students and associates in Canada.

(b) *The cognitive-situated period* (during the 1990s)–characterized by work drawing on cognitive theories in educational psychology.

(c) The process-oriented period (the past five years)–characterized by an interest in

motivational change, initiated by the work of Dörnyei, Ushioda, and their colleagues in

Europe. (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 66)

It is important to mention the core elements in this shifting perspective on motivation as one

of them fits the framing strategy used in the implementation of this research study. In the first

stage, Gardner's work, though "social" in name, did not account directly for any social aspect,

but only as from the individual's point of view and purposes, as derives from Ushioda (2009):

"As Dörnyei (1999) points out, Gardner and Lambert's (1972) original social-psychological

model on L2 learning is essentially a theory of individual, rather than socially or culturally

constitute, motivation" (p. 216). In that model, he stated motivation towards second language

acquisition processes was not neutral, unlike any other subject since it implied socioculturally-

related elements like "language attitudes, cultural stereotypes and even geopolitical

considerations" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 67). Based on this feature, Gardner saw second language

learning as a threefold a goal-directed construct composed of three characteristics: "the attitudes

towards learning a language (affect), the desire to learn the language (want) and motivational

intensity (effort)" (Liuolienė & Metiūnienė, 2006, p. 94), and, based on the learner's purpose to

learn the language motivation could be *instrumental* or *integrative*. The former referred to the

intention some learners have to learn a language because it serves as a medium to do something

with it, e.g. a foreign student or a businessperson, while the latter was used to identify the

objective of those learners who want to become members of the foreign culture in which the

language is spoken. This perspective might have been biased since Gardner was working as a

university professor in Canada when he started doing his study and he adopted the perspective of

the foreign-language teaching service provider: his observations were transferred "as they were"

to other contexts and its effect were predominant for over thirty years, though it was closer to an individual-centred outline than to a model on learner motivation in all its capacity.

The second stage saw a shift in the focus of research: motivational psychology brought forth the crucial impact of cognitive issues –e.g. carrying out self-assessment procedures as a performer, on motivation and the inclusion of more real-life contextual issues like "teaching methods or communicative styles, task design or participation structures" (Ushioda, 2009, p.217). Gardner's principles and findings remained accepted in this model and were adopted successfully:

> [Their] macroperspective was useful to characterize and compare the motivational patterns
> of whole learning communities and then to draw inferences about important issues such as
> intercultural communication and affiliation, language contact, multiculturalism, and
> language globalization. However, [...] to understand the motivational features of actual
> language classrooms, these broad factors have little explanatory power and need to be
> supplemented with motives associated with the learners' immediate learning situation.
> (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 75)

Despite this great advantage, the initial attempt to include more context-related issues was not entirely successful since the data collected tended to go through the lens of individual students' perceptions: there was a "tendency to rely o students' self-reported perceptions of their learning environment", which hindered the accomplishment of generalisability.

The last stage identified by Dörnyei (2005) in the evolution of research in this field, called the *process-oriented period* departs from the definition of motivation provided by Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) "the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby

initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised and (successfully or

unsuccessfully) acted out" (as cited in Dörnyei, 2001, p. 9). A further analysis into this definition

is required to identify two key elements: first, it is seen as *arousal*, and secondly, it is

dynamically changing and *cumulative*, which means it is not static –not even steady, and it can

be accumulated or lost. Regarding, the term *arousal*, some elaboration is required. The

Encyclopaedia Britannica (2010) defined it as (**emphasis added**):

> [T]he stimulation of the cerebral cortex into a state of **general wakefulness**, or **attention**.
> **Activation** proceeds from various portions of the brain, but primarily from the reticular
> formation, the nerve network in the midbrain that monitors **ingoing and outgoing sensory
> and motor impulses**.

The main implication, for the purposes of the present discussion, is the cause-effect

relationship between the active state of *wakefulness* or *attention* –with its subsequent

willingness, and the *activation* required to accomplish it; it presupposes interaction between

individuals or between individuals and realities, thus it can be social or critical. That basic

connection is the trigger for the *self-monitoring* production → reflection cycles implied in the

definition provided by Dörnyei and Ottó in which every individual "initiates, directs,

coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates" their course of action.

Dörnyei and Ottó proposed their own model for L2 motivation: the *process-oriented model*,

whose schematic representation is shown in Figure 1 below.
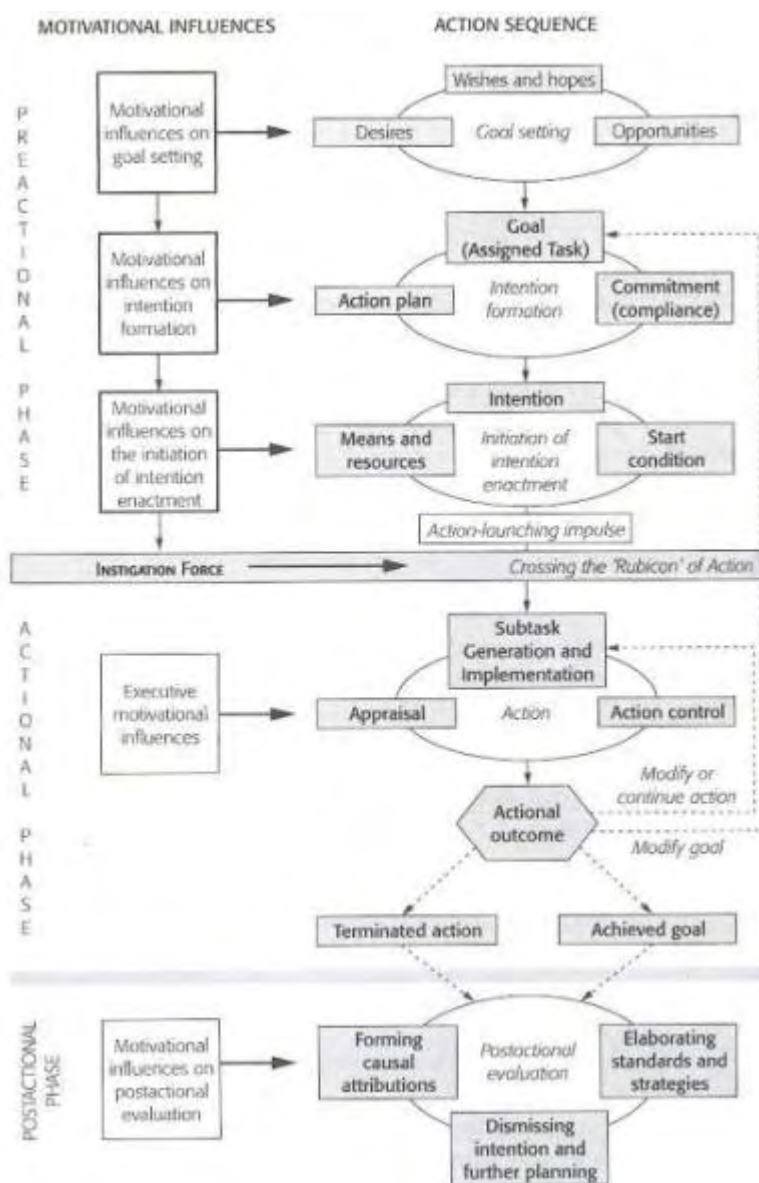
Figure 1. Dörnyei and Ottó's process model of L2 motivation. From Dörnyei, Z. (2001). Motivation. *Applied linguistics in action*. Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited.

In this model, there are two main dimensions: *action sequence* and *motivational influences* – shown as columns in Figure 1. The former represents a causality chain: "the behavioural processes whereby initial wishes, hopes and desires are first transformed into *goal*s, then into *intentions*, leading eventually to *action* and, hopefully, to the *accomplishment of the goals*, after

which the process is submitted to final *evaluation*." (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 85), while the latter

represent the forces, the energy needed to realise the action sequence, reason why they are

closely interrelated. Both of these interrelated columns are subdivided into three different phases,

based on Heckhausen and Kuhl's Action Control Theory, whose core element is "the distinction

of separate, *temporally ordered phases* within the motivational process. The most important

distinction is between the intention-formation process of the '*predecisional phase*' and the

implementation process of the '*postdecisional phase*'" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 42). These phases,

preactional phase, *actional phase* and *postactional phase* are represented as horizontal bands in

Figure 1; the motivational influences determine the subprocess which should be performed and

the establishment of a sequence suggests the ideal path to follow to accomplish appropriate

results –effective L2 learning, and to avoid skipping steps, especially because it might affect the

learners directly, by exposing them to losing their face in a test, conversational exchange, job

interview, etc.

By considering motivation as a constantly changing construct, a model of shades of grey can

be applied onto the concept to mark different perspectives and amounts. They are *demotivation*

and *amotivation*. The first term was defined by Dörnyei as "specific **external** forces that reduce

or diminish the motivational basis of behavioural intention or an ongoing action" (2001, p. 143,

emphasis added). As derives from this definition, it is worth noting that demotivation is *caused*

by a third party, so individuals do not demotivate themselves; this is important because,

especially in educational contexts, teachers tend to put the blame on their learners for not

wanting to learn, and it is taken as a problem in itself, not as a symptom requiring attention.

Finally, *amotivation*, defined by Deci and Ryan as: "the relative absence of motivation that

is not caused by a lack of initial interest but rather by the individual's experiencing feelings of

incompetence and helplessness when faced with the activity". (As cited in Dörnyei, 2001, p. 144). Thus, as opposed to demotivation, this concept deals with internal conceptions –and misconceptions, learners might have about their own performance and traumatic situations they have experienced which have left scars and resentment towards any specific task or subject. Surprisingly enough, there are many similarities of this definition when compared to the concept of posttraumatic stress offered by the US National Institute of Mental Health, NIMH: "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD, is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical harm occurred or was threatened" amotivation is a sort of posttraumatic stress disorder and, as such, requires treatment techniques and the therapy, as Helpguide.org have stated, it requires the individual to understand that: "In order to move on, it's important to face and feel your memories and emotions." (n.d., ¶ 6). In educational contexts, amotivation demands teachers to engage in the collection of reliable information to make decisions matching the learners' needs and increasingly willingness from the learner to face the traumatic situation.

However accepted the concepts of education, empowerment, autonomy and freedom might be in our western societies as well as the rationale behind them, and though it is widely accepted that one of the main aims of learning a foreign language is improving our possibilities to reach information, especially high-quality sources and enhancing our cognitive and cultural perspectives, usual teaching practices in our contexts seem to be biased in favour of the development of receptive skills and minimal productive skills. Two opposing trends amongst most EFL teachers are common in our teaching contexts: there is a group attracted by the explicit teaching of the most "tangible" aspects of the language like grammar terms, vocabulary lists and complex phonetic symbols –all of which have very little practicality for learners to achieve their

main goal: effective communication in the foreign language. This attraction might come from the political dimension of knowledge: it gives power to the teacher and control over their students, who fear them and lose any interest in the language and distrust their teachers. The other main tendency goes exactly in the opposite direction: teachers who emphasise communication at all costs; unfortunately, it is their communication the one that matters. These lessons typically feature a series of teacher-centred activities in which he/she gives the floor, is the only one who asks questions, and whose students should be grateful for having the most knowledgeable person on earth in their classrooms. Then these teachers amotivate learners who realise that "because academic ability is frequently evaluated in terms of competence in a specialist written register, students often find their own writing practices to be marginalised and regarded as failed attempts to approximate these standard forms" (Hyland, 2002, p. 58); eventually they start feeling segregated and demoted –rather than included and appreciated as actively participating citizens, one of the biggest concerns of educational policies worldwide outlined above. As Tribble said: "to be deprived of the opportunity to learn to write is […] to be excluded from a wide range of social roles, including those which the majority of people in industrialised societies associate with power and prestige" (as cited in Harmer, 2004, p. 3), and being neglected the chance to do basic writing exercises hinders their options to develop academic literacy.

   The previous description of these motivation-related issues are to do with the 8LEM model presented in the next section, as they can become indicators of active engagement in the learning activities and they provide further elements of analysis.

Leclercq & Poumay's 8 Learning Event s Model (8LEM)

Leclercq & Poumay devised a comprehensive perspective to teaching and learning about any subject –called *domain of learning*, at any place and moment, a feature which makes it really empowering as any individual who develops the skills promoted in every event can apply them to any situation or question, in which motivational issues, social interaction and individual roles and performance are included in a systematic sequence resulting in the development of academic literacy and citizenship. The central element of the model is the concept of *learning/teaching event* (LE), defined as "the joined description of paradigms […] of a learner's activity and a tutor (or teacher or coach)'s activity, these actions being complementary and interdependent, in a learning situation." (Leclercq & Poumay, 2005, p. 1). As stated above, the model is highly comprehensive as it provides several and varied teaching and learning opportunities to develop cognitive, social and reflective skills. It relies on three main components: its *principles*, the *learning events* themselves and the *metadata*.

Besides the concept of LE, the 8LEM is based on the eight different –though closely interrelated, principles summarised below:

1. **Purpose:** The model aims to help as a prescriptive and as a descriptive aid for all the members of educational communities to analyse the effectiveness of training strategies or teaching sequences or to suggest the implementation of innovative alternatives.

2. **Observability and recordability**: "A Learning Event (LE) is identifiable in time and space. **It is observable** and recordable, quantitatively (duration, intensity) or qualitatively (a description that includes the minimal conditions for confirming the occurrence of the LE)." (Leclercq & Poumay, 2005, p.2)

3. **Adjustable granularity**[2] **of description**: The purpose of every situation will determine the degree detail provided in the description of the situation, so decisions can be tailored to shift focus of descriptions.

4. **Degree of learner's initiative is important**: Control of LEs shifts constantly through the model, though there seems overreliance on the learners. This shift in control is analysed in terms of "allo-initiative" or "allo-control", i.e. control exercised by somebody else, usually the teacher, or "allo-initiative" or "auto-control", i.e. by the learners themselves. Figure 1 shows how five of the eight events are in the field of the learner's auto-initiative, while only three are controlled by the tutor/teacher.
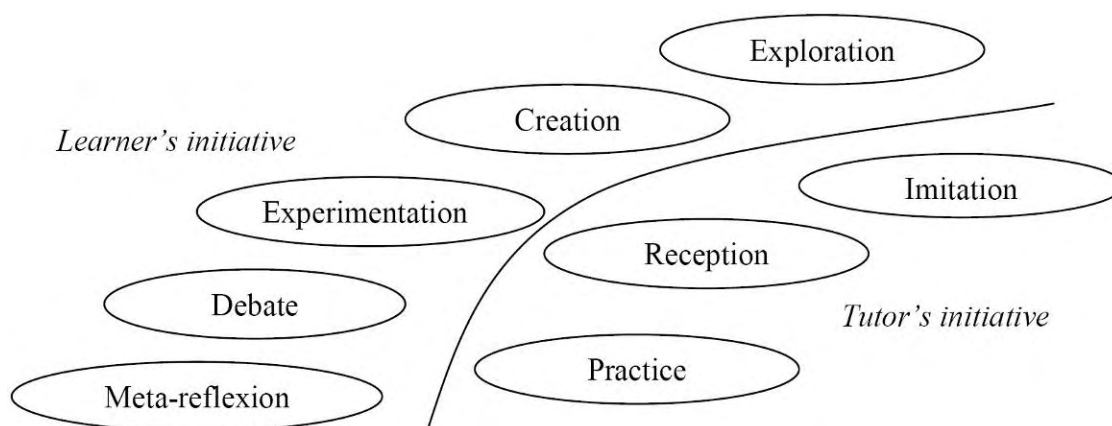
Figure 2. The degree of a learner's initiative. From Leclercq, D. & Poumay, M. (2005). *The 8 learning events model and its principles*. Retrieved from http://www.labset.net/media/prod/8LEM.pdf

5. **Paired contrasts between some LEs**: There is the possibility to perform paired contrasts between some of the LEs to shift emphasis and change perspective. For example, *creation* can be opposed to *imitation*.

6. **Diversity is important:** A wide variety of experiences, communication channels, teaching modes and methods reinforce learning.

7. **Mathetic polyvalence**: The learner should be trained to develop their *mathetic* skills, i.e. that "human desire to prepare and train each succeeding generation to assume conscious responsibility for the cognitive and cultural resources needed to understand and master their environment" (Howatt, 2009, 468), which offers them the possibility to be trained in as many different options as available to exploit their potential, a crucial issue in the modern knowledge-based society.

8. **The ethical dimension** in 8LEM is represented by the balance between the model and autonomy and responsibility, relationships which call for respect of individual differences and inclusion, thus learners become and are treated as citizens.

The second component of the model is the eight learning events:

1. *Imitation/Modelling*

2. *Reception/Transmission*

3. *Exercising/Guidance*

4. *Exploration/Documenting*

5. *Experimentation/Reactivity*

6. *Creation/Confortation*

7. *Self-reflexion/Co-reflexion* and

8. *Debate/Animation*.

They are represented in Figure 2 and described in Chart 1.
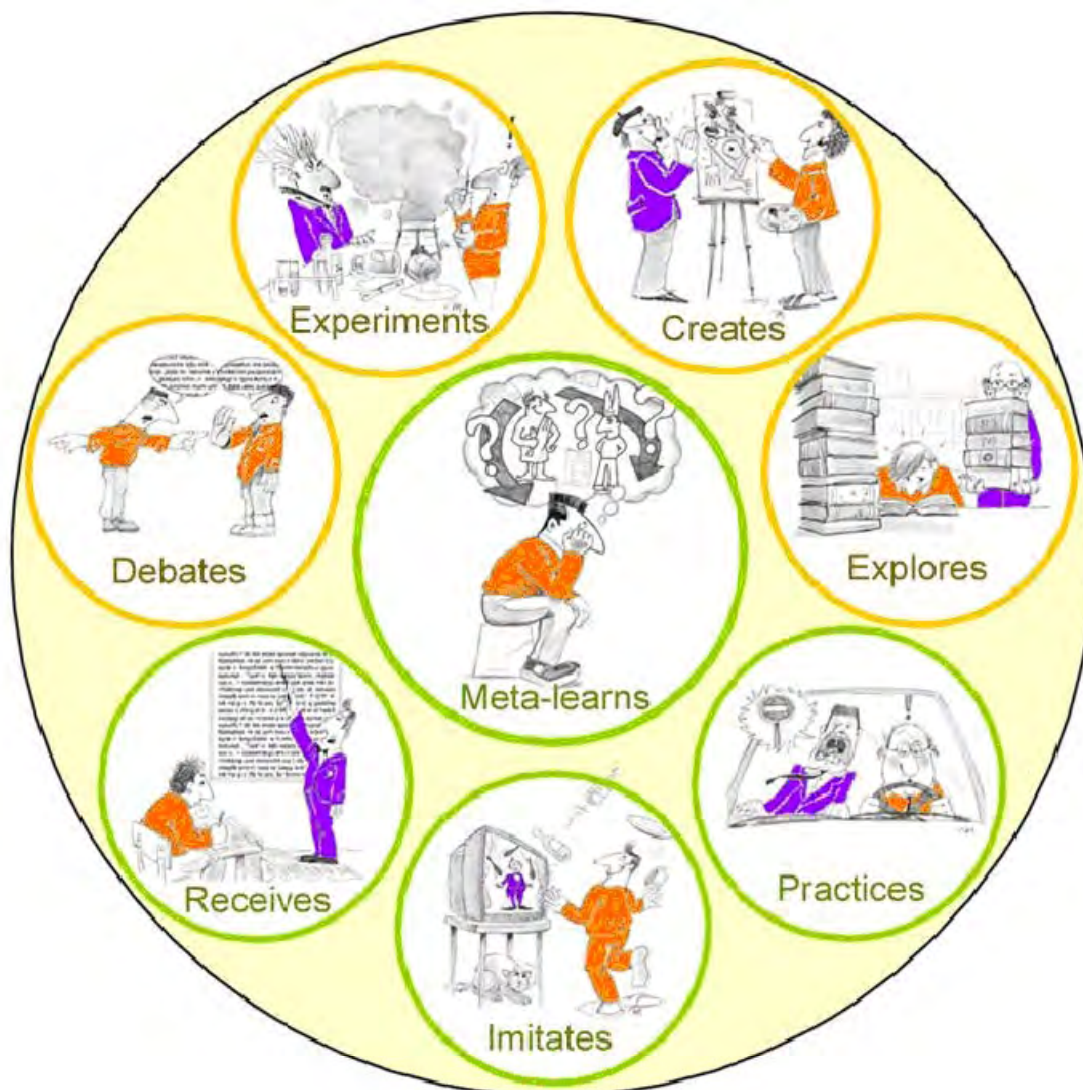
Figure 3. Graphical representation (from the students' perspective) of the 8LEs model.[5]

Before moving onto the description of the LEs, it is worth noting that there is no further

justification for the events being eight apart from practical issues. Professors Leclercq & Poumay

(2005) find it a manageable figure –though carefully refraining from being too simplistic: "By

confining itself to a restricted number of learning events (currently 8, but this number is not

magical), the model keeps within the limits of human cognitive capacities". (Leclercq &

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[5] From Leclercq, D. & Poumay, M. (2005). *The 8 learning events model and its principles*. Retrieved from
http://www.labset.net/media/prod/8LEM.pdf

Poumay, p. 1). Besides, each one of them includes eight different elements: *definition*,

teacher/trainer's role, *domains of learning*, *places* outside the classroom where the kind of

learning associated can occur, usual occurrence *at school*, *associated terms* so that linking and

networking skills are transferred onto real life and finally, the *main theory* which supports its

inclusion in the model. To facilitate the presentation, the information corresponding to the eight

LEs and the aspects just mentioned are summarised in Chart 1 on the next page.

		LEARNING EVENT						
		Imitation / Modelling	*Reception / Transmission*	*Exercising / Guidance*	*Exploration / Documenting*	*Experimentation / Reactivity*	*Creation / Confrontation*	*Self-reflexion / Co-reflexion*	*Debate / Animation*
ASPECT	**Definition**	Humans learn a lot from observation, impregnation (and imitation), either voluntarily or spontaneously	Humans learn a lot from intentional communication, i.e. messages intended to give us information.	Humans learn by acting, practising. Essays and errors are necessary	Where a large degree of freedom of choice is beneficial, humans learn by exploration, i.e. by a personal search among data, either randomly, or to answer their questions	In some contexts, learning is mostly efficient if the learner can manipulate the environment –and, when necessary, can modify it.	Humans learn by creating something new (to them), by constructing, by changing their environment, by producing concrete works	Judgements, analysis and regulations operated by a person on his/her own cognitive processes or products before, while and after performing a situation, performance is a test or a learning activity	Learning takes place during social interactions between pairs or between trainees and trainers provided there are conflicts of views
	Teacher's / Trainer's role	Provide models (not necessarily teachers themselves)	Provide the message to be transmitted,	Guide and correct	Ensure the access to the data	Provide an "experimentable" environment, help if task is too hard	Facilitator, a moral and material scaffold	Provide advice or data (such as metacognitive measures) or help the learner to interpret the situation	"Animate" the discussion through observational or invasive roles
	Domains of learning	We can be impregnated by (and imitate) movements, emission of noises, words and melodies, accents, vocabulary, postures, etc.	A large number of domains, except skills, values and appetencies, sensory-motor memory, and relational or emotional feelings	Sensory-motor skills	History or geography or arts or culture in general or personal relations	Science, computer sciences, social relations, the use of engines or instruments, etc.	Writing essays, conceiving iconic illustrations,	Estimations of success in intellectual, relational or sensori-motor domains.	Complex concepts, relationships or areas of contents
	Learning places	Everywhere	Everywhere.	Sport halls or fields, ballrooms, workshops, pools	Libraries, museums, web sites, TV channels, provided the learner has the initiative.	Science labs, workshop, computer simulations, exercise fields.	Painting academies, riverside (for painting), piano room,	Anywhere, but the interruption of action helps the process, due to the limited capacity of our working memory:	Real or virtual classes or subgroups
	At school	Conscious when teachers suggest models; unconscious modelling (and imitation) of every kind of behaviour	Written messages on paper or on the computer screen. Oral messages from peers, teachers, etc.	Exercise booklets, drill and practice sequences, quizzes testing, application tasks,	Manipulating dictionaries, encyclopaedias, libraries, but also observing fields, interviewing people	Students experiment each time they make an action "to see what will happen"	shaping clay, creating questionnaires, imagining plots, proposing new names, inventing routes for a trip	Huge lack of metacognitive practices	Debates can be (and are) organised not only on issues existing in society but also on the relevance of pieces of content to learn
	Associated terms	Imitation: copy, reproduction Modelling: showing an image, performing an action, drawing a picture	Transmission: verbal (or symbolic) communication, linguistic messages, words, texts (from books to subtitles on a screen	Coached systematic training, trials and errors with external correction	Searching, browsing, navigating, curiosity, knowledge appetence, questioning.	Trials, verification of hypothesis, check, test, problem solving	Divergent production, building new, originality.	Self cognition, reflexivity, self awareness.	Discussion, exchanges, socio-cognitive conflicts.
	Main theory	Bandura's Social Learning Theory	Ausubel's Verbal Learning Theory	Thorndike's law of effect and Skinner's contingencies of reinforcement	Those that refer to conceptual maps	Piaget's theory	Guilford's divergent production concept and Torrance's criteria for creativity	Flavell, Brown, Leclercq	Piaget's des-equilibration/re-equilibration processes

Chart 1. Summary of the aspects of the eight learning events in 8LEM[6].

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[6] Adapted from Leclercq, D. & Poumay, M. (2005). *The 8 learning events model and its principles*. Retrieved from http://www.labset.net/media/prod/8LEM.pdf

Interrelations: 8LEM model and the process model of L2 motivation

Through an analysis of the principles underlying Leclercq & Poumay's 8LEM and Dörnyei & Ottó's process-oriented model for L2 motivation, a fitting relationship was analysed in the study in terms of self-access activity planning, and the learners' active involvement and performance. The relationship between them was established because they both aim to foster critical thinking skills, starting with low-anxiety settings and unchallenging tasks, which gradually provide confidence to the individual, not only to develop their cognitive skills as a result from the engagement in increasingly freer action sequences but also to transfer their initial motivational influence onto other fields. Not only do they have the chance to test hypotheses in communication through the use of several media on their own, but they also engage in interaction with peers, do research about relevant topics and feel empowered to act and adopt critical views on their own performance, on the entire process and on the other individuals in their group. This research study aimed to make the most of these commonalities in terms of implementation and outcomes for learners, and strove to analyse the results with existing conditions.

Dörnyei & Ottó's elements of process model of L2 motivation are directly related to the intentionality behind the 8LEM model, as the information contained in Chart No. 2 outlines:

Process model of L2 motivation	8LEM model
- The *preactional phase* requires the establishment of goals, direction and the development of motivational influences.	- In the first stages, the learner requires purposeful guidance, modelling and directions.
- The *instigation force* needed to take higher control is crucial to move towards the executive motivational forces.	- The learner must become aware of the fact that learning depends on commitment and that no progress will be achieved if they remain at the imitation level.
- The actional outcome sets the basis for further action or the accomplishment of the goal.	- The experimentation event allows the learner to try and analyse outcomes and decide on further action.

- The eventual outcome is higher-level thinking skills: forming causal attributions, elaborating standards, dismissing intention.	- The eventual outcome of the process is metalearning, when the learner will have become more autonomous to assess teh overall outcome.

Chart No. 2. Common aspects between Leclercq & Poumay's 8LEM model and Dörnyei & Ottós process model of L2 motivation

Research design

Type of study

Brown and Rodgers (2002) warned about the dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative research approaches: "[t]hey refer to broad categories of research types, but one needs to be wary of oversimplification. Both qualitative and quantitative research come in many types, and the line dividing the two categories is not clear at all." (p. 15), but Strauss & Corbin (2008) offered a set of powerful reasons to lean towards a qualitative approach for this study: "qualitative research allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover, rather than test variables" (p. 12), aspects which were essential for a better understanding of the issue of active involvement in the performance of the 8LEM model roles and the creation of writing tasks in this specific context with a more tentative than prescriptive or regulatory approach. Therefore, it is important to make clear what a qualitative approach to research involves and how it was carried out in this study. Creswell (2007) offered the most complete analytical framework for qualitative research, starting with the following definition:

> *Qualitative research* begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a complex description and interpretation of

the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call for action. (***emphasis in the***

original, p. 37)

Also, according to Creswell, there are three important issues acting as conductors and

shapers of qualitative research: the philosophical assumptions that "the inquirers make in

deciding to undertake a qualitative study", the paradigms the "researchers bring [...] to the

research project" (p. 15), and the interpretive and theoretical framework used to analyse the data

collected. The first issue, i.e. the philosophical assumptions, had been described by Creswell

himself in 2003 as "a stance toward the nature of reality (ontology), how the researcher knows

what he or she knows (epistemology), the role of values in the research (axiology), the language

of research (rhetoric) and the methods used in the process (methodology)" (as cited in Creswell,

2007, p. 16), and they provide the framing principles leading the course of action used in the

implementation of the study. In this case, the ontological assumption is provided by the

significance of developing proper communicative skills in L2 for these learners to become fully

functional members of the learning communities where they intend to partake next year, and

where L2 is the main means of communication. The epistemological assumption results from

the revision of relevant literature and the definition of research objectives. The axiological

assumption is mostly assigned by the researcher, who identifies the importance of writing skills

for these particular learners and for the accomplishment of their learning objectives, and the

identification of strategies to analyse them in their context. The language of research and the

methodology are highly determined by the specific approach of qualitative research adopted for

the analysis, i.e. exploratory case study –as described in detail below.

The second element of qualitative research, according to Creswell is the one of *paradigms* or

worldviews¸ i.e. "a basic set of beliefs that guide action" (Guba, 1990, as cited in Creswell, 2007,

p. 19), and he mentioned four which "inform qualitative research and identify how these worldviews shape the practice of research [...]: postpositivism, constructivism, advocacy/participatory, and pragmatism" (p. 19), and it is worth noting the main features Creswell (2007) noted for each one of these paradigms to justify the one used in this study:

- *Postpositivism*: The approach has the elements of being reductionistic, logical, an emphasis on empirical data collection, cause-and-effect oriented, and deterministic based on a priori theories.

- *Social constructivism*: In this worldview, individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences [...] These meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meanings into a few categories or ideas. [...] Rather than starting with a theory [...] inquirers generate or inductively develop a theory or pattern of meaning.

- *Advocacy/Participatory*: The basic tenet of this worldview is that research should contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of participants, the institutions in which they live and work, and even the researchers' lives. The issues facing these marginalized groups are of paramount importance to study, issues such as oppression, domination, suppression, alienation, and hegemony.

- *Pragmatism*: Individuals holding this worldview focus on the outcomes of the research – the actions, situations, and consequences of inquiry –rather than antecedent conditions [...]. Thus, instead of focus on methods, the important aspect of research is the problem being studied and the questions asked about this problem. (pp. 20 – 23).

Finally, there are *interpretive communities*, which specialise in adopting the philosophical assumptions, the worldview described above with a very special intention: "represent underrepresented or marginalized groups" (p. 24), and since this is not the case dealt with in this study, this element will not be included in the analysis.

The fact the study was to be done with a small group (only two learners) along with a previous identification of the close interrelation between the different composing elements led to conclude its essence as an systemic unit, a *bounded system*, i.e. "a complex system that cannot be easily understood or effectively represented by means of a single quantitative measure or other numerical expressions". (Stoynoff, p. 380) or, as Yin (2003b) put it, a: "phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p. 13). This was a key element to make a decision in favour of the *qualitative case study* research methodology to approach this study because, as Creswell (2007) stated it "provides an in-depth study of this 'system' based on a diverse array of data collection materials, and the researchers situates this system or case within its larger 'context'" (Creswell, 2007, p. 244). Yin, who has long studied the qualitative case study methodology, had identified the following three different types of case studies in 1984, based on the case study's outcome (as cited in Shen, 2009, p. 24):

- exploratory (as a pilot to other studies or research questions).

- descriptive (providing narrative accounts)

- explanatory (testing theories)

In fact, Yin (2003b) later revisited these concepts and proposed a 2x3 matrix which resulted in six different types of case studies: 2 possible case types to base the study on, and 3 different

approaches, depending on the outcome outlined above, which can be used with either case study

basis. This taxonomy is represented in Chart 3 below:

THE 2X3 MATRIX OF YIN'S TAXONOMY	
CASE STUDY THE RESEARCH IS BASED ON	SPECIFIC TYPE DEPENDING ON OUTCOME
SINGLE-CASE STUDY	Exploratory
	Descriptive
	Explanatory
MULTIPLE-CASE STUDY	Exploratory
	Descriptive
	Explanatory

Chart No. 3. The 2x3 Matrix of Yin's taxonomy of case studies

As follows, the case reported here is *exploratory single-case study* because it is "aimed at

defining the questions and hypothesis of a subsequent study (not necessarily a case study) or at

determining the feasability of the desired research procedures". (Yin, 2003a, p.5). Once the

methodological approach had been clearly defined, it was necessary to identify the components

of the case study research design and turn them into concrete items for analysis; they were:

1. A study's questions

2. Its propositions (if any)

3. Its unit(s) of analysis

4. The logic linking the data to the propositions

5. The criteria for interpreting the findings. (Yin, 2003b, p.21)

As stated before, the research question drawn for this case study was (the words underlined

indicate the main foci of analysis):

What are the <u>effects</u> of attempting an <u>8LEM</u>-framed <u>process-writing strategy</u> on two

graduate learners' <u>quality of argumentative essays</u> and on their <u>participation</u> in their

writing learning process?

Before stating the subquestions that derive from the research question, the changes made by Creswell (2007) to the two types of subquestions originally devised by Stake (1995) should be taken into account. Stake (1995) had considered *issue* subquestions, i.e. "the major concerns and perplexities to be resolved" (as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 109) and *topical* subquestions, i.e. those which "call for information needed for description of the case" (p.25), and Creswell (2007) changed the name of the latter to **procedural** subquestions, as a way to have authors "mirror the procedures they intend to use" (p. 110). Based on this taxonomy, the next subquestions were considered:

Issue subquestions

- *What does the 8LEM explicitly involve in terms of language teaching?*

- *Which of the 8LEM roles appear to be predominant in this context? Why? How can it be proven?*

- *What happens if any of the roles is not performed entirely?*

Procedural subquestions

- *How can process-writing exercises be integrated into the 8LEM?*

- *Which strategy(ies) can be used to measure essay quality?*

The second component was the *propositions* of the case study and though Tellis (1997) had stated that exploratory case studies –which is the focus here, "rather than having propositions, would have a stated purpose or criteria on which the success will be judged", Yin (2003b) outlined the need to include a guiding principle: "[e]very exploration, however, should still have some purpose. Instead of propositions, the design for an exploratory study should state this purpose, as well as the criteria by which an exploration will be judged successful" (p. 22). With these concepts in mind, the following exploration guidelines were stated for this case study:

- The principles of the 8LEM model, which had been originally designed as a framing strategy for online environments, could be transferred to language teaching modules, taking advantage of the roles and interaction proposed.

- The interaction involved in process writing seems an appropriate companion for this 8LEM attempt.

- The creation of argumentative essays involves a great deal of personalisation, which fosters the development of critical thinking skills and engages learners in lifelong learning processes.

The third component, i.e. the *units of analysis*, was established on the basis of three observable elements, which constituted the data collection methods in themselves, as will be shown in detail in the following paragraphs. The first two had to do with the degree of active involvement of the learners in every module and in each one of the writing tasks, and the last one attempted to analyse the quality of the essays written through a variety of tools designed to identify the degree of complexity of a written text. The units of analysis were the *positive 8LEM role match*, the *accomplishment of the process writing cycles* and an analysis of the changes observed from the application of three different *readability formulas* to the essays written by the learners along the modules.

1) *The positive 8LEM role match*: The concept of "positive match" was adapted from security procedures and it is related to checking the actual occurrence of a predicted event. Since the 8LEM framework outlined the roles and tasks learners should do in every stage of each module, the researcher opted for the design of a chart to keep track of their positive realisation of the intended role. The modules led the learners from mostly passive roles in which they answered self-access activity guides on their own

with low levels of stress since they were given an entire week to prepare it and send it

for correction before moving onto the second stage, done together in which they

presented, debated and analysed situations before they were given an additional week to

carry out the more actively productive stages of the model, which involved freer

research, experimentation, discussion and further creation and the expected process

writing task, done together with their peer and the teacher.

2) *The accomplishment of the process writing cycles*: The four 8LEM-framed modules,

aimed at the production of argumentative essays, were designed so that the learners

carried out certain tasks in each stage of the modules: write a first draft, peer-review

their partners' paper, send it to their teacher for further review and comments –especially

in terms of grammar and vocabulary, and write a final draft.

3) *Readability formulas*: In an attempt to provide a more reliable basis to the analysis of the

texts, the researcher decided to use readability formulas, instead of other tools like

rubrics or comparison to established outlines, since they still depend on the justification

given by every person who applies the rubric or makes the analysis. The researcher then

resorted to the concept of *readability*, a construct defined as: "[a]ccording to Klare

(1963) readability is 'the ease of understanding or comprehension due to style of

writing'. This definition focuses on writing style, in contrast to factors like format,

features of organisation and content" (as cited by Anagnostou and Weir, 2006, p. 3). The

readability formulas are considered "a way to use vocabulary difficulty and sentence

length to predict the difficulty level of a text" (DuBay, 2004, p. 2), and in short, is

mathematics applied to reading comprehension, an idea which might look outrageous at

first. However, a closer analysis of its background proves the underlying importance of

the concept of readability: it is related to research in corpus linguistics, the typical *cloze* exercises so familiar in language tests worldwide is based on its principles, and the concept of graded readers derives from the research started in the 1920s. Though there are more than 200 different formulas available and used in various fields, just a few of them have endured criticism and are considered reliable. For the present study, three readability formulas were used and their selection was made on the basis of proven reliability and appropriateness in terms of intended audiences; they were the Flesch-Reading Ease, the New Dale-Chall, and the SMOG Grade. They were chosen on the grounds of the target group (education) and the level (high school and college), as indicated by My Byline Media (n.d., pp. 12-13). Below, there is a brief outline of the three readability formulas used for the analysis of the participants' written work. The information is mostly taken from My Byline Media (n.d.), who have created a concise guide on readability formulas, features and applicability.

3.1) **The Flesch-Reading Ease readability formula**: According to My Byline Media (n.d.), this is one of the "few accurate measures around" (p. 19). Developed by Rudolph Flesch in 1948, it is widely used in school texts and by US agencies, and it includes two main elements: ASL and ASW, "ASL stands for average sentence length, i.e. the number of words divided by the number of sentences and ASW stands for average number of syllables per word, i.e. the number of syllables divided by the number of words." (p.20). The mathematical formula is shown below:

```
The Flesch Reading Ease Readability Formula

The specific mathematical formula is:

RE = 206.835 - (1.015 x ASL) - (84.6 x ASW)

RE = Readability Ease
```

Taken from My Byline Media, (n.d.), p. 19.

In this formula, the score ranges from 0 to 100, and it is interpreted according to this scale.

```
90-100 : Very Easy
80-89  : Easy
70-79  : Fairly Easy
60-69  : Standard
50-59  : Fairly Difficult
30-49  : Difficult
0-29   : Very Confusing
```

Taken from My Byline Media, (n.d.), p. 20

There are, however, some flaws in the application of this formula and punctuation marks, nonsensical words or the generalisation of a vowel to a syllable might affect the reliability of the formula.

3.2)   **The New Dale-Chall:** Named after its creators Edgar Dale and Jane Chall in 1948, as an improvement of the Flesch-Reading Ease formula, and its principle is highly related to the origins of corpus linguistics because it "uses a count of 'hard' words [...i.e...] words that do not appear on a specially designed list of common words familiar to most 4th-grade students" (My Byline Media, n.d., p.

17). The main difference between the first version and the current one is the

number of "non-hard" words, which increased from 763 to 3000. These are the

instructions to obtain the score:

3.3.1) Select a text sample of 100-150 words from an intermediate or advanced

      level text.

3.3.2) Compute the average sentence length by dividing the number of words

      by the number of sentences.

3.3.3) Compute the number of words not in the list.

3.3.4) Compute the following equation:

      Raw score = 0.1579 PDW + 0.0496 ASL + 3.6365

      Where,

      Raw score: reading grade of a reader who can answer one-half of the test

      questions of the passage.

      PDW = Percentage of difficult words

      ASL = Average Sentence Length

3.3.5) Use the following table to get an adjusted score.

RAW SCORE	ADJUSTED SCORE
4.9 and Below	Grade 4 and Below
5.0 to 5.9	Grades 5 - 6
6.0 to 6.9	Grades 7 - 8
7.0 to 7.9	Grades 9 - 10
8.0 to 8.9	Grades 11 - 12
9.0 to 9.9	Grades 13 - 15 (College)
10 and Above	Grades 16 and Above (College Graduate)

Taken from My Byline Media, (n.d.), p. 18

The fact it relies on familiar words has shown accuracy in its use in reading tests.

3.3)   **The SMOG readability formula:** Created by Harry McLaughlin in 1969, it also

calculates the number of years needed to understand certain text properly. It is

based on word length, and the instructions to calculate it are transcribed below:

3.3.1) Assess the entire text.

3.3.2) Count 10 sentences in a row near the beginning, ten in the middle, and 10

in the end for 30 in total.

3.3.3) Count every word with three or more syllables in each group of

sentences, even if the same word appears more than once.

3.3.4) Add 3 to the figure arrived at in Step 4 to know the SMOG grade, i.e. the

reading grade that a person must have reached if he (sic) is to understand

fully the text assigned.

The entire formula is: SMOG grade = + square root of polysyllable count

It is considered appropriate for 4th grade and above, and the results should be

interpreted based on the following table:

SMOG Conversion Table	
Total Polysyllabic Word Count	Approximate Grade Level (+1.5 Grades)
1 - 6	5
7 - 12	6
13 - 20	7
21 - 30	8
31 - 42	9
43 - 56	10

Taken from My Byline Media, (n.d.), p. 32

Though these mathematical formulas seem to offer complicated rules and restrictions, the fact there are available readability measurement applications built in MS Word (e.g. the Flesch-Reading Ease) or online (like the tools used for the New Dale-Chall and the one offered by the author of the SMOG formula, Harry McLaughlin) facilitates the work as they adapt the score to longer or shorter texts, ando their reliability is not biased by improper implementation.

The analysis of the data collected through the previous units was done through the *pattern matching* technique suggested by Campbell (1969), "whereby several pieces of information from the same case may be related to some theoretical proposition" (as cited in Yin, 2003b, p. 26). Put simply, the idea is to relate the trends identified to the propositions stated as the second component of the case study research design, and to use internal and external validity procedures. The patterns will then be interpreted and supported by additional sources of data like the learners' artifacts (the four self-access guides they did in every module, their essays), the records of peer/teacher correction instances, the learner profile they filled out at the beginning of the implementation in which information about language learning experience, techniques and motives had been collected, and an entry and an exit survey they were asked to fill out, since they expressly refused to engage in periodic reflection activities.

The fourth and fifth components of the case study research design, i.e. *linking data to propositions* and *criteria for interpreting the findings* are actually hard to pinpoint, according to Yin (2003b): "these components foreshadow the data analysis steps in case study research, and a research design should lay a solid foundation for this analysis" (p. 26). In this specific case, the trends identified in positive role match, and in the accomplishment of the process writing cycles were then contrasted to the propositions and justified in the additional data collected.

Regarding the criteria to judge the quality of the research design, Yin (2003b) noted that "[f]our tests [...] have commonly used to establish the quality of any empirical social research. Because case studies are one form of such research, the four tests are relevant"; the tests are *construct validity*, *internal validity*, *external validity*, and *reliability*, and the suggestion is to implement at least one of the tactics to increase the credibility of the results of any case study research. Chart No. 4 shows the kind of test suggested, the tactic and the phase when it should be done.

TESTS	CASE STUDY TACTIC	PHASE IT OCCURS
CONSTRUCT VALIDITY	- Use multiple sources of evidence. - Establish a chain of evidence - Have key informants review draft report	Data collection Data collection Composition
INTERNAL VALIDITY	- Do pattern-matching - Do explanation-building - Address rival explanations - Use logic models	Data analysis Data analysis Data analysis Data analysis
EXTERNAL VALIDITY	- Use theory in single-case studies - Use replication logic in multiple-case studies	Research design Research design
RELIABILITY	- Use case study protocol - Develop case study database	Data collection Data collection

Chart 4. The 2x3 Matrix of Yin's taxonomy of case studies[7]

Researcher's role

Rossman and Rallis (2003) noted that qualitative research "has two unique features: (a) **the researcher is the means through which the study is conducted**, and (b) **the purpose is to learn about some facet of the social world**" (p. 5), and this gives the researcher a dual role: researcher-learner, who performs an active learning process to transform the data collected into information through analysis and interpretation, which is then applied and, thus, becomes

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[7] Taken from Yin, R. K. (2003b). *Case study research: Design and methods (3rd. ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, SAGE Publications, Inc. (p.34).

knowledge. They represented this process in the "Building blocks of knowledge" diagram

transferred to Figure 2 below:
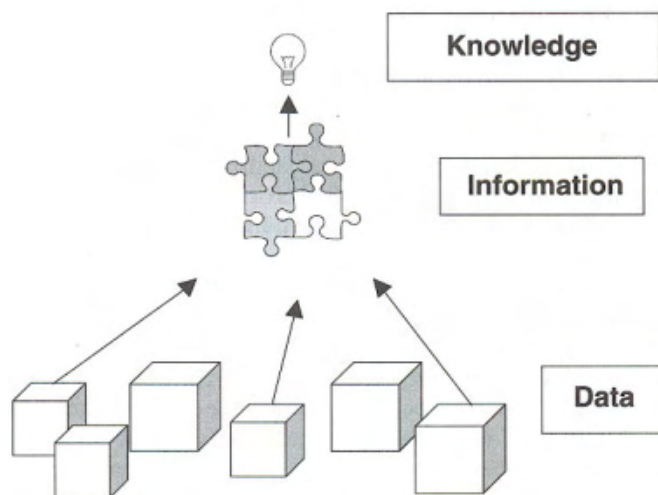
Figure 2. Building blocks of knowledge[8].

Therefore, the dual role played by the researcher in this study can be unfolded in the

following specific facets:

- As a *researcher*, he identified a problematic situation, proposed an alternative to deal

  with it, planned and implemented the proposal, analysed and interpreted the data

  collected to turn it into information, and to do it, he used the *exploratory understanding*

  approach described by Sciarra (1999) as "accessing the meaning an individual gives to

  his or her actions, and this meaning must be understood within context" (p. 40), by means

  of the interpretive tools offered by the pattern matching techniques supported on the data

  previously collected.

- As a *learner*, he made use of the information analysed and interpreted as knowledge to

  establish further instances of application or implementation. This is the continuous

  reflective stage of qualitative research, where the results obtained should locate the

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[8] From Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 5

      researcher one step ahead in the understanding of their social phenomena and they also

      help establish a more solid ground to make decisions and advance knowledge.

Context

      The study was carried out with a group of two students enrolled in a graduate course in

aerospace medicine at the biggest campus of the oldest and most important public university of

Colombia, the National University. The university's Academic Council justified the inclusion of

foreign language instruction in its programmes with this statement: "[T]he University

acknowledges foreign languages as manifestations of different views of the world, perspectives

and cultures [...] foreign languages are fundamental in undergraduate and postgraduate studies

since they are essential for greater and more immediate access to cultural, artistic, scientific and

technological advances" (Consejo Académico, 2001b) [9]. One of the general requirements for all

postgraduate programmes at the National University of Colombia is that the candidate "is able to

understand texts related to the postgraduate programme" (Consejo Académico, 2001a).

      The Faculty of Medicine of the National University offers a 3-year-long speciality training

programme in Aerospace Medicine for physicians and the second year of the programme

includes visits to different institutions and universities in the United States, which is why the

second language required for this programme is English. The main objective of including

English as a subject is to provide students with the opportunity to expand the requirement onto a

more practical use of language in real communicative contexts –not only reading and

understanding texts, and to develop their writing skills in more academic contexts.

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[9] The information taken from official documents of the National University is entirely written in Spanish, so it had to be translated for this paper.

Apart from the reasons provided above, there is no written, explicit curriculum for what English has to or should be taught nor other reason to include English as a subject in the programme, but it does consider its significance within the programme because it amounts to 360 hours a year and its essence as a subject involving a lot of autonomous work because twice as much as the time devoted to the lessons (120 hours a year) should be independent work. One of the main reasons to emphasise so much on English may be the regulations set by the International Civil Aviation Organization:

> Therefore, pilots on international flights shall demonstrate language proficiency in either English or the language used by the station on the ground. Controllers working on stations serving designated airports and routes used by international air services shall demonstrate language proficiency in English as well as in any other language(s) used by the station on the ground. (ICAO, n.d.)

In order to solve the problem of what to teach, and what the course aims at, the general profile of the graduate students of the specialty will be used:

> A professional in the area of Aerospace or aviation medicine who provides vital support, protective medicine and healthcare to aeronautical crew both in the air and on the ground and to the users of the air transportation system, as well as knowing and handling the conditioning and adverse factors to exposure to the space environment, supporting all aeronautical activities. (Dirección Nacional de Programas de Posgrado, n.d.)

These were the aims, goals and objectives set for the specific course taught with the participants in the study:

1.   Aerospace medicine graduates are healthcare providers for populations exposed to flight

        and space who enquire about aspects of physics and engineering in such an environment.

        (Dirección Nacional de Programas de Posgrado, n.d.)

        1.1   Graduates of the speciality programme will communicate effectively in English with

                pilots, crew members and air traffic controllers.

        1.1.1 Using English in practical contexts related to aerospace issues so that learners use it

                appropriately.

        1.1.2 Being able to hold a conversation in English with their peers and/or tutors while they

                take their courses in the United States.

        1.1.3 Being able to do academic presentations in English to their peers and tutors about the

                issues of study.

        1.2   Graduates will study the connection between physics and engineering and aerospace

                medicine.

        1.2.1 Doing classroom practice with academic articles written in English describing issues

                related to the learners' field of action.

        1.2.2 Being able to write academic articles in English following established patterns of

                organisation and the writing guidelines for their field of study.

        1.2.3 Being able to deal with the physics and engineering concepts within the scope of

                their professional duties both in Spanish and in English.

2.   Aerospace medicine graduates will help improve the safety of all air operations, both civil

        and military.

2.1 Students will know the standards set by the Federal Aviation Administration Safety Team, FAAST, and their rationale.

2.1.1 Studying the FAAST safety standards, written in English to be able to use them effectively in their professional duty.

2.1.2 Doing research about the implementation in Colombia of the FAAST standards and doing monthly presentations in English about them.

2.1.3 Holding effective argumentative discussions about ways and strategies to improve air travel safety standards.

2.2 Students will work in a joint manner with the civil aeronautics and the military forces to become familiar with safe air operations.

2.2.1 Doing practical exercises about international regulations for military and civil air and space operations.

2.2.2 Preparing and holding discussions according to patterns of organisation and development about these regulations in class.

2.2.3 Doing process writing exercises through essays about commonalities/differences between civil and military operations in the US and in Colombia.

3. Graduates from the speciality will be able to perform activities in all aviation-related fields. (Dirección Nacional de Programas de Posgrado, n.d.).

The participants

The participants were two male English learners of a public university in Bogotá, enrolled in the second semester of a graduate course in medicine, and their average age was 30 years old. English plays a very important instrumental role in the graduate course, since the second year of the course is entirely composed of lessons and visits to different institutes and colleges in the United States. These learners shared outstanding oral communicative competence, alongside the ability to cope with the reading tasks of a considerable amount of academic papers in their field for the other subjects (physiology, epidemiology, etc.) with no significant trouble.   In this respect, the results reported by Hyland (2002) on the research study carried out by Jenkins et al. with graduate-level engineering faculty members at six different US universities provides an explanation for the attitude displayed by these learners: the results of the study showed that "overall the engineering faculty members believed that writing was more important **after** graduation than in the programme itself" (**emphasis** added, p. 166).

Despite this commonality and the great empathy between them –especially reinforced by their interest in ICTs, they held rather different learner profiles and backgrounds. These were the main features obtained from an initial analysis done to Participant A through a learner profile:

-   He had been a regular language learner for over six years, both in private institutes and as an undergraduate student, and he had shown respectful and motivated attitudes towards the activities done in the course before the implementation.

-   Despite his previous language learning experience, he was not self-confident to take initiative as the Jung typology test done at Humanmetrics (2009) had reflected: he had obtained an ISTJ (Introvert, Sensing, Thinking, Judging) result and he had agreed to that

concept: "I guess it's true, because of my profession, I need to be sensitive about the suffering of other people".

- He acknowledged the need to engage in active language use in class and have his oral contributions corrected as often as necessary. In an entry survey done before the actual implementation, he considered "reading aloud, speaking to the teacher and classmates and listening to audio texts" **highly important**, while "reading silently" and "analysing text structure" were not as significant with a respective score of 2 and 3 over 5 (= highly important).

 In the same manner, the following information was collected from Participant B:

- Despite the outstanding overall effectiveness of his communicative competence, he had never had formal language lessons. In fact, he was very proud of having learnt it by playing videogames and somehow disregarded the lessons he had to take in the first part of the course. In the generalities section of the entry survey, his reply to "reasons to take this course" was "I have to", and in a section in which he was asked what his favourite activity was, he replied "destroy stuff".

- His prioritisation of in-class tasks was a general 5 (highly important) for all, except for "reading silently", which might have been interpreted as true interest in making the most of the lesson or a total disdain towards the survey.

- There were two items in the learner profile which sought to provide opportunities for reflection on learning styles (the Advanogy (2007) Memletics learning styles inventory) and the Jung typology test. In either case, the attitudes he displayed towards these instruments were very negative: for the first tool, he commented: "I´ve taken it 3 times now and I always get different results..." and for the second, after having been analysed

as an ENTP, i.e. extroverted, intuitive, thinking and perceiving, he added: "i (sic) don't

think is an accurate way to describe me".

In general, the aspects described above led to the lack of balance of these two learners'

linguistic skills called for a much more comprehensive approach to help them realise the

importance of a more committed and responsible attitude to improve their overall linguistic and

learning skills, but their reluctance they had shown in the previous semester to do writing tasks

dealing with basic reflective or descriptive activities meant they required a different approach,

and Leclercq and Poumay's 8 Learning Event s Model seemed a fitting alternative.

Data collection instruments

Rossman and Rallis (2003) considered "the primary ways of gathering qualitative data are through **interviewing, observing, and reviewing material culture** (documents, artifacts, records, decorations, and so on)" (p. 139), while Yin (2003b) stated that "[e]vidence for case studies may come from six sources: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation and physical artifacts." (p. 83). Based on the fact the research question aimed at observing the development of writing skills, the main instrument of data collection were the following learners' artifacts[10]:

1. Before starting implementation, the participants were asked to fill out a *learner profile*, a document aimed at collecting information about personality traits, learning styles, monitoring strategies and learning goalposts for each individual participant. It was divided in the following **nine** (**9**) sections:

    1.1. BASIC PERSONAL INFORMATION: Demographic and educational information needed to establish the learner's background.

    1.2. LEARNING STYLE: Information obtained through the Memletics Learning Styles Questionnaire (Advanogy.com, 2007) test and which offered them the possibility to reflect upon usual learning practices and suggest predominance of any learning style. This information was necessary to indentify which activities could be the most appropriate for them based on their predominant cognitive abilities as well as the ones they would need to develop strategies to compensate the fact they had not developed these features extensively.

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[10] Original documents designed for the study and samples of the participants' documents and written work are included in the Appendix section.

1.3. PERSONALITY TYPE: Through an online tool, the Carl Jung and Isabel Myers-Briggs typology test, the participants could identify general personality traits which would complement the information collected in the previous section as it would lead to the implementation of activities which fit the participants' personality and would not challenge it excessively, bringing a higher degree of comfort and subsequent accomplishment.

1.4. LANGUAGE NEEDS AND INTERESTS: Results of a survey carried out to obtain information about the participants' specific needs and interests about L2 and language learning. The information contained in this section should be permanently reviewed to assess progress and improvement.

1.5. CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT: This section intended to allow participants to set easily identifiable goals which they should accomplish within the time limit they had previously set.

1.6. TEST RESULTS: Records of the results of the tests taken over the course so that they could identify improvement or needs to carry out revision.

1.7. ACTIVITY RECORD CHART: A summary of the activities carried out so that they could track frequency and effectiveness over time.

1.8. TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT: A space devoted to the teachers' reflections upon the learners' individual process based on an analysis of their performance in the lessons and in the material included in the profile.

1.9. SELF-REFLECTION: Based on the information contained in the previous sections, analyse how successful the process had been in terms of appropriateness of material,

suitability of teaching activities and tests, feasibility of goals set, amount and quality of independent work and efficacy of the entire process.

2. The starting point of each one of the four modules was a *self-access activity guide*, which was answered individually by the participants. It allowed them to do some pressure-free research and try different sources and means of information related to the issues chosen while it provided them with useful vocabulary and information required for the subsequent discussion, elaboration and eventual written production. The answers given by each one of the participants provided the study with basic information about learning strategies which could then be compared to the information collected in the learner profile.

3. Every module involved the creation of an argumentative essay dealing with the topic presented in the self-access guide, discussed in class and explored further as part of the essay-preparation process. It was done in the modality of writing-as-a-process, so it required the preparation of a first draft, a review form their peer, a subsequent review from the teacher, and the eventual preparation of a final version of the essay. These papers, along with the revisions, were collected and kept for further analysis through the use of the readability formulas described in Chapter 2 and additional interpretive data for the overall results of the study.

4. The participants were asked to fill out two surveys: one before the implementation of the research study, called *entry survey*, in which they were asked some personal details, level of satisfaction with their communicative language level at the time, their learning interests and favourite kinds of activities, as well as their expectations regarding the study they were about to undertake and the level of motivation towards the subject and the work done in it. The second survey, *exit survey*, aimed at collecting information about the participants'

perceptions of the effects of the research study on their overall communicative competence, on their writing ability and on the learning process itself.

5. The last element to collect information was a researcher blog (http://velugov.blogspot.com), where the information collected from the implementation was recorded. The use of this as a research tool was suggested by tutors, especially because of the characteristic pointed out by Mortensen and Walker (2002): "[w]eblogs elucidate the constant flow of thought and the ever-changing nature of research". (p. 267), and this could help us greatly to make eventual sense of our observations. At the beginning of the implementation, the idea was to ask learners to contribute with comment on this blog, but since they refused to engage in this activity, it only contains information collected by the teacher-researcher.

Data collection procedures

As stated above, the first set of data collected was contained in the *learner profile* which the learners filled out individually and sent to their teacher before starting the self-access activities of the four implementation modules. At this stage of the research study, participants were asked to fill out the first four sections, and they were supposed to continue working on it and to keep track of their progress as the study moved forward in an autonomous manner, and the information collected in this manner could be later integrated in the post-implementation stage and also in the exit survey.

Once the learners started to develop the activities planned for the implementation modules, the data coming from the self-access activity guides and their written papers started to be recorded in charts designed to keep track of their effective performance of the task and the activities and roles related to it (positive role match): when they carried out these roles entirely, it

was marked with a tick (✔), when it was carried out partially, it was marked with an exclamation

mark (❢), and when it was not carried at all, it was marked with a cross (✗). Chart 5 below shows

a sample of the results for the first module.

Participant	FIRST CYCLE Sep. 14 – Oct. 6, 2009							
	LEARNING EVENTS							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗
B	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✗

POSITIVE MATCH INDICATORS							
✔	Carried out entirely		✗	Not attempted		❢	Unfinished
1	Imitation/Modelling	3	Exercising/Guidance	5	Experimentation/Reactivity	7	Self-reflexion/ Co-reflexion
2	Reception/Transmission	4	Exploration/Documenting	6	Creation/Confortation	8	Debate/Animation

Chart 5. Positive 8LEM roles match

The second aspect about which data were collected was the effective accomplishment of the

process writing tasks assigned, which were recorded in a chart similar to Chart 6 below, where

they were represented in terms of **present** (✔) or **absent** (✗), and the information collected was

put in graphs showing trends. These trends were further compared to the information obtained,

charted and graphed from the previous unit of analysis, i.e. *the positive 8LEM role match*.

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROCESS WRITING TASKS																
8LEM CYCLE	FIRST: Political correctness				SECOND: Environment				THIRD: Schooling				FOURTH: Privacy			
Participant A	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD
Participant B	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD
D	First draft		**PR**	Peer review		**TR**	Teacher's review		**FD**	Final draft						

Chart 6. Accomplishment of process writing tasks

Pedagogical intervention and implementation

In this chapter the steps and processes undertaken in the implementation of the strategy to deal with the problematic issue are described in detail. First of all, it is worth noting that the participants had been enrolled in this course in the previous semester, but no conversation about carrying out this research study had previously taken place as the original project had been planned for another group with a very different profile (A1 learners with very limited communicative competence in L2), but the unexpected cancellation of that course obliged me to use the information collected the previous semester to design a new project. These two learners agreed to take part in the study just three weeks before the actual implementation, so many decisions were made as the project was taking place. Consequently, the strategy was developed as the implementation was under its way, and it allowed me to make necessary adjustments to the materials and contents selected with no preconception or limitation from excessive planning. In fact, a close look at the consent letters will show that the original strategy was exclusively based on materials taken from an educational website which specialises in critical views on the information presented in mainstream media (mediaeducationfoundation.org), but after the learner profile was filled out, it was evident that more varied sources of information would be needed to fulfil their level of expectation, though it was clear from the beginning that the emphasis would be on writing skills development –as explicitly stated in the consent letters. Fortunately, the design was supported on the content and assignments of one of the subjects of our Master's Programme, called Learner Autonomy and Self-Access Materials, for which we had to design self-access guides for different language skills or issues (grammar, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, etc.), and the guides were designed with the implementation in mind, and conveniently checked by our professors with authoritative eyes before implementation. Their critical views helped the implementation significantly.

The analysis of this group allowed adopting the perspective of a researcher on the events observed in the previous semester, and that is where the issue of low interest in performing writing exercises, which had been evident over the first semester, turned the most interesting to work with since more traditional alternatives had already been tried –e.g. doing explicit work in class about essay layout and structure, and assigning simple exercises, though with no eventual outcome.   Then, as Burns (1999) stated, "teachers may be in a position to draw out hypotheses or predictions about what is likely to occur" (p. 39), and I thought the use of the short video clips of the website mentioned above –which I had used in a previous session and had caused a great deal of discussion in the classroom, could be the excuse to structure a broader strategy, which would end up in the creation of texts where their ideas and opinions would eventually be included, and I found out about Leclercq & Poumay's 8LEM model when I was implementing the second self-access activity, and it allowed me to design the definite research proposal.   The implementation was designed in four modules, which opened with a self-access activity which allowed the learners to carry out a task (reading/writing/listening/vocabulary, etc.) which dealt with a controversial issue, and the guide offered optional activities for the learners to explore different media or opinions.   They would be given a week to do the task, and send their answers to the teacher for correction before the next face-to-face session, where they would do the activity described in the guide as NEXT LESSON PREPARATION. As the participants carried out the activities, the researcher collected the solved self-access guides, corrected them and sent them back with feedback on grammar and content. This activity could be to prepare an individual presentation or prepare arguments based on assigned roles to hold a debate. At the end of the lesson, the learners would have been given the opportunity to perform the first five roles of the 8LEM model (imitate, receive, exercise, explore, and experiment), and should be aware of

different viewpoints on the issues being discussed and may be ready to start creating and

debating (on a written medium). Chart No. 7 below shows the actual schedule designed for the

implementation modules, which was given to the participants so that they could keep track of the

scheduled activities

ACTIVITIES DONE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOUR 8LEM MODULES

Module	SEPTEMBER W16	T17	F18	S19	S20	M21	T22	W23	T24	F25	S26	S27	M28	T29	W30	OCTOBER T1	F2	S3	S4	M5	T6	W7	T8	F9	S10	S11	M12	T13	W14	T15	F16	S17	S18	M19	T20	W21	T22	F23	S24	S25	M26	T27
ARGUMENTATIVE: Political correctness								D1				P1			T1				F1		R1																					
CAUSE-EFFECT: Environmental issues															D2				P2			T2			F2		R2															
COMPARISON: US/British schooling systems																						D3			P3				T3				F3		R3							
ARGUMENTATIVE: Privacy rights																													D4				P4				T4			F4		R4
(Activity assessment)																					A1						A2								A3							A4

DESCRIPTION

■ (orange)	Self-access activity on the specific essay type	■ (light blue)	Deadline to send for teacher review
■ (green)	Debate/Presentation	■ (blue)	Time allowed for teacher review
■ (yellow)	Time allowed to prepare drafts	■ (dark green)	Activity assessment
■ (light green)	Deadline to send for peer review		

Chart 7. Activities done for the implementation of the 8LEM modules

Timeline of Data Collection and Implementation

Stage	Month	Week (Dates)	Activity	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Comments
Pre-stage	August	**1 -2:** August 3 – 15	1. To analyse the viability of the proposal already designed. 2. To identify possible changes to implement in the original proposal.	None	No implementation possible during the whole month due to cancellation of existing courses. Finding an alternative was not possible in the whole month
		3–4: August 17 – 29	3. To comply with the administrative requirements to carry out the project	Consent letter	Signed in the first week of September
			4. To identify particularities of the learners taking part in the research project	Learner profile	
			5. To do literature review	None	
	September	**5-6:** September 1 - 11	6. To verify compliance/ constraints of the project according to curricular guidelines.	Curriculum review	
			7. To start designing the self-access activity guides	None	
		6: September 5 - 11	8. To design a tool to keep track of the advance in the implementation	Blog. http://velugov.blogspot.com	
While-stage	September	**7 – 8:** September 14 - 22	9. To explain learners the programme, the schedule of implementation and the scope of the research project.	Audio recording	
			10. To obtain information about the learners' initial state regarding academic writing	An argumentative essay assigned in this lesson, allowing them 30 minutes to do it with full Internet access.	
			11. To get acquainted with	Writing guide	

			process writing, peer review and drafting as writing strategies.		
			12. To start implementing SA activities	SA activity guide	
			13. To collect first impressions on the learners' perception and expectations	Blog. http://velugov.blogspot.com	
		8: September 23 – 29	14. To implement the first writing module: argumentative essays	Video recording of the learners' presentation/debate	
			15. To keep track of learners' collaborative work	Students' essays with peer reviewer's notes	
		9: September 30 – October 6	16. To implement the second module: cause-effect essays	Video recording of the learners' presentation/debate	
		10: October 7 - 13	17. To implement the third module: comparison essays.	Video recording of the learners' presentation/debate	
		12: October 20	18. To obtain information about the learners' situation regarding their writing skills at the end of the process	An argumentative essay written by the learners, allowing them 30 minutes to do it with full Internet access.	
		7 – 12: September 30 – October 20	19. To analyse motivational factors through learners' weekly reflection	Blog. http://velugov.blogspot.com	
		5 – 12: September 09 – October 31	20. To monitor achievements and delays from the teacher's perspective	Blog. http://velugov.blogspot.com	
Post-stage	November	**13 – 14:** November 2 – 8	21. To analyse and validate the data collected in the previous weeks	Students' essays, video recordings, reflections on the blog, self-reflections by the teacher on the blog.	
		14 – 16: November 2 - 22	22. To write the final report		

Chart 8. Timeline of data collection and implementation

Chart No. 6 above shows the initial plan designed for the implementation modules more in detail. It is worth noting that the video and audio recordings planned in the design had to be called off because one of the learners refused to be recorded and the data collected needed to rely on their artifacts and the researcher's record in the blog.

After the face-to-face session, participants were given three days to write the essay suggested in the self-access guide –where directions were clearly stated, and they were supposed to send it to their peer, who had two additional days to read it, and make comments using the MS Word "add comments" tool, which they had been trained how to use in class. After these two days, they should send it to the teacher, who had two days to send it back to the author for corrections and changes. He had three additional days to make any necessary changes and resend it directly to the teacher, for a final feedback. The four modules repeated the same pattern and closed with an open discussion to collect opinions on the motivational issues and comments on the tasks assigned in the module, as well as questions, concerns or suggestions.

Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter will describe in detail the process to turn the data collected into information and knowledge through analysis and interpretation based on the theory and through the categories identified, with the guiding principle of verifying the objectives of the study. Before moving onto the data analysis, it is important to go back to the four tests to judge the quality of research designs mentioned in Chapter 2, and how they were observed in this specific case study research:

- CONSTRUCT VALIDITY: Yin (2003b) mentioned two steps a researcher needs to cover to meet this test: "1. Select the specific types of changes to be studied (and relate them to the original objectives of the study) and 2. Demonstrate that the selected measures of these changes do indeed reflect the specific types of change [...] selected" (p.35). In this case, the change intended for study –and displayed in the research objectives, are the involvement in writing tasks and the quality of the texts, and the measures are the *positive role match*, which indicates effective performance of the intended –or expected, role by the participants is a clear and valid measure of the first change and the scores obtained in three readability formulas assume that clarity is a condition for quality, and thence, it can be a true reflection of the change selected.

- INTERNAL VALIDITY: The analysis was performed by adopting the *pattern-matching logic*, recommended by Yin (2003b), as "one of the most which desirable techniques [...which...] compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one (or with several alternative predictions). If the patterns coincide, the results can help a case study to strengthen its *internal validity*" (p. 116). In this case, the assumption is that the more the participant is offered possibilities to discuss about a topic and reflect upon different

opinions, the easier it will be for them to create a well-structured argumentative essay
and the more motivated they will be to engage in the writing process.

- EXTERNAL VALIDITY: The tactic for single-case studies is to use theory, and
Leclercq and Poumay's *8LEM model* and Dörnyei and Ottó's (2001) *process model of
L2 motivation* offer two well-structured theoretical frameworks, which are also
interrelated and that facilitates interpretation of the data collected and of the study in its
entirety.

- RELIABILITY: In order to establish certain standards to carry out a subsequent case
study research in similar conditions, the recommendation is either to use a case study
protocol or to develop a case study database, so that "if a later investigator followed the
same procedures as described as described by an earlier investigator and conducted the
same case study all over again, the later investigator should arrive at the same findings
and conclusions" (Yin, 2003b, p. 37). In this case, it was not done, since the study was
not planned under a protocol and, as will be noted below, the findings were positive
indicators of direct relationship between positive role match and the quality of the
argumentative essays but these results lacked conclusiveness.

Then, since construct validity does not require further analysis, the following paragraphs
will describe the analysis in terms of *pattern matching logic* for internal validity and the external
validity will be analysed in relation to the theory supporting the study.

Internal validity

The analysis is based on the results outlined in the following charts. The first chart shows
the records of the actual performance of the expected outcome was recorded in Chart 7, as

entirely done (✔), **unfinished** (✗) or **not attempted** (⁝), and it provided trends which were then

related to the next unit of analysis, i.e. the accomplishment of writing cycles, to start identifying

patterns.

POSITIVE 8LEM ROLE MATCH																																
		FIRST CYCLE Sep. 14 – Oct. 6, 2009								**SECOND CYCLE** Sep. 23 – Oct. 13, 2009								**THIRD CYCLE** Sep. 30 – Oct. 20, 2009								**FOURTH CYCLE** Oct. 7 – 27, 2010								
		LEARNING EVENTS								**LEARNING EVENTS**								**LEARNING EVENTS**								**LEARNING EVENTS**								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
PARTICIPANT	A	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	⁝	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	⁝	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✔	⁝	✗	✗	✗	✗
	B	✔	✔	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	✔	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	⁝	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✔	⁝	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

POSITIVE MATCH					
✔	Carried out entirely	✗	Not attempted	⁝	Unfinished
8 LEARNING EVENTS					
1	Imitation/ Modelling	3	Exercising/ Guidance	5	Experimentation/ Reactivity	7	Self-reflexion/ Co-reflexion
2	Reception/ Transmission	4	Exploration/ Documenting	6	Creation/ Confortation	8	Debate/ Animation

Chart 7. Positive 8LEM roles match

However, since the initial objective was to relate the degree of positive involvement in the

model with the quality of the texts, these trends need to be related to the results in the readability

scores of the texts produced by this participant, and it is important to highlight the fact that the

initiative to use readability formulas for the study, which might have seemed controversial at

first –though the analysis of their background, features, and widespread use in countries like the

US provided in the second chapter might have also helped change that perspective, aimed

primarily to explore their potential for future L2 research in our contexts, since they are mostly

unknown. Thence, the procedure for the analysis will be to display individual results for positive 8LEM role match and then the scores of the three readability formulas –which include data from both participants, to have access to the data before the analysis. Figures 3 and 4 below show the results for positive 8LEM role match separately for each participant in graphs which facilitate the identification of patterns and the interpretation as they are related to the different stages of the four modules. The decimals in the lower part indicate the module and the learning event (e.g. 3.1 means *third* module, *first* learning event: modelling/imitation), and the numbers on the left are conventions like this: **1:** carried out entirely, **0.5:** partially done, and **0:** not done at all.

POSITIVE 8LEM ROLE MATCH FOR PARTICIPANT A

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8
Participant A	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0,	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0,	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0,	0	0	0	0
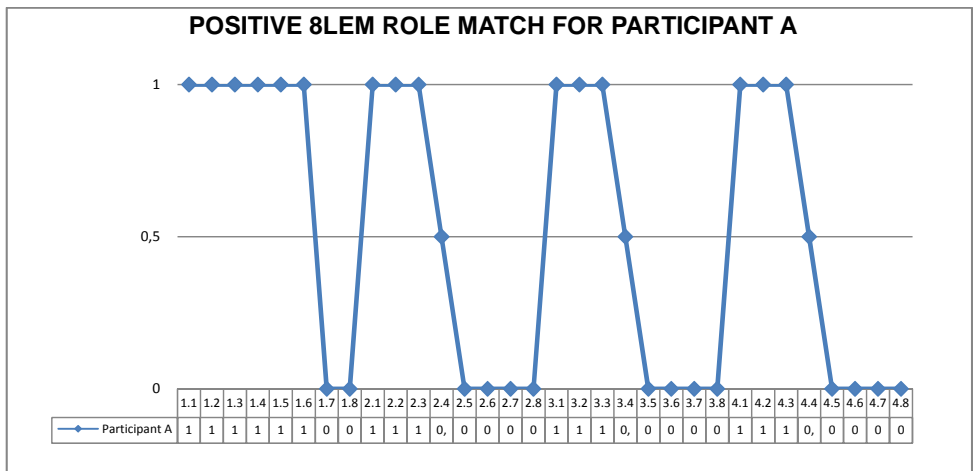
Figure No. 3. Positive role match for participant A

The data for Participant A displayed in Figure 3 indicate a high level of performance of the intended 8LEM role at the early stages of every module, in fact, it is interesting to appreciate the good level of achievement for role match for the first module, where six out of eight roles were achieved completely. However, from the second modules there started to be an identifiable pattern, in which the participant carried out the first three roles entirely, the fourth was carried

out partially and the last four were not carried at all. The most remarkable fact from the interpretive standpoint is that these were the roles which required a higher level of demand, but also offered a higher level of free action.

POSITIVE 8LEM ROLE MATCH FOR PARTICIPANT B

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8
Participant B	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0,5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0,5	0	0	0	0	0	0
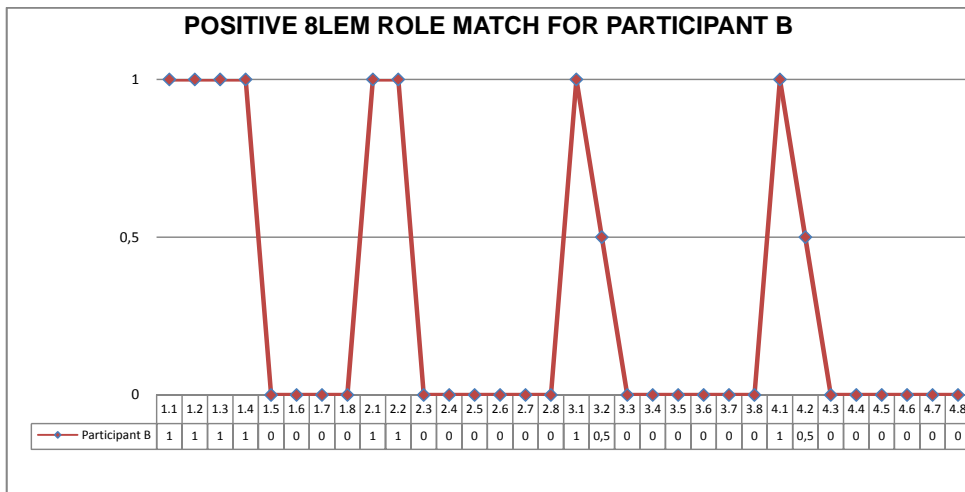
Figure No. 4. Positive role match for participant B

Participant B showed a decreasing involvement in the study. He performed the first four learning events in the first module, but subsequently refused to do the activities which involved autonomous work, and by the end of the implementation process he basically did the controlled exercises in the self-access activity guide. The greatest concern was the negative consequences this attitude had on the other participant's work, because despite his constant promise to catch up with the tasks he was behind, Participant B only checked his peer's work on one occasion. The researcher consciously decided not to take any action because it might have affected the reliability of the results.

Figure 5 below shows the comparison between the two participants' actual performance of the 8LEM roles. It is evident the great degree of involvement of Participant A in the learning events and his interest to continue working autonomously.
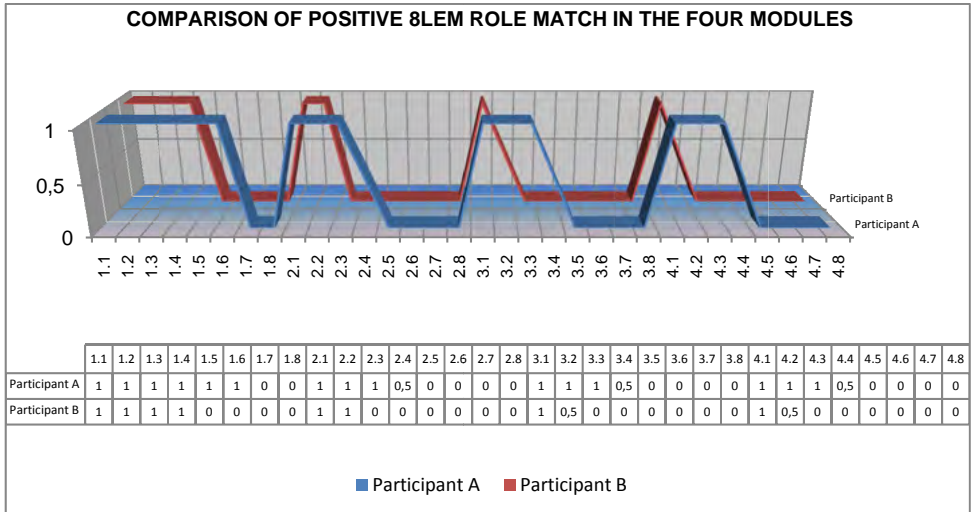

COMPARISON OF POSITIVE 8LEM ROLE MATCH IN THE FOUR MODULES

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8
Participant A	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0,5	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0,5	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0,5	0	0	0	0
Participant B	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0,5	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0,5	0	0	0	0	0	0

■ Participant A   ■ Participant B

Figure No. 5. Comparison of positive 8LEM role match for participant B

The previous data was the necessary background for the writing process, which was recorded in Chart No. 8 below. It was used during the implementation process to keep track of the actual performance of the tasks participants were intended to perform during the process writing module (first draft, peer review, teacher review, and final draft) and they were represented in terms of **present** (✔) or **absent** (✘). The information collected was put in graphs

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROCESS WRITING CYCLES																
8LEM CYCLE	FIRST: Political correctness				SECOND: Environment				THIRD: Schooling				FOURTH: Privacy			
	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD
Participant A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD	D	PR	TR	FD
Participant B	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

D	First draft		PR	Peer review		TR	Teacher's review	FD	Final draft

Chart 8. Accomplishment of process writing cycles

This is one of the first findings: the high level of involvement shown by Participant A in the first 8LEM module promoted the facilitated the creation of the first argumentative essay, about political correctness and this personal motivation was complemented by the timely reviews done by Participant B and by his teacher. However, as soon as peer review failed to appear, he stopped doing his share, which is evident in the big gap in the second and third modules. Participant B, in turn, only did his first draft, but Participant A did not review it –though the teacher did not review it either because he considered peer review was a necessary prior step for the model to be applied properly. In the end, Participant B simply refused to do any subsequent written work, complemented by his poor involvement in the 8LEM module activities pointed out above. The comparative trends of actual accomplishment of the assigned writing tasks by the two participants is shown in Figure 6 below.
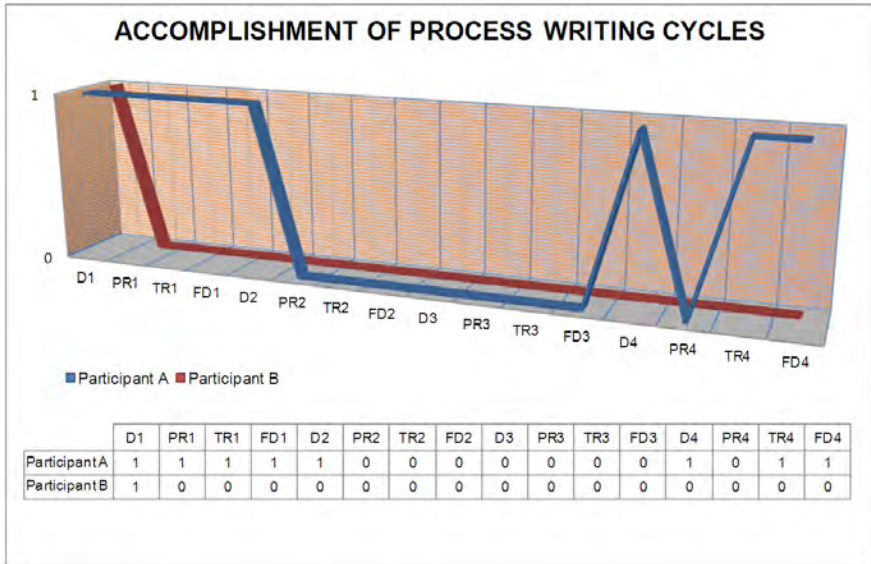
ACCOMPLISHMENT OF PROCESS WRITING CYCLES

■ Participant A ■ Participant B

	D1	PR1	TR1	FD1	D2	PR2	TR2	FD2	D3	PR3	TR3	FD3	D4	PR4	TR4	FD4
Participant A	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Participant B	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Figure No. 6. Comparison of the accomplishment of process writing cycles

The results of the application of the *readability formulas* to the essays written by the

participants yielded the following results, which were then put in a chart to track changes and

they were eventually graphed to identify trends, which were again related to the data collected

through the previous units of analysis. Chart 9 below shows the results of the application of the

readability formulas outlined above for each participant, and Charts 10, 11 and 12 show the

comparison of the results obtained by the two participants in each readability formula:

CHANGES IN READABILITY SCORES									
READABILITY FORMULAS	Entry essay: Gun control		FIRST: Political correctness		SECOND: Environment		THIRD: Schooling		FOURTH: Privacy	
	Participant A									
	D	FD	D	FD	D	FD	D	FD	D	FD
Flesch-Reading Ease (Degree of difficulty)	53/100	N/A	48/100	49/100	30/100	ND [11]	ND	ND	45/100	46/100
New Dale-Chall US grade level	6.85	N/A	8.90	8.86	10.69	ND	ND	ND	7.18	7.33
SMOG Grade Years of education	15.09	N/A	14.86	14.47	16.31	ND	ND	ND	16.73	16.89
	Participant B									
	D	FD	D	FD	D	FD	D	FD	D	FD
Flesch-Reading Ease (Degree of difficulty)	40/100	N/A	40/100	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
New Dale-Chall US grade level	7.82	N/A	5.80	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
SMOG Grade Years of education	17.14	N/A	17.07	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND

Chart No. 9. Changes in readability scores along the four modules

It is very important to point out that though it was evident during the implementation that if the participants did not do all the writing tasks or performed the expected 8LEM roles, the results would not be easy to relate, but no additional effort was made to have them do the tasks and the big gaps require interpretation rather than adaptation to fit the hypothesis. Charts 10, 11 and 12 represent the ND gaps as a broken line in the trend, as it would have been inaccurate to award them a zero or to have jumped to the next score. The interpretation was made on the ground of what had been occurring before the gap and the direction of the final trend.

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[11] ND: Not done. These were the tasks the participants decided not to do.

FLESCH-READING EASE READABILITY

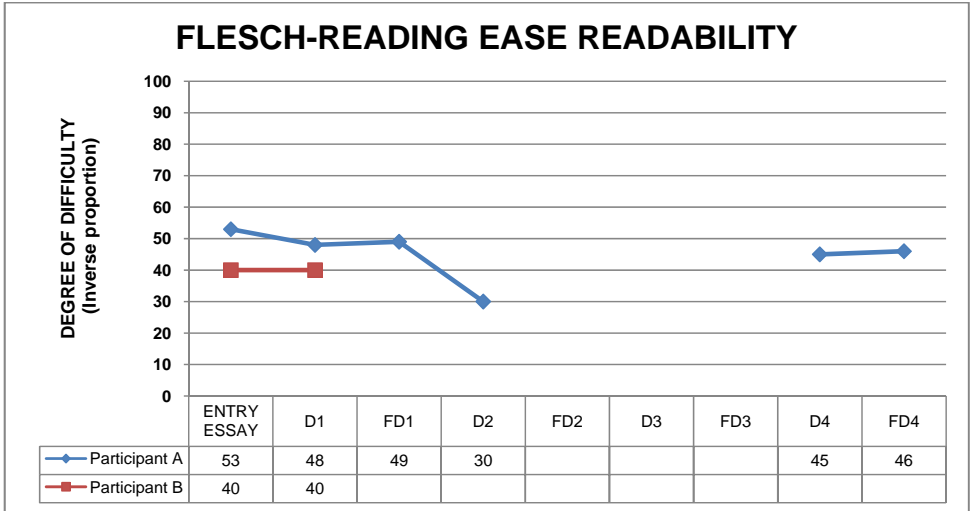|	ENTRY ESSAY	D1	FD1	D2	FD2	D3	FD3	D4	FD4
Participant A	53	48	49	30				45	46
Participant B	40	40							

Chart No. 10. Comparison of scores obtained by the participants in the Flesch-Reading Ease

In this case, for Participant A, the scores show that the texts were gradually becoming more complicated to understand before the gap, but this score showed a slight improvement towards the end of the implementation. The result for Participant B was absolutely stable in the first two essays he wrote, but it is important to point out that there was no process writing involved.
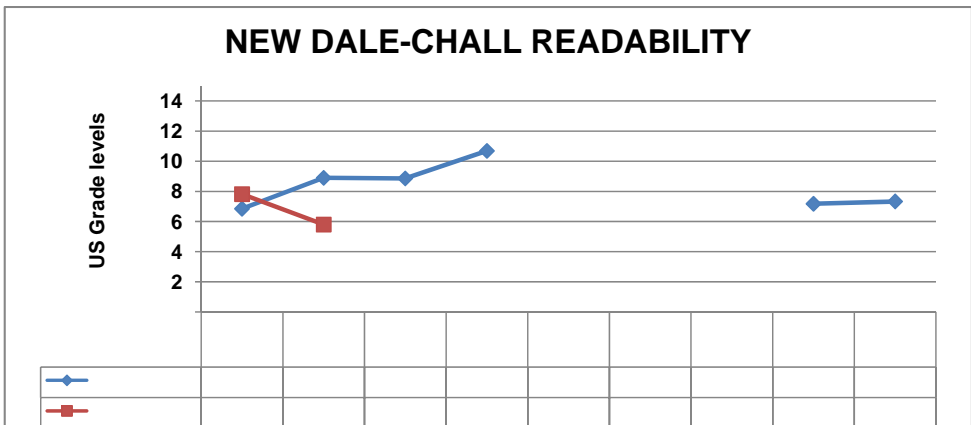
NEW DALE-CHALL READABILITY

Chart No. 11. Comparison of scores obtained by the participants in the New Dale-Chall

The scores of this readability formula showed the degree of complexity of the texts created by Participant A increased as the implementation progressed, and this trend kept constant even after the gap. However, or Participant B, there was a slight decrease in the complexity of the texts.
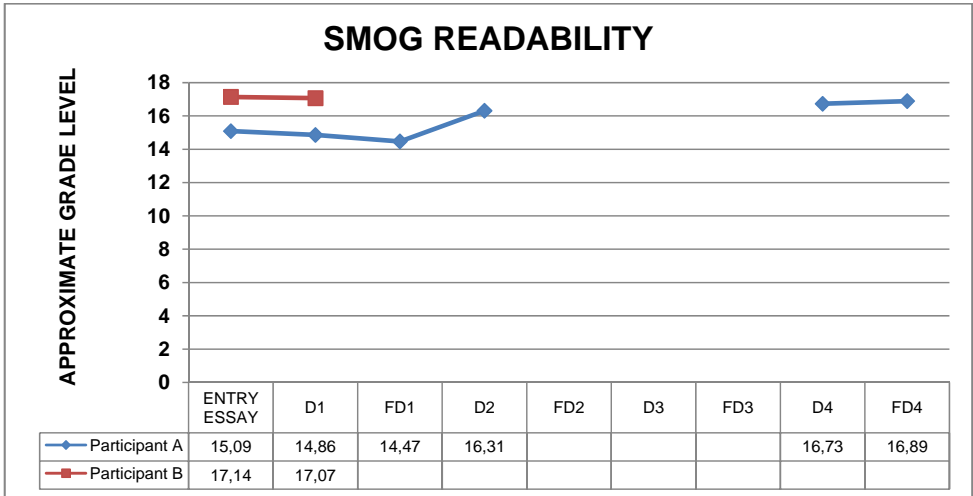

Chart No. 12. Comparison of scores obtained by the participants in the SMOG

In this case, the results are very similar to the ones obtained in the new Dale-Chall readability formula. The trends in readability through the four modules, according to the results of applying the three formulas, show there is a consistent direct relationship between them, i.e. the more active the participation, the better the readability, except in the Flesch-Reading Ease, which shows a decrease in the readability of the texts for Participant A.

External validity

As stated above, it will be analysed in terms of the theoretical confirmation of the principles of the case study. The study showed that the *domains of learning* considered in the 8LEM model as separate skills to develop can be adopted as a comprehensive framework for language learning and teaching, especially because of its increasing level of autonomous decision transferred onto the learner. The self-access activity guides designed for the study condensed traditional language learning elements while they offered opportunities for subsequent exploration, discovery, experimentation, creation, self-reflexion and debate. They are effective gate openers but cannot stand alone in the purpose of developing a diversity of learning and critical thinking skills, especially because the model relies heavily on interaction for effective learning. However, as it had been originally designed, the connection with the writing tasks seemed appropriate as it allows the transformation of the information studied, reflected upon and discussed into a concrete instance of a structured element based on verbal elements and personalisation, essential elements of *argumentation*, as described in Chapter 2.

The effective performance of the intended 8LEM roles can be interpreted as indicators of Dörnyei and Ottó's process model of L2 motivation as the relationship established in Chapter 2 indicated. The individual personal motivations and learner styles influence the way each learner faced the implementation of the model, but the executive motivational influences are highly conditioned by the effective accomplishment of start conditions strong enough to create action-launching impulses, a factor which hindered the accomplishment of the later stages of the modules.

Conclusions, pedagogical implications and further research

The implementation was really optimistic in its foundations and the initial discussion held

with the two participants mainly sought to modulate the negative attitudes previously shown by

Participant B, since the 8LEM model requires permanent interaction amongst the members of the

educational unit and a close and attentive relationship to monitor self- and peer-progress. In

order to grant this desired degree of involvement, the study itself was presented as an innovative

perspective to the lessons, and the results show it was working very well at the first stage. In the

first lessons, the use of self-access activities which allowed them to browse different sources of

information as well as different media (videos, reading texts, avatar-creating software, etc.)

promoted highly positive involvement and interaction –though Participant B did not show

enough seriousness in his comments (e.g. to show positive reaction towards a well-structured

argument, he commented "*kick ass!*", as shown in Figure 7 below) and this attitude started to

hinder the academic nature of the tasks and by the third module, the self-access guide was the

only task they did.

But what happens if one society uses a policy linked to violence to convince people that its ideas are better than those of the enemy? Then, the concept of political correctness has been born. For instance, Churchill's empire trying to sell the idea that Hitler was in fact the principle of evil made flesh, meanwhile Stalin's or Roosevelt's corpses were absolutely justified.

Comentario [A13]: Kick ass!

Figure 7. Sample of the comments made by participant B to Partcipant A's first essay

This lack of commitment was further worsened by the fact the course was suddenly

cancelled two weeks before and the additional strategy of carrying out an exit test, in similar

conditions to the ones provided for the entry test, and which aimed to provide internal validity,

was impossible. These attitudes reflect the lack of *instigation force* mentioned by Dörnyei (2001)

as necessary for learners to transcend difficulties and start achieving on their own without permanent supervision or guidance.

As noted above, the effects of the implementation were not easy to assess as the entire strategy depended on the active interaction between the learners and with the writing process and the effects of the negative attitude shown by Participant B allowed the obtainment of the answer for the first issue subquestion, i.e. *What happens if any of the roles is not performed entirely?*: the 8LEM model does not work if the members of the community do not do their share in an effective and timely manner.

The implementation of the 8LEM model in itself did not carry significant changes in one of the participants' involvement and, rather, his negative attitude weakened the active role adopted by the other participant. This was evident in the data shown in Figure 5, where the initial roles in every module, which depend mostly on guidance and exemplification, were carried out entirely, yet as the level of independent demand increased, their degree of autonomous active participation decreased. This was also evident in the data displayed in Figure 6, which depicts more clearly the negative attitudes of Participant B towards the writing modules.

One of the conclusions which follow from this is the fact that an implementation strategy which relies so heavily on active participation certainly needs monitoring mechanisms which allow peer-assessment and active demand for fulfilment of expectations; on this occasion, they were given a soft copy of the timeline for the implementation process, but it could have been more effective to provide each of them with a printed checklist showing expected roles and dates so that they could have been much more critical of their own roles and on the other participant's role. It is also worth noting that the role expected from the peer could possibly have been taken by the teacher, but it was a conscious decision to neglect it since, in the end, it was not his role,

and the participant should be aware of the negative effect the lack of commitment from the other learner had on his own process and, consequently, they would individually realise their importance as active participants of the model. Surprisingly, Participant A did not see this lack of commitment from his peer as significant for his degree of accomplishment and the achievement of progress in his communicative competence and academic writing abilities, as he noted in the exit survey:

> 10. The support I received from the following was
> <mark>My classmate: Excellent</mark>
> My teacher: Excellent
> The materials suggested: Excellent

Figure 8. Excerpt from the exit survey done by Participant A

This might show the need to develop more reflective tools for learners to keep track of their peers' involvement as part of their learning process, so that they can become more critical of the importance of peer review and demand its effective implementation and thus increase the sense of citizenship and community bonds. On the other hand, it might also mean that Participant A supplied positive feedback on his peer's poor cooperation in an attempt to avoid possible penalties on Participant B. If this were the case, the use of the reflective tools should provide more objective analyses and would certainly contribute to an increased sense of citizenship through writing and collaboration with no biased on the grounds of partnership.

A related aspect to consider for future implementation instances is the need to establish more participant-friendly mechanisms for involvement and constant collection of data. In first place, Participant B refused to make comments on the researcher blog or be video or audio recorded, but there could have been alternative ways to involve them in the reflection process – highly important for this model, incidentally, like brief notes at the end of the activities. Secondly, these participants refused to provide all the additional tasks they had done (e.g. they

both had done analytically interesting PowerPoint presentations which they promised to hand in later, but never actually did), so better monitoring mechanisms to collect the data available on time are required.

The self-access activities used for this research study provide some indications for potential uses other than their inclusion in self-access centres, so emphasised by authoritative voices, like Benson (2001), and further affordances, components and designs should be explored and implemented, especially in comprehensive strategies to develop writing skills suitable for local contexts and interests.

The expected outcome of further implementation of strategies similar to the one reported here can be increased motivation for teachers to carry out more cognitively challenging and interesting tasks for the learners. Consequently, professional skills will have to be permanently fine-tuned to keep up with the challenges posed by more and more critical students and national and international professional guidelines. An immediate result of individual research efforts in educational settings like the one undertaken here –especially if they bring about positive outcomes, is awareness from the other members of the community of the possibilities available to engage in more reflective and professionally developing teaching practices, and the subsequent creation of research groups. In this specific case, the implementation of strategies aimed at promoting better writing skills will lead to an overall increase in the quality of teaching practices, especially based on the demand from learners and the need to keep up with them: as part of the 8LEM, their level of active participation will make teaching more challenging because learners will demand coherence in the guidelines set, better quality in the materials, engagement with their educational community and with society in general as social roles will become stronger.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Request presented to the director of the specialty to grant authorisation to carry out the research project with the medicine graduates.

Bogotá, D.C.
2 de septiembre de 2009

Doctor
█████████████

Director
Especialización en Medicina Aeroespacial
Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Apreciado Doctor █████████:

Ante todo, quisiera agradecerle la confianza que la Universidad Nacional, el Departamento de Medicina y Usted han depositado en mí para llevar a cabo las actividades de enseñanza de la asignatura Lengua Extranjera – Inglés en el programa de Especialización en Medicina Aeroespacial con completa autonomía y espero haber cumplido hasta el momento con las expectativas de calidad que se han establecido.

Por ello y con el fin de contribuir de manera más significativa a mejorar los estándares de calidad en la enseñanza de lengua extranjera en la Facultad de Medicina, promover el desarrollo de las habilidades cognitivas de los estudiantes y, particularmente, dentro de los lineamientos de "Ciencia y Tecnología para el País" de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, quisiera solicitarle Su aprobación para implementar un proyecto de investigación con los alumnos que actualmente se encuentran registrados en la asignatura, los doctores █████████ █████████ y █████████████. Vale la pena anotar que, de manera informal, los Doctores █████████ y █████████ han manifestado su interés en participar en esta iniciativa, pero esperan Su aprobación para continuar con el proceso.

Este proyecto lo realizo como requisito de grado de la Maestría en **Enseñanza del Inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo** que estoy cursando actualmente en la Universidad de la Sabana. Los requerimientos básicos son la implementación de Tecnologías de la Información y de la Comunicación (TIC) en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera y el desarrollo de la autonomía en el aprendizaje de los estudiantes. Para tal efecto, he diseñado un proyecto que consiste en el análisis de los efectos de la realización de un taller semanal diseñado completamente por mí que incluye la utilización de material disponible en la página web de *Media Education Foundation* (www.mediaed.org). Este taller tendría una duración aproximada de un mes y medio y sería complementario al trabajo que los estudiantes realizan actualmente en sus clases. Su objetivo principal sería la expansión del trabajo en clase para desarrollar sus habilidades de comunicación escrita en lengua inglesa y mejorar sus estrategias de aprendizaje hacia el futuro.
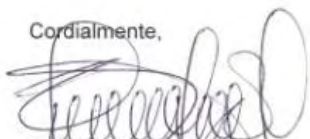
Debo manifestar expresamente que toda la información obtenida será confidencial y, por ende, nunca será divulgada a terceros ni será utilizada para ningún propósito diferente al

establecido en esta solicitud. Tendré toda la prudencia necesaria, respetando parámetros de confidencialidad para no afectar en manera alguna el nombre de los estudiantes, ni el de la especialización, ni el de la Universidad.

Por todo ello, quisiera solicitarle su autorización para llevar a cabo este proyecto con la firme convicción de que el proceso de implementación beneficiará principalmente a los estudiantes, pero, de igual manera al Departamento de Medicina y a la Universidad Nacional en general por realizar reflexiones objetivas conducentes al mejoramiento de nuestros procesos de enseñanza.

Agradezco su atención y quedo atento a Su respuesta.

Cordialmente,

Víctor Elías Lugo Vásquez
Licenciado en Filología e Idiomas – Inglés
Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Appendix B

Letter issued by the director of the specialty, granting authorisation to carry out the research project with the medicine graduates.

UNIVERSIDAD
NACIONAL
DE COLOMBIA
SEDE BOGOTÁ

FACULTAD DE MEDICINA
DEPARTAMENTO DE MEDICINA
DIVISION DE APOYO ESPECIALIZADO EN MEDICINA AEROESPACIAL

MA-172

Bogotá, Septiembre 09 de 2009

Señor
VICTOR ELIAS LUGO
Docente Ocasional
DEPARTAMENTO DE MEDICINA
Facultad de Medicina
UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA

Asunto *Proyecto de Maestría "Enseñanza del Inglés, con énfasis en ambientes de aprendizaje autónomo"*

Es placentero saber sus progresos y adelantos en el campo de la enseñanza en inglés, estos mismos se traducirán en beneficio directo para nuestros estudiantes y en extenso a nuestra especialidad. Por supuesto cuenta con mi beneplácito y concurso, siguiendo los lineamientos que usted ha determinado en su proyecto y poniendo en práctica los elementos éticos del caso.

Atentamente,

Coordinador División de Apoyo Especializado en Medicina Aeroespacial
UBA DEL DEPARTAMENTO DE MEDICINA

Calle 44 No. 45–67 Bloque C, Modulo 5, Oficina 101–102
Telefax: (57) (1) 3165000 extensión 10913
Correo electrónico: @unal.edu.co
Bogotá, Colombia, Sur América

Appendix C
Request presented to one medicine graduate to take part in the research project.

Bogotá, D.C.
2 de septiembre de 2009

Doctor
███████████████

Estudiante
Especialización en Medicina Aeroespacial
Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Apreciado Doctor:

Como parte de mi preparación profesional, estoy realizando la Maestría en **Enseñanza del Inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo** en la Universidad de la Sabana y, como requisito de grado, debemos realizar un proyecto de investigación en el que utilicemos Tecnologías de la Información y de la Comunicación (TIC) en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera.

Para tal efecto, he diseñado un proyecto que consiste en el análisis de los efectos de la realización de un taller semanal diseñado completamente por mí que incluye la utilización de material disponible en la página web de *Media Education Foundation* (www.mediaed.org). Este taller tendría una duración aproximada de un mes y medio y sería complementario al trabajo que Ustedes realizan actualmente en sus clases. Su objetivo principal sería la expansión del trabajo en clase para desarrollar sus habilidades de comunicación escrita en lengua inglesa y mejorar sus estrategias de aprendizaje hacia el futuro.

La información para el proyecto de investigación se obtendrá por medio de varios instrumentos:
- Pruebas para identificar su estilo de aprendizaje y los rasgos más sobresalientes de su personalidad,

- un documento llamado **Learner profile**, que le permitirá reflexionar sobre la información obtenida en las pruebas mencionadas anteriormente, hacer un seguimiento continuo de las actividades realizadas y establecer un plan de acción para mejorar los resultados observados;

- dado que se hará énfasis en el desarrollo de habilidades de escritura, se utilizarán los documentos que Usted desarrolle y, finalmente,

- se le solicitará realizar reflexiones escritas sobre todo el proceso.

Es muy importante anotar que, a pesar de que el objetivo central de este proyecto es mejorar su capacidad comunicativa en inglés y su autonomía como aprendiz de la lengua

extranjera, estas actividades son de **carácter voluntario** y no tendrán ninguna calificación adicional.

De igual manera, deben considerar que la información obtenida será confidencial y, por ende, no será divulgada a terceros ni será utilizada para ningún propósito diferente al establecido en esta solicitud. Su nombre, su perfil y toda la información obtenida en este proceso de investigación no se publicará bajo ningún concepto, de modo que no será posible asociar el documento de análisis final con usted de ninguna manera.

Con base en lo anterior y tras haber dilucidado las inquietudes que puedan surgir, le solicito firmar esta carta aprobando o denegando su participación en el proyecto descrito. Recuerde que su participación es completamente voluntaria, así que no afectará el desarrollo de las clases si usted decide no participar en este proyecto.

El suscrito, ███████████████ , de manera expresa y voluntaria,

acepta (X)   no acepta ( )

que el Profesor Víctor Elías Lugo Vásquez incluya la información que obtenga de mi participación en sus clases en el proyecto de investigación descrito en esta carta.

Firma: _____

Cédula de Ciudadanía: _____████████████

Appendix D

Request presented to the other medicine graduate to take part in the research project.

Bogotá, D.C.
2 de septiembre de 2009

Doctor
█████████████████████

Estudiante
Especialización en Medicina Aeroespacial
Universidad Nacional de Colombia

Apreciado Doctor:

Como parte de mi preparación profesional, estoy realizando la Maestría en **Enseñanza del Inglés con Énfasis en Ambientes de Aprendizaje Autónomo** en la Universidad de la Sabana y, como requisito de grado, debemos realizar un proyecto de investigación en el que utilicemos Tecnologías de la Información y de la Comunicación (TIC) en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera.

Para tal efecto, he diseñado un proyecto que consiste en el análisis de los efectos de la realización de un taller semanal diseñado completamente por mí que incluye la utilización de material disponible en la página web de *Media Education Foundation* (www.mediaed.org). Este taller tendría una duración aproximada de un mes y medio y sería complementario al trabajo que Ustedes realizan actualmente en sus clases. Su objetivo principal sería la expansión del trabajo en clase para desarrollar sus habilidades de comunicación escrita en lengua inglesa y mejorar sus estrategias de aprendizaje hacia el futuro.

La información para el proyecto de investigación se obtendrá por medio de varios instrumentos:
- Pruebas para identificar su estilo de aprendizaje y los rasgos más sobresalientes de su personalidad,

- un documento llamado **Learner profile**, que le permitirá reflexionar sobre la información obtenida en las pruebas mencionadas anteriormente, hacer un seguimiento continuo de las actividades realizadas y establecer un plan de acción para mejorar los resultados observados;

- dado que se hará énfasis en el desarrollo de habilidades de escritura, se utilizarán los documentos que Usted desarrolle y, finalmente,

- se le solicitará realizar reflexiones escritas sobre todo el proceso.

Es muy importante anotar que, a pesar de que el objetivo central de este proyecto es mejorar su capacidad comunicativa en inglés y su autonomía como aprendiz de la lengua

extranjera, estas actividades son de **carácter voluntario** y no tendrán ninguna calificación adicional.

De igual manera, deben considerar que la información obtenida será confidencial y, por ende, no será divulgada a terceros ni será utilizada para ningún propósito diferente al establecido en esta solicitud. Su nombre, su perfil y toda la información obtenida en este proceso de investigación no se publicará bajo ningún concepto, de modo que no será posible asociar el documento de análisis final con usted de ninguna manera.

Con base en lo anterior y tras haber dilucidado las inquietudes que puedan surgir, le solicito firmar esta carta aprobando o denegando su participación en el proyecto descrito. Recuerde que su participación es completamente voluntaria, así que no afectará el desarrollo de las clases si usted decide no participar en este proyecto.

El suscrito, ██████████████████, de manera expresa y voluntaria,

acepta (X)   no acepta ( )

que el Profesor Víctor Elías Lugo Vásquez incluya la información que obtenga de mi participación en sus clases en el proyecto de investigación descrito en esta carta.

Firma: _____

Cédula de Ciudadanía: _____

Appendix E
Entry Survey Participant A
http://esurveyspro.com/DetailReport.aspx?surveyId=72103&id=2700289

Name: Participant A
Nationality: COLOMBIAN
Gender: MALE
Hobbies: SPORTS, VIDEOGAMES, MUSIC
Time studying English: SIX YEARS
Reason to take this course: ENGLISH TRAINING FOR N.A.S.A.
ROTATION NEXT YEAR
Foreign countries you have lived in: NONE

2. How satisfied do you feel with your overall ability to communicate in English?
Satisfied
3. Indicate how important is it for you to practise each one of these aspects in class to improve your communicative abilities: 5: Extremely important 1 = Not important al all
Reading aloud: 5 Extremely important
Reading silently: 2 Not very important
Writing short texts: 4 Highly important
Analyse text structure: 3 Important
Speaking to the teacher: 5 Extremely important
Speaking to my classmates   5 Extremely important
Listening to audio texts: 5 Extremely important
Correct writing assignments: 4 Highly important
Watch authentic videos: 4 Highly important
Doing grammar exercises: 3 Important
Learning vocabulary lists: 4 Highly important

4. How often do you practise English on your own? This practice might include reading newspapers, watching videos, chatting on the internet, etc.
Every day.

5. Do you think this frequency of individual practice... could be better?

6. My motivation towards the activities done in this particular English course has been permanently high

7. In your opinion and according to your own experience, how important is it to study the formal aspects of the language to communicate effectively?
BECAUSE IT IS INTERESTING FOR ME TO LEARN AN ELEGANT STYLE OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LENGUAGE.

8. Which of the activities in this course you think have helped you the most to learn? Why?

WATCHING VIDEOS, LISTENING TO RECORDS, SPEAKING IN ENGLISH THE WHOLE FOUR HOURS. BECAUSE THESE ACTIVITIES HAVE MADE ME BEGIN TO THINK IN ENGLISH

9. Which of the activities done in this course you consider have not helped you much in our language learning process? Why?
NONE

10. Please tell us about your expectations in participating in this research project in your own learning process.
I HOPE THIS RESEARCH MAKES THE LESSONS MORE FOCUSED IN THEMES LIKE

TECHNOLOGY, SPACE, AERONAUTICS, SCIENCE.

Appendix F
Entry Survey Participant B
http://esurveyspro.com/DetailReport.aspx?surveyId=72103&id=2700289

Name:	Participant B
Nationality:	Colombian
Gender:	Male
Hobbies:	destroy stuff
Time studying English:	8 months
Reason to take this course:	i have to
Foreign countries you have lived in:	none whatsoever

2. How satisfied do you feel with your overall ability to communicate in English?
Neutral

3. Indicate how important is it for you to practise each one of these aspects in class to improve your communicative abilities: 5: Extremely important 1 = Not important al all

Reading aloud:	5 Extremely important
Reading silently:	1 Not important at all
Writing short texts:	5 Extremely important
Analyse text structure:	5 Extremely important
Speaking to the teacher:	5 Extremely important
Speaking to my classmates:	5 Extremely important
Listening to audio texts:	5 Extremely important
Correct writing assignments:	5 Extremely important
Watch authentic videos:	5 Extremely important
Doing grammar exercises:	5 Extremely important
Learning vocabulary lists:	5 Extremely important

4. How often do you practise English on your own? This practice might include reading newspapers, watching videos, chatting on the internet, etc.
Every other day.

5. Do you think this frequency of individual practice...
could be better.

6. My motivation towards the activities done in this particular English course has been full of ups and downs

7. In your opinion and according to your own experience, how important is it to study the formal aspects of the language to communicate effectively?
   Not very important

8. Which of the activities in this course you think have helped you the most to learn? Why?
speak with the teacher, it has made me so much more confident!

9. Which of the activities done in this course you consider have not helped you much in our language learning process? Why?
learning about crime

10. Please tell us about your expectations in participating in this research project in your own learning process.
i wish i could learn how to learn english

Appendix G
Exit Survey Participant A
http://esurveyspro.com/SummaryReport.aspx?surveyId=92496

1. Learner's name: Participant A

2. How satisfied do you feel with your overall ability to communicate in English after having done the activities in the study?
Very Satisfied

3. Indicate how important is it for you to practise each one of these aspects on your own after having done the activities in the research study: 5: Extremely important 1 = Not important al all

Reading aloud:	4 Highly important
Reading silently:	4 Highly important
Writing short texts:	3 Important
Analysing text structure:	3 Important
Speaking to other people in English:	5 Extremely important
Listening to audio texts in English:	5 Extremely important
Correcting writing assignments:	4 Highly important
Watching authentic videos:	5 Extremely important
Doing grammar exercises:	4 Highly important
Learning vocabulary lists:	4 Highly important

4. How often do you practise English after the study? This practice might include reading newpapers, watching videos, chatting on the internet, etc.
Every day.

5. Do you think this frequency of individual practice...

...improved after the project?✔

...remained the same after the project?
...got worse after the project?

6. How do you think the study helped you improve your communicative competence regarding...
Reading: 3 A little
Speaking: 4 Much
Listening: 5 Very much
Writing: 4 Much

7. In general, after the study, my motivation towards English learning...

...improved. ✔
...remained the same.
...decreased.
Other

8. According to your experience and the activities done in the study, how important is it to do exercises on the formal aspects of the language to communicate effectively?

Extremely important

Fairly important ✔

Important
Not very important
Not important at all
Other?

Why?

9. If 1= Not useful and 10= Extremely useful, how useful was it for you to practise writing essays with the structure of academic papers in English? 9

10. The support I received from the following was
 My classmate: Excellent
 My teacher: Excellent
 The materials suggested: Excellent

11. How much do you agree with the following statement: "The activities we did in the classroom helped me do activities on my own"

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Undecided
Agree
Strongly Agree✔

12. Which of the activities you did in the study you found most useful to learn? Why?
WRITING ESSAYS AND SPEAKING ALOUD, BOTH WITH THE TEACHER AND THE CLASSMATE.

13. Which of the activities done in the study did you find NOT very useful? Why?
ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES WERE USEFUL TO ME

14. How much do you agree with the following statement: "I have a better understanding of what learning a language implies".
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Undecided
Agree

Strongly Agree✔

15. How much do you agree with the following statement: "I learnt how to use convenient technological tools for language learning in the study"
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Undecided

Agree

Strongly Agree✔

16. How much do you agree with this statement: "I am a better learner because the project provided me with better learning strategies and I do not need permanent guidance from a teacher"?

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Undecided

Agree ✔

Strongly Agree

17. How satisfied do you feel with the study in terms of the accomplishment of your initial expectations?

Very dissatisfied

Not satisfied

Neutral

Satisfied ✔

Very satisfied

18. Additional comments: In case you have anything else to say, please feel free to do so here!
MR. LUGO IS REALLY AN EXCELLENT PROFESSIONAL IN THE FIELD OF TEACHING LANGUAGES.

Appendix H
Learner profile format

PURPOSE

The purpose of the information collected in the document herein is:

-       To rely on objective data to improve the quality of our courses, specifically by helping you identify what kind of activities are more appropriate for you based on your predominant learning style and personality type.

-       To provide the University with the information needed to make appropriate decisions about suitable resources for individual learners

-       To help learners perform a better control of their learning process through the use of measurable and user-friendly strategies.

-       To establish a database for the development of policies related to language learning inside the Faculty of Medicine and specifically in the Aerospace Medicine specialty.

-       To help the University make informed decisions about the roles and duties of the members of the staff who are required in these language learning settings.

COMPONENTS

This profile is divided into **nine** (**9**) sections so that you can easily identify where to put and find specific information. A brief description of every section is provided below:

1. **BASIC PERSONAL INFORMATION:** Demographic and educational information needed to establish the learner's background. This information will never be made public and it will only be available to you and to your teacher. Access to third parties and disclosure shall only be granted through an expressly written consent signed by you.

2. **LEARNING STYLE:** Information obtained through a test necessary to indentify which activities are the most appropriate for you based on your predominant cognitive abilities as well as the ones you need to develop strategies you have not fully explored.

3. **PERSONALITY TYPE:** General personality traits which will lead us to the implementation of activities which fit your personality and do not challenge it excessively, bringing a higher degree of comfort and subsequent accomplishment.

4. **LANGUAGE NEEDS AND INTERESTS:** Results of a survey carried out to obtain information about your specific needs and interests about the language. The information contained in this section will be permanently reviewed to assess progress and improvement.

5. **CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT:** This section allows you to set easily identifiable goals which you should accomplish within the time limit you had previously set.

6. **TEST RESULTS:** Records of the results of the tests taken over the course so that you can identify improvement or needs to carry out revision.

7. **ACTIVITY RECORD CHART:** A summary of the activities carried out so that you can track frequency and effectiveness over time.

8. **TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT:** A space devoted to your teachers' reflections upon your individual process based on an analysis of your performance in the lessons and in the material included in this profile.

9. **SELF-REFLECTION:** Based on the information contained in the previous sections, analyse how successful your process has been in terms of appropriateness of material, suitability of teaching activities and tests,

feasibility of goals set, amount and quality of independent work and efficacy of the entire process.

SECTION ONE: BASIC PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full name: _____   Age: _____   Gender: M F

Place of birth: _____

_____

CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone number: _____   Mobile phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Which of the previous media do you prefer to receive information and news from us?

_____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

DEGREE: _____

Graduated from _____ (university) in _____ (year)

Number of years of study in public institutions: _____

Name the institution(s): _____

_____

Number of years of study in private institutions: _____

Name the institution(s): _____

_____

SECTION TWO: LEARNING STYLE

Please, choose one of these three possibilities to do the learning styles test:

1. Online: on http://www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory/questions.asp
2. On Excel: Ask your teacher for the file.
3. As a pen-and-paper test: Ask your teacher for the booklet.

NOTE: In any case, please read the description of each one of the learning styles (available online at: http://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/) and reflect about how much you agree with the results.

When you finish it, check the results and fill in the chart below with the scores:

ENTRY TEST taken on _____

(date)

Visual	Verbal	Aural	Physical	Logical	Social	Solitary

Write your comments about the results here:

_____

_____

As part of your final assessment, we recommend you to take the test once again when you are about to finish your course here, to see how much your initial results changed over this period. Note down the results in the box below:

EXIT TEST taken on _____ (date)

Visual	Verbal	Aural	Physical	Logical	Social	Solitary

COMMENTS

_____

_____

SECTION THREE: PERSONALITY TYPE

Do the Carl Jung and Isabel Myers-Briggs typology test available on the following website   http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp   and   write   here   the personality type you obtained ,   which   stands   for

_____

Read the explanation of their typology and write down how much you agree with the test results and why: _____

SECTION FOUR: LANGUAGE NEEDS AND INTERESTS

Part A: To identify which language items and skills you need to work harder on, you have to do a practice version of the Cambridge ESOL Preliminary English Test (PET). The exam is composed by three different sections:

1. **Reading and writing**
2. **Listening** and
3. **Speaking**

The results will be reported to in a format very similar to the one used by Cambridge ESOL (2009), and you will be required to transfer those results here:

Score: _____   **Result:** _____

_____

Candidate profile

Exceptional			
Good			
Borderline			
Weak			

Chart taken from University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (2009). *Preliminary English test and preliminary English tests for schools: understanding your statement of results and certificate.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Part B: STUDIES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Numbers of years you have studied English in public institutions: _____

Name the institution(s): _____

_____

Number of years you have studied English in private institutions: _____

Name the institution(s):

Please, answer the questions below in as much detail as possible:

1. What kind of activities have you found more effective or attractive in class?

2. Which activities you have not liked doing in class?

3. What do you prefer doing in class? (Please, put a cross(X) only in ONE choice):
working alone: _____   working in pairs: _____   working in groups:_____

4. How often do you do these activities on your own (not assigned by teachers)?
a. reading articles/newspapers in English _____

b. watching movies in English using subtitles in English (or the closed caption feature)

**c.** chatting with people in English on the Internet _____
d. watching videos in English on the Internet _____
e. other activities in English (what?) _____

5. How active is your participation in suggesting activities or changes to your lessons? What kind of changes have you proposed? What has been the reaction from your teachers? Have you felt satisfied with these initiatives?

6. Do you usually have good results in English tests? What kind of exercises do you find better to evaluate your achievement? Which exercises you find particularly difficult?
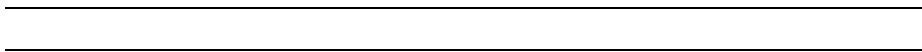
SECTION SIX: CONTINUOUS COMMITMENT

The chart below will help you set SMART (i.e. **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic and **T**imely) goals[12], and it will also help you check your accomplishment on a weekly basis. This will provide you with strategies and elements to make decisions about your progress.

Goal	Time set	Strategy	Accomplished?

---

[12] In case you need assistance with the "SMART goal" concept, please ask your teacher; they will also help you permanently check your progress in goal setting and accomplishment.

SECTION SEVEN: ACTIVITY RECORD CHART
The chart below offers you the possibility to include a brief description of the activities done in class which, in your opinion, are **more useful and effective** for you to understand and practise the language and those activities you **do not like** doing in class or the ones you do not find useful at all. This information is constantly reviewed by your teacher(s) and by the supervisors to know what activities are suitable for you as an individual and for the group in general and if the teacher is making proper decisions in your case.

Date	Name/description of the activity	Useful/Effective		Why?	Revision/date	
		Yes	**No**		**Teacher**	**Supervisor**

SECTION EIGHT: TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
In this section, your teacher(s) will write down some comments about your learning process regarding your strengths, needs, and they will also suggest you some suitable activities for you to improve and supplement your learning process, always based on the information included in the previous pages of this document.

Date	General comments	Accomplishments	Areas for improvement	Suggestions	Learner's acceptance/date

PART NINE: SELF-REFLECTION
This is a freer section for you to analyse the general process in a periodical basis. Though this is not obligatory, we do suggest you to work on this because it will help you consider aspects we did not take into account. Your teachers and also the supervisors will reply to you to make this a lively and productive space for reflection.

Thanks a lot for your commitment to your language learning process. We wish you the best results possible!

References

Advanogy.com. (2007). *Memletics learning styles questionnaire.* Retrieved on August 27, 2009 from http://www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory/questions.asp.

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Humanmetrics.com. (2009). *Identify your type with Jung Typology test™.* Retrieved on August 27, 2009 from http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes1.htm.

Humanmetrics.com. (2009). *Jung Typology test™.* Retrieved on August 27, 2009 from http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp.

Appendix I
Participant A's learner profile[13]

SECTION ONE: BASIC PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full name: <u>PARTICIPANT A</u>   Age: 32_____   Gender:

M X   F

Place of birth: BOGOTA – CUNDINAMARCA - COLOMBIA

CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone number: XXXXXXX_____ Mobile phone: XXXXXXXXXX_____

E-mail address: xxxxxxxxxxxxx@gmail.com

Which of the previous media do you prefer to receive information and news from us?

_____E-MAIL_____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

DEGREE: PHYSICIAN

Graduated from UNIVERSIDAD DE LA SABANA_____ (university) in 20XX_____

(year)

Number of years of study in public institutions: 0_____

Name the institution(s):--------------

Number of years of study in private institutions: 18_____

Name the institution(s): COLEGIO MAYOR DEL ROSARIO–UNIVERSIDAD DE LA SABANA

SECTION TWO: LEARNING STYLE

Please, choose one of these three possibilities to do the learning styles test:

4.   X Online: on http://www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory/questions.asp

5.   On Excel: Ask your teacher for the file.

6.   As a pen-and-paper test: Ask your teacher for the booklet.

NOTE: In any case, please read the description of each one of the learning styles (available online at: http://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/) and reflect about how much you agree with the results.

When you finish it, check the results and fill in the chart below with the scores:

---

[13] Due to the length, only the sections filled out will be included here, but the full profile is available for review.

ENTRY TEST taken on _____

(date)

Visual	Verbal	Aural	Physical	Logical	Social	Solitary

Write your comments about the results here:

_____

_____

As part of your final assessment, we recommend you to take the test once again when you are about to finish your course here, to see how much your initial results changed over this period. Note down the results in the box below:

EXIT TEST taken on _____

(date)

Visual	Verbal	Aural	Physical	Logical	Social	Solitary

COMMENTS

_____

_____

SECTION THREE: PERSONALITY TYPE

Do the Carl Jung and Isabel Myers-Briggs typology test available on the following website   http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp   and   write   here   the

personality type you obtained $ISTJ$, which stands for

Introverted	Sensing	Thinking	Judging
11	50	25	33

Read the explanation of their typology and write down how much you agree with the test results and why: I GUESS IT'S TRUE, BECAUSE OF MY PROFESSION, I NEED TO BE SENSITIVE ABOUT THE SUFFERING OF OTHER PEOPLE

SECTION FOUR: LANGUAGE NEEDS AND INTERESTS

Part A: To identify which language items and skills you need to work harder on, you have to do a practice version of the Cambridge ESOL Preliminary English Test (PET). The exam is composed by three different sections:

4. **Reading and writing**
5. **Listening** and
6. **Speaking**

The results will be reported to in a format very similar to the one used by Cambridge ESOL (2009), and you will be required to transfer those results here:

Score:_____   **Result:** _____

Candidate profile

Exceptional				
Good				
Borderline				
Weak				

Chart taken from University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (2009). *Preliminary English test and preliminary English tests for schools: understanding your statement of results and certificate.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Part B: STUDIES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Numbers of years you have studied English in public institutions: 0_____

Name the institution(s):---------------------------------_____

Number of years you have studied English in private institutions: 4_____

Name the institution(s):COLEGIO MAYOR DEL ROSARIO – UNIVERSIDAD DE LA SABANA

Please, answer the questions below in as much detail as possible:

7. What kind of activities have you found more effective or attractive in class?
VIDEOS, CUTSCENES FROM FAMOUS MOVIES, DOCUMENTARIES_____

8. Which activities you have not liked doing in class?
NONE

9. What do you prefer doing in class? (Please, put a cross(X) only in ONE choice):
working alone: _____   working in pairs: X_____   working in groups:_____

10. How often do you do these activities on your own (not assigned by teachers)?
   f. reading articles/newspapers in English SEVERAL TIMES A DAY_____
   g. watching movies in English using subtitles in English (or the closed caption feature) SEVERAL TIMES A DAY_____
   h. chatting with people in English on the Internet ONCE A MONTH_____
   i. watching videos in English on the Internet SEVERAL TIMES A DAY_____
   j. other activities in English (what?) X-BOX 360 GAMES – PC GAMES_____

11. How active is your participation in suggesting activities or changes to your lessons? What kind of changes have you proposed? What has been the reaction from your teachers? Have you felt satisfied with these initiatives?
ACTUALLY I HAVE MADE A COUPLE OF SUGGESTIONS ABOUT PREPARATION FOR ENGLISH TESTS AND MY TEACHER LISTENED AND ACTED IN CONSEQUENCE

12. Do you usually have good results in English tests? What kind of exercises do you find better to evaluate your achievement? Which exercises you find particularly difficult?
YES I HAVE, I PREFER LISTENING, WRITING COULD BE A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT

Appendix J
Participant B's learner profile

SECTION ONE: BASIC PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full name: PARTICIPANT B   Age: 25   Gender: M

                                         F

Place of birth: Barranquilla/ Atlántico/ Colombia

CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone number: XXXXXXXXX   Mobile phone: XXXXXXXXXX

E-mail address: xxxxxxxxxxx@hotmail.com

Which of the previous media do you prefer to receive information and news from us?   e-

mail_____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

DEGREE: current postgraduate student

Graduated from Universidad Nacional De Colombi   (university) in 2006

(year)

Number of years of study in public institutions: 6

Name the institution(s): Universidad Nacional De Colombia

Number of years of study in private institutions: 0

Name the institution(s):

SECTION TWO: LEARNING STYLE

Please, choose one of these three possibilities to do the learning styles test:

7. Online: on http://www.learning-styles-online.com/inventory/questions.asp

8. On Excel: Ask your teacher for the file.

9. As a pen-and-paper test: Ask your teacher for the booklet.

NOTE: In any case, please read the description of each one of the learning styles (available online at: http://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/) and reflect about how much you agree with the results.

When you finish it, check the results and fill in the chart below with the scores:

ENTRY TEST taken on _____

(date)

Visual	Verbal	Aural	Physical	Logical	Social	Solitary
12/20	16/20	11/20	11/20	12/20	13/20	10/20

Write your comments about the results here:

I´ve taken it 3 times now and i always get different results...

As part of your final assessment, we recommend you to take the test once again when you are about to finish your course here, to see how much your initial results changed over this period. Note down the results in the box below:

EXIT TEST taken on _____ (date)

Visual	Verbal	Aural	Physical	Logical	Social	Solitary
16/20	16/20	12/20	9/20	10/20	11/20	9/20

COMMENTS

Again...

SECTION THREE: PERSONALITY TYPE

Do the Carl Jung and Isabel Myers-Briggs typology test available on the following website   http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp   and write here the personality type you obtained ENTP___, which stands for extroverted, intuitive, thinking and perceiving

Read the explanation of their typology and write down how much you agree with the test results and why: i don't think is an accurate way to describe me

Appendix K
SELF-ACCESS ACTIVITY No. 1
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT – READING, VOCABULARY AND WRITING LESSON
Argumentative essays: Expressing your own opinions
TOPIC: Political correctness in language

OBJECTIVES
Reading skills
Learners will be better able to skim different texts dealing with the issue of politically correct language to identify the main ideas.

Speaking skills
Learners will be better able to hold a debate in which they have to support conflicting opinions about the issue of politically correct language

Writing skills
Learners will be able to write a better organised argumentative essay to express their own opinion, following the guidelines already presented in class.

PRE-READING STAGE
Background and activation of previous knowledge
In a reading skills book for immigrants learning to read in English schools and universities, its authors, Kirn and Hartmann (1996), said that "Part of college life in North America these days is discussion of P.C. –political correctness." (p. 12).

Read the definition for the expression **politically correct** at
http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/287100.html and consider three reasons why **you** think discussion on this topic is so important at American colleges.

1.

2.

3.

Do you think this issue is present in other aspects of our lives? If so, list a few specific examples here.

READING
Read Ulaby's (2009) article "*Rethinking 'retarded': Should it leave the lexicon?*", available at
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112479383.

(**N. B.** In case you want additional practice, you can also listen to it by clicking on "**Listen to the story**" link on the upper part).

AFTER READING

Exercise 1

Based on the information contained in the article by Ulaby, are these sentences **True** (**T**), **False** (**F**) or **It does not say** (**NS**)?

1. _____ Mr Wrobel has always been careful with the language he uses because he is a professor of speech communications.

2. _____ Some organisations have started to eliminate the word 'retarded' and have replaced it by a more politically correct alternative.

3. _____ They considered Ben Stiller's (2008) movie *Tropic Thunder* offended people with mental disabilities.

4. _____ The DVD version of the comedy *Miss March* was altered to avoid criticism.

5. _____ The Black Eyed Peas album was originally called "Let's get retarded".

6. _____ Columnist Dan Savage willingly accepted to eliminate the word 'retarded' from his lexicon because there were many criticisms.

7. _____ According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* editor, those two words mean "bad".

8. _____ The first record of the word 'retard' as an insult was in an edition of *playboy* magazine in the 1950s.

9. _____ Coates, *The Atlantic* columnist, says that most people use these expressions with no actual intention to offend.

Exercise 2

Words sometimes can have different meanings depending on the context they are in. Look up their meanings for the words below in www.dictionary.com –or if you are more visual, look up a synonym at http://www.visualthesaurus.com/, and identify which of the definitions provided is more appropriate in this case.

1. **slur**: _____   _____

2. **cut off:** _____   _____

3. **teary:** _____   _____

4. **put-down**: _____   _____

5. **trash talk:** _____   _____

6. **coin:** _____   _____

7. **bigoted:** _____   _____

8. **chink:** _____   _____

9. **zinger:** _____   _____

Exercise 3

The use of most of the words in **Exercise 2** is quite informal. Can you think of more standard expressions for them? Write similar/equivalent expressions on the second line above.

Voluntary exercises: Independent extension
The article mentions the *Tropic Thunder* protests. You can watch this video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLPMYfX1A6c&hl=es and, read the section "Controversy" in this Wikipedia article http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tropic_Thunder to have a better understanding of what this was about.

And to read about the changes implemented in the DVD version of the movie *Miss March*, go to: http://www.cinematical.com/2009/07/28/on-dvd-miss-march-isnt-retarded-anymore/ http://www.patriciaebauer.com/2009/03/11/retard-miss-march/

NEXT LESSON PREPARATION
For our next class, we are going to hold a debate to analyse differing points of view on a single issue. For that activity, you will be assigned a role, either to present arguments **in favour** (*the pros*) or **against** (*the cons*) of **political correctness** and you will do a short presentation (5 minutes) to defend your topic before the debate.

N.B.: I will inform which your role is in an individual email message.

I am recommending you some articles here to obtain arguments for the debate and prepare it, but you can find additional material or specific examples to support the point of view assigned.
In favour
http://www.sideroad.com/Business_Communication/politically-correct-language.html http://www.inthesetimes.com/article/3027/a_politically_correct_lexicon/ http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10352592

Against
http://www.students.org.au/political/correctness/
http://www.siepmann.org/Freedom/PC1.htm
http://www.capc.co.uk/faqs.htm

WRITING
After our debate in the next lesson, you will have a clearer perspective of the issue of political correctness and you will be able to write an **argumentative essay**, expressing **your** point of view. Remember to check the basic requirements and structure of an argumentative essay from our last lesson and check the sources I recommended you, too.
EVALUATION
The **AFTER READING** exercises will be collected to check comprehension and revision of the vocabulary. Please send them to my email address (velugov@unal.edu.co) before Monday evening at 8.00 p.m. I will return them with corrections/suggestions on Tuesday afternoon (before 5.00 p.m.). **They will amount to 20%** of your grade in this activity.

The debate activity is particularly important for our process to write effective argumentative essays because it will allow us to present points of view and arguments in favour or against an

issue, so the 5-minute presentation, active participation and evidence of previous research (references, cases, and further insight) will be highly appreciated.

Presentation: **10% of the grade**
Participation in the debate: 20% of the grade

As we had agreed, writing will be done in these stages: **first draft → corrections/suggestions → final draft**.

The **whole writing process will amount to 50%** of the final grade of this activity. **Improvement through the process** and **effective implementation of the writing strategies** studied in class will be the most important issues in this activity. <mark>Check the dates to send your essays for peer review and submission to your teacher</mark>.

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Appendix L
SELF-ACCESS ACTIVITY No. 2
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT – READING, GRAMMAR AND WRITING LESSON
Cause-Effect essays: Describing influences
TOPIC: Environmental issues

OBJECTIVES
Reading skills
To be able to skim texts effectively to identify the aspects originating consequences in the environment.

Speaking skills
To be able to hold a debate to support conflicting opinions about the issue of environmental issues.

Language development skills: grammar
To be able to report other people's speech in affirmative or negative statements.

Writing skills
To be able to write a well-organised cause-effect essay following guidelines about layout, structure and length.

PRE-READING STAGE
Background and activation of previous knowledge
In this activity we will discuss the topic of "Environmental issues". Are you personally concerned about the environment? What do you think of initiatives like recycling, using public transport –instead of driving yourself and buying "green" products? Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of our planet? Why?

Figure 1. Divine rays. (2006). Note Copyright: Tumkur Ameen, 2006 – 2009.

What do you think are the most serious environmental issues we face nowadays? Why? Fill out the table below with your opinions in the first two columns.

MOST SERIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	REASON	According to WebEcoist
1.		1.
2.		2.
3.		3.

When you have finished, take a look at the Top Ten Most Important Environmental Issues at http://webecoist.com/2008/08/18/most-important-environmental-issues-of-today/ and compare your opinions and justifications. Put the three top environmental issues according to the information on the website in the third column above.

READING
The United States are usually accused of being the biggest polluters in the world. Read the report on the BBC webpage of the interview BBC correspondent Pallab Ghosh had with Dr. John Holdren, President Obama's scientific advisor (Ctrl + click on the photo below to open the article. – **N. B.** In case you want additional practice, you can also watch the original interview on video by clicking on the "**Click to play**" icon on the photo).

N.B. In case you are interested in the concept of "cap and trade" –mentioned in the interview, check the US Environmental Protection Agency s website http://www.epa.gov/captrade/.
AFTER READING

Exercise 1
Choose the best way to finish each statement, based on what you have just read.

1. According to Dr. Holdren, mixing politics and scientific advice is
    a. inevitable
    b. inappropriate
    c. undesirable

2. The message President Obama wanted to send with the appointment of Professor Holdren as his scientific advisor was that:
    a. he will take into account the need for fossil fuel.
    b. he will accept that fossil fuel is affecting seriously the environment.
    c. he will embrace his predecessor's views about the use of fossil fuel.

3. Dr. Holdren is optimistic about the US role in Copenhagen next December because
    a. they have always had an outstanding role.
    b. they have had a lot of pressure to increase fossil fuel implementation.
    c. they have approved a law regulating greenhouse emissions and he expects to have another approved.

4. He says that they will not be able to meet the requirements set by the European Union because the previous administration
    a. applied the regulations partially.
    b. let decisions be influenced by politics.
    c. had invested a lot on fossil fuel.

5. The main concern he has to delay the NASA plan to send an American back to the moon is
    a. the pressure from Lockheed Martin CEO
    b. the effect of such an investment on environmental plans on the earth.
    c. the few result observed on similar missions before.

Exercise 2
Before: Some grammar is necessary
Interviews commonly show sentences like the one below:

> Dr John Holdren told the BBC that he wanted to take the politics out of scientific advice.

This kind of sentences is usually called **indirect reported speech** in grammar books.

The idea is that when you report **what other person has said before** you use the reported speech, and it can be **direct** or **indirect**. When you report what the person **actually** said, you use direct speech, e.g.:

> Dr John Holdren told the BBC: "I want to take out the politics out of scientific advice"

In direct speech, punctuation is important: you use a colon (:) and quotation marks ("") to indicate the actual words, or a comma (,) and the name when the message comes first.

But, normally we adapt the person's actual words according to some fixed structures. Those changes correspond to **indirect speech**. Please take a look at the information available at

http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar/reported.htm to obtain detailed examples of these changes.[14]

THE EXERCISE

Based on the information you collected in the previous exercise, identify **nine** (**9**) sentences in **indirect reported speech** in the interview of Dr Holdren and put them in the left-handed column below from **1** to **9**, and **ten** (**10**) examples of **direct reported speech** in the right-handed column from **A** to **J**.

Indirect reported speech	Direct reported speech
1. Dr John Holdren says the last eight years have been "wasted" in tackling CO2 emissions.	`Dr Holden says: "the last eight years have been "wasted" in tackling CO2 emissions."`
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
`He said it would be advantageous for the United States to go to Copenhagen as a leader.`	A. "It would be advantageous for the United States to go to Copenhagen as a leader," he said.
	B.
	C.
	D.
	E.
	F.
	G.
	H.
	I.
	J.

Key to the exercise
You can find the answers for the indirect reported speech sentences at:
http://awurl.com/ZNCSMPRT4, and the answers for the direct reported speech at
http://awurl.com/3ieNHpAVn.

When you have finished, make the changes to the other form, i.e. from direct to indirect and vice
versa in the opposite column. The first one has been done in each case.

Exercises 1 and 2 should be sent to my e-mail (velugov@unal.edu.co) by Monday 28 September
in the evening.

NEXT LESSON PREPARATION
For our next lesson we will hold a debate on the most important environmental issues are
nowadays, paying special attention to **their causes**, so please take a look at the list of
Environmental issues created by people at Wikipedia at the following address:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_environmental_issues and **choose two of them** to prepare
your five-minute presentation. It is very important that when you have chosen it, you send us a
short message so that your partner knows which other issues are available.

WRITING
After our debate in the next lesson, you will have a clearer perspective on important
environmental issues and their causes and you will be able to write a **cause-effect essay**,
expressing **your** point of view. Remember to check the basic requirements and structure of a
cause-effect essay from our last lesson and check the sources I have recommended you, too. In
this case, taking into account the grammar emphasis of this lesson, be very careful when making
reference to what other people have said.

EVALUATION
The **AFTER READING** exercises will be collected to check comprehension and revision of the
vocabulary. Please send them to my email address (velugov@unal.edu.co) before Monday
evening at 8.00 p.m. I will return them with corrections/suggestions on Tuesday afternoon
(before 5.00 p.m.). **They will amount to 20%** of your grade in this activity.
The debate activity is particularly important for our process to write effective cause-effect essays
because it will allow us to present origins and consequences of these issues, so the 5-minute
presentation, active participation and evidence of previous research (careful attention to
references, further insight) will be highly appreciated.

Presentation: **10% of the grade**
Participation in the debate: 20% of the grade

As we had agreed, writing will be done in these stages: **first draft ➔ corrections/suggestions
➔ final draft**.
The **whole writing process will amount to 50%** of the final grade of this activity.
Improvement through the process and **effective implementation of the writing strategies**
studied in class will be the most important issues in this activity.
                    As usual, enjoy this activity and have a lot of interesting fun!

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Appendix M
SELF-ACCESS ACTIVITY No. 3
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT – READING AND CREATIVE AND CRITICAL
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT LESSON
A comparison essay: Identifying main characteristics
TOPIC: Education systems in the US/England

OBJECTIVES
Reading skills
- To be able to scan a text effectively to obtain specific information about the main features of the term *education*.

Cognitive skills development
- To reflect on the individual and social aims of education.
- To be able to summarise information in charts as basis for description.
- To be able to describe the main features of an educational system, identifying its corresponding advantages and drawbacks.
- To be able to use the information collected in different sources related to three educational systems to assume a critical position and defend it.

PRE-READING STAGE
Background and activation of previous knowledge
Imagine you are having a conversation with British philosopher Bertrand Russell and he has just said this to you, what would you reply to him? (Click on the speech balloon to type in your reply).

Bertrand Russell   You
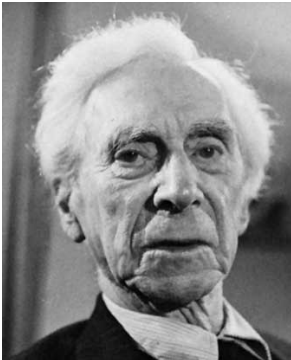
Dear doctor, I think men are born ignorant, not stupid. They are made stupid by education."
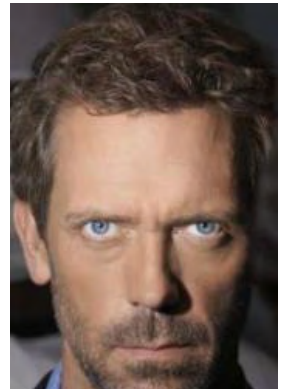
Reflection
Why do you think Mr Russell had such a negative impression of education? Write your opinion here:

Exercise 1: Reading skills work: *scanning for details*
Read the introduction to the Wikipedia™ entry for *Education* available at:

and complete the following chart.

Term	Definition
Education	In general:
	Technically:
Schooling	
Higher learning	
Vocational education	
Informal education	

Too much information? Let's have a break!

When you have finished, go to:

Play the game to review what you have studied today. Enjoy it!

Exercise 2
Summarising

Read the articles describing the Wikipedia ™ entries which describe the education systems in the US and in England and create **a summary** of common and different aspects in **the form of notes**.

N.B.: Do not complicate your lives, OK? Consider only the most general aspects.

Education Systems	
Only in the United States	**Only in England**
1.	1.
Common aspects • •	

Exercise 3: Extension and critical application

Once you have summarised the information, you will be able to **make an informed choice**:

Write a **comparison essay** in which you say which of these two systems is <u>better</u> and

<u>why</u>.

Make reference to the information collected in the table above, consult additional sources

EVALUATION
Exercises 1 and **2** will be collected to check comprehension, vocabulary and effective note-taking skills. Please send them to my email address (velugov@unal.edu.co) before Monday evening at 8.00 p.m. I will return them with corrections/suggestions on Tuesday afternoon (before 5.00 p.m.). **They will amount to 40%** of your grade in this activity.

The comparison essay will be equivalent to **60% of the grade**. The aspects to be taken into account are:
- Effective paragraphing: clear topic sentence, related supporting sentences and appropriate use of the conjunctions and expressions suggested to indicate comparison.
- Essay structure: 5 paragraphs: introduction, comparison and conclusion.
- Appropriate use of grammar and vocabulary
- Semi-formal style: according to the guidelines previously seen in class.

As we had agreed, writing will be done in these stages: **first draft →
corrections/suggestions → final draft**. **Improvement through the process** and **effective implementation of the writing strategies** studied in class will be the most important issues in this activity.

As usual, enjoy this activity and have a lot of interesting fun!

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Appendix N
SELF-ACCESS ACTIVITY No. 4
CULTURAL AWARENESS LESSON
TOPIC: Privacy in different parts of the world

OBJECTIVES
Reading skills
To be able to skim texts effectively to make deductions about the differences in the way public figures deal with their private lives in the United States, Spain and Europe in general.

Speaking skills
To be able to present specific approaches to the concept of privacy and support one's opinion in public.

Cultural awareness development
To be able to identify the value of privacy in different parts of the world.

PRE-READING STAGE
Exercise 1: *Making predictions*
The photo below, of U.S. President Obama, his wife and Spain's Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, his wife and children at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, caused a lot of controversy. Why do you think it happened? Do you find anything unusual in it? Write your ideas in the box below.

Figure 1. Photo of President Obama, his wife and the Prime Minister of Spain, his wife and children. (2009). Note Copyright: Jackson, L., 2009.

READING

Read the article by Brett Michaels Dykes (September 29, 2009) on *The Yahoo! Newsroom*, available at

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ynews/ynews_ts930 and confirm your predictions. Were they very different?

Exercise 2: Expressing opinions

The modified photos, along with some parodies on video, have been available on the internet since the day these photos were published by the White House. Look at them and answer the question below.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

1. Do you find any of these parodies aggressive/cruel/harmless? Which one do you find particularly offensive?

2. Why do you think people do this? Do people in Colombia use this kind of humour?

Ronald Standler (1997) stated:

> *Privacy* is the expectation that confidential personal information disclosed in a private place will not be disclosed to third parties, when that disclosure would cause either embarrassment or emotional distress to a person of reasonable sensitivities. *Information* is interpreted broadly to include facts, images (e.g., photographs, videotapes), and disparaging opinions.

In this case, the Spanish government sought to protect famous children's privacy, but Americans had a very different perspective on this issue.

Further reflection
After having seen the consequences of this 'cultural mismatch',
1. Do you think these measures to protect children's privacy are appropriate or useless? Why?

2. How do you think PM Zapatero/President Obama/these two girls feel about this controversy?

3. What is the generally-accepted rule for these situations in Colombia? Do you find it appropriate? Why/Why not?

4. How do you think this controversy could have been prevented?

Exercise 3: Additional background
Read what happened to British teenage movie star Emma Watson at
 http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/blogs/sfgate/detail?blogid=7&entry_id=48770 and

this article on the different approach to privacy between Europeans and Americans, especially on the government and companies having access to your privacy:
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15221111/ns/technology_and_science-privacy_lost/

Based on the texts and on **your own experience**, analyse the concepts of **privacy and free development** for
- celebrity or celebrity-related teenagers, **or**
- regular citizens
and suggest what the best approach should be. You can include information about other cultures if you consider it appropriate or necessary.

EVALUATION GUIDELINES
The **predictions and opinions** for **exercises 1 and 2** should be sent to my e-mail (velugov@unal.edu.co) by Monday 12 October in the evening. These exercises represent **40%** of the total grade of the activity.

NEXT LESSON PREPARATION

The presentation will be held on **October 14**. The presentation will amount to **60%** of the corresponding grade.

As usual, I hope you **enjoy** this activity and have a lot of interesting fun!

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Modified photos of PM Zapatero's children. (n.d.). Retrieved on October 1 from http://www.totalwind.net/foro/viewtopic.php?f=15&t=41344&st=0&sk=t&sd=a and http://www.blogcatalog.com/search.frame.php?term=obama+y+zapatero&id=44db7b1fe5e 9f11c5e81e8bc019cffbd.

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Standler, R. B., (1997). *Privacy law in the USA*. Retrieved on October 1, 2009 from http://www.rbs2.com/privacy.htm.

Sullivan, B. (October 19, 2006). 'La difference' is stark in EU, U.S. privacy laws: EU citizens well protected against corporate intrusion, but red tape is thick. *MSNBC.com*. Retrieved on October 1, 2009 from http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15221111/ns/technology_and_science-privacy_lost/.

Appendix O
Entry essay: Participant A
The indiscriminate use of Gun and the Necesity for gun control

By Student A

Through the last 5 centuries guns have killed more people than they should.
People have given wrong use to the guns and found a lot of excuses to kill their own kind with them.

Man have invented artifacts of destruction since they appeared in the world, at first there were only things that could throw like stones or pieces of wood, then became more elaborated when for example attached stones with sticks and made spears, although their very first objective were kill a prey for food or in self-defense, man would understand later that the weapons he created would serve as tools for murdering other men.

With the increasing technology, weapons became also more powerful; the bow and arrow put bigger distance between hunter and prey, and then the wars began from greater distances. A few ages later the man discovered that mixing gunpowder with projectiles could inflict a greater damage, always looking for impose to their own by force.

Although guns have helped people in achieving noble objectives, like gaining independence from oppression of other societies and have save many others from being killed for no reason, their indiscriminate use with no purpose like in columbine school or many others examples like this make me think that we need to make more gun control.

In conclusion, guns have been bounded to mankind since the beginning of history, in many times

the have been useful for society. is the wrong use that we gave to them that obligates to

implement better gun controls for the man not use in a indiscriminate way.

September 16, 2009

Dale-Chall Readability Formula for This Passage =
(**0.0496 * *26.8* Avg. Number of Words Per Sentence) +**
(**0.1579 * *11.94* Percent of Words in Sample Not Found on Dale Familiar Word List) +**
3.6365
= *6.85* **Raw Score**
= *7-8th* *Grade Level*
http://www.lefthandlogic.com/htmdocs/tools/okapi/okapi.php

http://www.harrymclaughlin.com/SMOG.htm
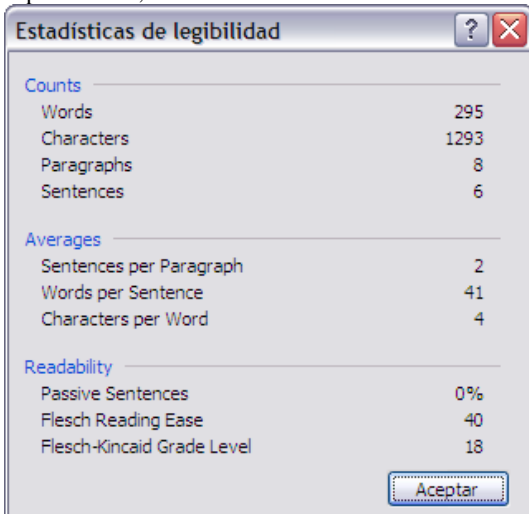
Appendix P
Entry essay: Participant B

Gun Control
By Participant B

There are more than one reason why we shouldn't have weapons in our houses, but there is also many more for DO having them around; balancing the danger of self harm versus the ability to defend yourself seems to be the right answer

in our country, murder is the first cause of death in the 15-45 year old group, we are at open war, so many people in the wrong side of the law possess a variety of guns and ammunition, which are used to battle the public forces, as a result, many of our young and soon-to be productive-people are dying in the process.

But what happen when the bad guys are fully armed, and its illegal for citizens to carry and operate guns? If you are planning to mug someone, you are almost sure that the average innocent bystander has no means of defending himself, so literally it's like taking the candy from a baby!

If it were legal for citizens to carry a concealed weapon, a criminal might think twice before attack any person, so it will work as a deterrent for many inexperienced thieves, criminal often pick the most little, helpless victim for commiting such acts, so they go for the 5-or-less foot girl ina lonely alley, but what if the girl carried a loaded .45 magnum? That story will be completely different.

So, to sum up, in a country in the edge of a civil war, the citizens who abide by the law, and don't carry weapons are the more vulnerable group, we should reconsider the laws that forbid the use of guns by any civilian, in this case, the balance should incline for the side of our own personal safety.

September 16, 2009

Estadísticas de legibilidad [? X]

Counts
Words	295
Characters	1293
Paragraphs	8
Sentences	6

Averages
Sentences per Paragraph	2
Words per Sentence	41
Characters per Word	4

Readability
Passive Sentences	0%
Flesch Reading Ease	40
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	18

Aceptar

Dale-Chall Readability Formula for This Passage =
(**0.0496 *** *36.66* **Avg. Number of Words Per Sentence) +**
(**0.1579 *** *15.0* **Percent of Words in Sample Not Found on Dale Familiar Word List) +**
3.6365
= *7.82* **Raw Score**
= *9-10th* Grade Level

http://www.lefthandlogic.com/htmdocs/tools/okapi/okapi.php

SMOG Grade	Type document title here (optional)					
17.14	Words: 294	Polysyllable Words: 40	Numbers(off): 0	Total Tokens: 294	Syllables: 452	Sentences: 6

Basic Data			Derived Data	
Sentences	6		Words/Sentence	49.
Total Words	294		Syllables/Word	1.5
Polysyllable Words	40		Syllables/Sentence	75.
Letters	1220		Letters/Syllable	2.7
Digits	0		Letters/Word	4.1
Characters	1552		Letters/Sentence	20
Lines	1			

SMOG Grade	Educational Level	Example
0 - 6	low-literate	Soap Opera Weekly
7	junior high school	True Confessions
8	junior high school	Ladies Home Journal
9	some high school	Reader's Digest
10	some high school	Newsweek
11	some high school	Sports Illustrated
12	high school graduate	Time Magazine
13 - 15	some college	New York Times
16	university degree	Atlantic Monthly
17 - 18	post-graduate studies	Harvard Business Review
19+	post-graduate degree	IRS Code

http://www.harrymclaughlin.com/SMOG.htm

Appendix Q
Sample Self-access activity guide No. 1 – Participant A

PRE-READING STAGE

Background and activation of previous knowledge

In a reading skills book for immigrants learning to read in English schools and universities, its authors, Kirn and Hartmann (1996), said that "Part of college life in North America these days is discussion of P.C. –political correctness." (p. 12).

Read the definition for the expression **politically correct** at http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/287100.html and consider three reasons why **you** think discussion on this topic is so important at American colleges.

4. It is important to know the exact definition of the term.

5. Its knowing gives the person certain tools for taking position pro or against P.C.

> **Comentario [VL1]:** It could be better to use: "Knowing it gives…"

> **Comentario [VL2]:** This is a very strange combination. It usually is "in favor or against" OR "the pros and cons of…"

6. The debate itself is always a good practice of tolerance in every scenario.

> **Comentario [VL3]:** Really good point!

Do you think this issue is present in other aspects of our lives? If so, list a few specific examples here.

- Sometimes the people reject using the term "negro" in presence of a black man. Instead it is used the word "moreno", believing that this is more Politically Correct

> **Comentario [VL4]:** Not necessary because you generalise.

> **Comentario [VL5]:** "the word 'moreno' is used"

- Other example refers to the use of the term "habitante de la calle" (homeless) instead of "desechable" (disposable) for referring about the poor people who don't have a home.

> **Comentario [VL6]:** Wrong prepositio: the expression is always "refer to"

READING

Read Ulaby's (2009) article "*Rethinking 'retarded': Should it leave the lexicon?*", available at http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112479383.
(**N. B.** In case you want additional practice, you can also listen to it by clicking on "**Listen to the story**" link on the upper part).

AFTER READING

Exercise 1

Based on the information contained in the article by Ulaby, are these sentences **True** (**T**), **False** (**F**) or **It does not say** (**NS**)?

2.	F	Mr Wrobel has always been careful with the language he uses because he is a professor of speech communications.
2.	T	Some organisations have started to eliminate the word 'retarded' and have replaced it by a more politically correct alternative.
3.	T	They considered Ben Stiller's (2008) movie *Tropic Thunder* offended people with mental disabilities.
4.	T	The DVD version of the comedy *Miss March* was altered to avoid criticism.
5.	F	The Black Eyed Peas album was originally called "Let's get retarded".

6.	T	Columnist Dan Savage **willingly** accepted to eliminate the word 'retarded' from his lexicon because there were many criticisms.
7.	T	According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* editor, those two words mean "bad".
8.	T	The first record of the word 'retard' as an insult was in an edition of *playboy* magazine in the 1950s.
9.	T	Coates, *The Atlantic* columnist, says that most people use these expressions with no actual intention to offend.

Exercise 2

Words sometimes can have different meanings depending on the context they are in. Look up their meanings for the words below in www.dictionary.com –or if you are more visual, look up a synonym at http://www.visualthesaurus.com/, and identify which of the definitions provided is more appropriate in this case.

10. **slur**: A disparaging remark   INSUL

11. **cut off:** To intersect   CROSS ("Block")

12. **teary:** Inclined to weep   DEPRESSed

13. **put-down**: A remark or act intended to embarrass someone.   HUMILIATEion

14. **trash talk:** Disparaging, often insulting or vulgar speech about another person or groupINSULT

15. **coin:** To make; invent; to coin an expression.   FABRICATE

16. **bigoted:** Utterly intolerant of any creed, belief, or opinion that differs from one's own.INTOLERANT

17. **chink:** Disparaging and Offensive   DESPISE

18. **zinger:** A quick, witty, or pointed remark or retort   COMMENTARY

Appendix R
Sample Self-access activity guide No. 1 – Participant B

PRE-READING STAGE
Background and activation of previous knowledge
In a reading skills book for immigrants learning to read in English schools and universities, its authors, Kirn and Hartmann (1996), said that "Part of college life in North America these days is discussion of P.C. –political correctness." (p. 12).

Read the definition for the expression **politically correct** at http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/287100.html and consider three reasons why **you** think discussion on this topic is so important at American colleges.

7. Because it states what can and can´t be said in public

8. Because it avoid hitting sensible audiences

> **Comentario [VL7]:** This verb does not usually collocate with "audience", can you think of other alternative?

9. Because freedom of speech cant overcome other rights

Do you think this issue is present in other aspects of our lives? If so, list a few specific examples here.

I don't.

> **Comentario [VL8]:** Have you ever considered situations like offering the seat to women or allowing older people to have preferential service s in some offices? Can they be considered examples of PC?

READING
Read Ulaby's (2009) article "*Rethinking 'retarded': Should it leave the lexicon?*", available at http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=112479383.
(**N. B.** In case you want additional practice, you can also listen to it by clicking on "**Listen to the story**" link on the upper part).

AFTER READING
Exercise 1
Based on the information contained in the article by Ulaby, are these sentences **True** (**T**), **False** (**F**) or **It does not say** (**NS**)?

3. f   Mr Wrobel has always been careful with the language he uses because he is a professor of speech communications.

2. t   Some organisations have started to eliminate the word 'retarded' and have replaced it by a more politically correct alternative.

3. t   They considered Ben Stiller's (2008) movie *Tropic Thunder* offended people with mental disabilities.

4. t   The DVD version of the comedy *Miss March* was altered to avoid criticism.

5. t   The Black Eyed Peas album was originally called "Let's get retarded".

6. t   Columnist Dan Savage willingly accepted to eliminate the word 'retarded' from his lexicon because there were many criticisms.

7. t   According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* editor, those two words mean "bad".

8. t   The first record of the word 'retard' as an insult was in an edition of *playboy* magazine in the 1950s.

9. t   Coates, *The Atlantic* columnist, says that most people use these expressions with no actual intention to offend.

Exercise 2

Words sometimes can have different meanings depending on the context they are in. Look up their meanings for the words below in www.dictionary.com –or if you are more visual, look up a synonym at http://www.visualthesaurus.com/, and identify which of the definitions provided is more appropriate in this case.

19. slur: to pronounce words in a way that is not clear so that they run into each other, usually because you are drunk or tired (Do you think it is related to drunkenness or tiredness?

20. cut off: used to tell sb to stop doing or saying sth annoying

21. teary: fille wit tears

22. put-down: to speak ill of sth

23. trash talk: disparaging or boastful language used esp. to demoralize or intimidate opponents

24. coin: to invent a new word or phrase that other people then begin to use

25. bigoted: showing strong, unreasonable beliefs or opinions and a refusal to change them

26. chink: a narrow opening in sth, especially one that lets light through

27. zinger: a fast response offense

Exercise 3

The use of most of the words in **Exercise 2** is quite informal. Can you think of more standard expressions for them? Write similar/equivalent expressions on the second line above.

1. mispronounce
2. stop
3. cut out
4. demean
5. boast
6. to be obtuse
7. a glimpse
8. a witty comment

Comentario [VL9]: Similar to your idea, but different to the meaning in the text

Comentario [VL10]: Same as No. 1 above

Comentario [VL11]: This one can be positive

Appendix S
First essay: Participant A with comments from peer (A) and tutor (VL)

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS, A POLITE WAY TO DISCRIMINATE

Discrimination has been growing up since at least seven decades ago. More powerful societies have been trying to impose _____ to those weaker ones in several ways like using violence and destruction; this method has always been very persuasive and in the end the less favored surrender without hope and then, they turn into the discriminated ones.

> **Comentario [VL12]:** Remember you do not use "ago" with "since". However, "since" is not appropriate here, check the preposition we use to indicate duration.

But what happens if one society uses a policy linked to violence to convince people that its ideas are better than those of the enemy? Then, the concept of political correctness has been born. For instance, Churchill's empire trying to sell the idea that Hitler was in fact the principle of evil made flesh, meanwhile Stalin's or Roosevelt's corpses were absolutely justified.

> **Comentario [A13]:** Kick ass!

The people behave as a mass and have the natural tendency of believe in what is imposed to them as politically correct. In World War II the Germans were convinced that the Jewish needed to be discriminated or even exterminated, because their existence wasn't politically correct. For the allies, the axis powers were not politically correct and then war was justified.

> **Comentario [VL14]: to** believe

> **Comentario [VL15]:** Remember the recommendation on the use of contractions in academic writing.

> **Comentario [A16]:** Do you know your enemy?

Demagogy is based on political correctness. Politicians know that this is a fair way of saying offensive and biased things masked on words that confuse the auditory without generate uncomfortable sensations, but still convincing people with their ideas. For example, when they that health coverage is going to rise, people may feel pleased; nevertheless, what they are not saying is that health quality is going to be impaired because the doctors will be underpaid and will have to work harder.

> **Comentario [VL17]:** Wrong word

> **Comentario [VL18]:** Check grammar

> **Comentario [VL19]:** Word missing?

In conclusion, political correctness is nothing but a coward way of cheating people with ideas expressed in a manner that doesn't let them think for themselves. If each one of us would try saying the things in the exactly way they are, obviously using prudence, the world would be different.

> **Comentario [A20]:** Is it polite or is it coward?

> **Comentario [VL21]:** Grammar

Congratulations! You did a very good job. The ideas are all relevant and clear. Could you please check the need to break paragraphs 1 and 2? We will talk about this next lesson. Please, do not forget to label it and write the date, so you can see progress.

Again, congratulations!

Sincerely,

Víctor Lugo

Appendix T
Final draft essay: Participant A
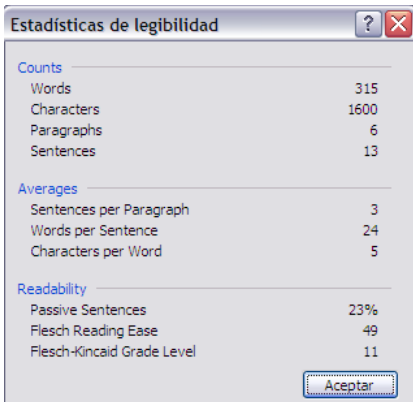## POLITICAL CORRECTNESS, A POLITE WAY TO DISCRIMINATE

Discrimination has been growing up for at least seven decades. More powerful societies have been trying to impose to those weaker in several ways like using violence and destruction; this method has always been very persuasive and in the end the less favored surrender without hope and then, they turn into the discriminated ones.

But what happens if one society uses policy linked to violence to convince people that its ideas are better than those of the enemy? Then, the concept of political correctness has been born. For instance, Churchill's empire trying to sell the idea that Hitler was in fact the principle of evil made flesh, meanwhile Stalin's or Roosevelt's corpses were absolutely justified.

The people behave as a mass and have the natural tendency to believe in what is imposed to them as politically correct. In World War II the Germans were convinced that the Jewish needed to be discriminated or even exterminated, because their existence was not politically correct. For the allies, the axis powers were not politically correct and then war was justified.

Demagogy is based on political correctness. Politicians know that this is a fair way of saying offensive and biased things masked on words that confuse the audience without generating uncomfortable sensations, but still convincing people with their ideas. For example, when they inform that health coverage is going to rise, people may feel pleased; nevertheless, what they are not saying is that health quality is going to be impaired because the doctors will be underpaid and will have to work harder.

In conclusion, political correctness is nothing but a coward way of cheating people with ideas expressed in a manner that does not let them think for themselves. If each one of us tried to say things in the exact way they are, obviously using prudence, the world would be different.

Estadísticas de legibilidad	
Counts	
Words	315
Characters	1600
Paragraphs	6
Sentences	13
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	3
Words per Sentence	24
Characters per Word	5
Readability	
Passive Sentences	23%
Flesch Reading Ease	49
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	11
	Aceptar

Dale-Chall Readability Formula for This Passage =

(**0.0496 *** *19.54* **Avg. Number of Words Per Sentence) +**
(**0.1579 *** *26.97* **Percent of Words in Sample Not Found on Dale Familiar Word List) +**
3.6365
= *8.86* **Raw Score**
= ***11-12th*** *Grade Level*

http://www.lefthandlogic.com/htmdocs/tools/okapi/okapi.php

SMOG Grade		Educational Level	Example
14.47			
	Words: 311	Polysyllabic Words: 57	Numbers(off): 0

Basic Data			Derived Data	
Sentences	13		Words/Sentence	23.92
Total Words	311		Syllables/Word	1.67
Polysyllable Words	57		Syllables/Sentence	40.0
Letters	1524		Letters/Syllable	2.93
Digits	0		Letters/Word	4.9
Characters	1882		Letters/Sentence	117.23
Lines	1			

SMOG Grade	Educational Level	Example
0 - 6	low-literate	Soap Opera Weekly
7	junior high school	True Confessions
8	junior high school	Ladies Home Journal
9	some high school	Reader's Digest
10	some high school	Newsweek
11	some high school	Sports Illustrated
12	high school graduate	Time Magazine
13 - 15	some college	New York Times
16	university degree	Atlantic Monthly
17 - 18	post-graduate studies	Harvard Business Review
19+	post-graduate degree	IRS Code

http://www.harrymclaughlin.com/SMOG.htm

Appendix U
First draft essay: Participant B

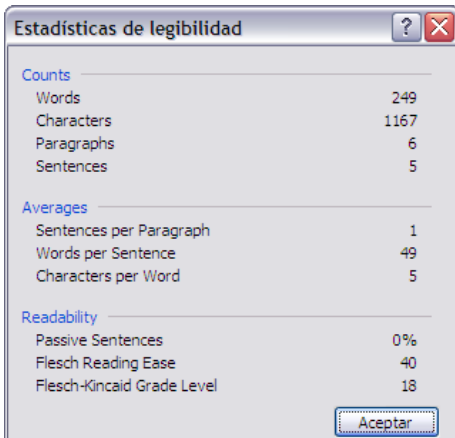Political corectness, a shield from yourself

There is a huge difference between what you think and feel, and what you should say; no matter where you are, what gender you are, what is the color of your skin or your incomes, you are going to get in trouble if you say what you REALLY feel.

Most people believe that political correctness is just a way to limit freedom of speech, because you have to be very careful while picking the right words so you won´t have to regret have said something "wrong", i.e. putting a foot in your mouth because you ask a girl if she has a boyfriend, when she is actually Homosexual and you should have asked I she was dating/seeing anyone.

Also, if you are over-correct, you can hurt people feelings too, if you refuse to call a person "black" and you start using euphemisms for that same term, like "afican-american" (without knowledge of that person origin) you can be very offensive.

Nevertheless, you have to be very careful about who you mistreat if you don't want to be misspercieved, Your reputation can be damaged by the use of exclusive language, thereby causing you to be considered untrustworthy of holding a leadership position in social, business or political organizations.

In conclusion, the best way to protect you from yourself is to be certain that you don't offend anyone by avoiding using words that can be offensive, even if you consider them as neutral words.

Estadísticas de legibilidad

Counts

Words	249
Characters	1167
Paragraphs	6
Sentences	5

Averages

Sentences per Paragraph	1
Words per Sentence	49
Characters per Word	5

Readability

Passive Sentences	0%
Flesch Reading Ease	40
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	18

Aceptar

Dale-Chall Readability Formula for This Passage =
(**0.0496 * ** *22.0* **Avg. Number of Words Per Sentence) +**
(0.1579 * ** *6.81* **Percent of Words in Sample Not Found on Dale Familiar Word List) +
3.6365
= *5.80* **Raw Score**
= **5-6th** *Grade Level*
http://www.lefthandlogic.com/htmdocs/tools/okapi/okapi.php

SMOG Grade	Type document title here (optional)					
17.07	Words: 248	Polysyllable Words: 33	Numbers(off): 0	Total Tokens: 248	Syllables: 379	Sentences: 5

Basic Data

Sentences	5
Total Words	248
Polysyllable Words	33
Letters	1089
Digits	0
Characters	1372
Lines	1

Derived Data

Words/Sentence	49.6
Syllables/Word	1.53
Syllables/Sentence	75.8
Letters/Syllable	2.87
Letters/Word	4.39
Letters/Sentence	217.8

SMOG Grade	Educational Level	Example
0 - 6	low-literate	Soap Opera Weekly
7	junior high school	True Confessions
8	junior high school	Ladies Home Journal
9	some high school	Reader's Digest
10	some high school	Newsweek
11	some high school	Sports Illustrated
12	high school graduate	Time Magazine
13 - 15	some college	New York Times
16	university degree	Atlantic Monthly
17 - 18	post-graduate studies	Harvard Business Review
19+	post-graduate degree	IRS Code

http://www.harrymclaughlin.com/SMOG.htm