

**UNIVERSITAT JAUME I**

DEPARTAMENT D'ESTUDIS ANGLÉSOS



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**LEARNING STYLES AND READING MODES**

**IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE**

**LEARNING AUTONOMY THROUGH**

**‘CYBERTASKS’**

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**DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

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**Dr. María Luisa Villanueva Alfonso**

**Castellón, October 2013**



**UNIVERSITAT JAUME I**

DEPARTAMENTO DE ESTUDIOS INGLESES



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**LOS ESTILOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y MODOS  
DE LECTURA EN EL DESARROLLO DE LA  
AUTONOMÍA DEL APRENDIZAJE DE  
LENGUAS A TRAVÉS DE LAS  
“CIBERTAREAS”**

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**TESIS DOCTORAL**

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS USED THROUGHOUT THE STUDY**

**EFL** English as a Foreign Language

**ESL** English as a Second Language

**ICT** Information and Communication Technologies

**LA** Learning Autonomy

**URL** Uniform Resource Locator

**WWW** World Wide Web

**ZPD** Zone of Proximal Development

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## **1- INTRODUCTION**

The intention of this research is to study: (a) the possible relationship between the learning styles of university students and the different reading and navigation modes they use when faced by tasks requiring effective management of web-based information; and (b) the relationship between different digital texts and different ways of implementing browsing-reading and navigating modes.

The theoretical background of this research is based on three research fields: (a) psychopedagogical approaches focused on cognitive strategies and task-based approaches; (b) the challenges of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) applied to promote learner autonomy; and (c) linguistic studies based upon the notion of genre in the digital era (Cybergenres).

More specifically, we intend to see how the students' learning styles correlate with the navigation carried out by them.

In order to carry out our investigation it has been necessary to design a specific type of task based on the WebQuest model, which we will call "Cybertask", according to specific purposes of our research in both a methodological approach of learning and a linguistic approach of digital texts.

The main aim of promoting autonomy in this project is to help students to take charge of their own learning and to be able to make significant decisions concerning their management and organisation of complex tasks in the new media age. In this project, the design of a Cybertask has then a double use: (a) an instrument of research, and (b) a tool to develop autonomy. The design of such a Cybertask constitutes a research contribution *per se*, and it is not only a mere instrument for the students' own analysis of strategies. This Cybertask adopts a task-oriented approach applied to the Web (WebQuest), but at the same time it incorporates proposals and activities that:

- (a) take into account the diversity of learning styles in relation to reading strategies;
- (b) take into consideration the analysis of reading strategies in relation to specific task objectives;
- (c) and which bear in mind the characteristics of digital texts: intertextuality, multimodality and hypertextuality.

In chapter 2, first, I explain the role and types of previous knowledge in the context of a psychopedagogical and socioconstructivist approach; second, the relevance and new features of communicative approaches nowadays; third, the relationship between learning and

acquisition; fourth, the relationship between languages and cultures; and finally, the role of self-assessment.

In chapter 3, I show the main differences between humanistic and “grammarial” approaches; and learning autonomy.

In chapter 4, I focus on learning styles in order to observe the possible links we may find with regard to the students’ reading strategies.

In chapter 5, I focus on New Literacies and Cybergenres, taking into account modes to access digital information (navigating, browsing, and reading) as complex webtasks bearing in mind multimodality, hypertextuality and learners’ autonomisation. From a dialogical point of view, I consider both a linguistic approach in the age of digital genres, and a pedagogical approach.

Chapter 6 deals with two different features; on the one hand, Task-Based Learning Activities; and on the other hand, a historical overview that traces the evolution of WebQuests and Cybertasks for the purposes of the present study.

Chapter 7 is devoted to Research Questions and Cybertask Design. The latter includes on the one hand, the design and pedagogical implications of the Cybertask; and on the other hand, we present the

Cybertask ‘The Writing Process’ as the main instrument (among others) for data collection for the purpose of our present work.

Chapter 8 is devoted to Methodology. This includes on the one hand, the instruments used (such as questionnaires and the Cybertask); and on the other hand, the procedure carried out for the present study.

Chapter 9 is devoted to the explanation of the data collection procedure, as well as the results obtained thereof.

Finally, in chapter 10, we offer an in-depth discussion about the results obtained in the study, followed by the general conclusions drawn from this research. Subsequently, I make suggestions for further research followed by a list of references and annexes, as well as the materials employed to collect the data for the present study.

We deem it necessary to point out that although we have undertaken a broad-based study which includes lots of research areas, we are not going to develop all of them in great detail. Preferably, we are going to focus our attention on new literacies and cybergenres, for the purpose of the present investigation. Evidently, our preference for this research area does not mean that the other areas become less important, since in hindsight, they have proven to be very useful in giving meaning to our final objective.



## **2. LANGUAGE LEARNING**

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## **2. LANGUAGE LEARNING**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.2. THE ROLE AND TYPES OF PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE**

### **2.3. THE RELEVANCE OF COMMUNICATIVE APPROACHES**

### **2.4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING AND ACQUISITION**

### **2.5. THE ROLE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT**

### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

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The present chapter is devoted to a brief review of theories on language learning. On the one hand, the role and types of previous knowledge and the relevance of communicative approaches; on the other hand, the existing relationships between learning and acquisition; finally, the role of self-assessment as metacognitive awareness and consciousness (Ellis, 1992) in the field of language education.

Following this self-assessment approach, students were required to complete a self-assessment questionnaire at the end of the Cybertask concerning different aspects in relation to the task process and the task result. Thus, students are able to evaluate their own work during the

Cybertask process, being able to think about their previous knowledge in relation to the new information they have learned after having completed the Cybertask. Furthermore, students express their motivation for learning with these types of tasks.

## 2.2. THE ROLE AND TYPES OF PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE

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Based on present-day approaches, and from a socioconstructivist point of view, it is not possible to speak of language learning without taking into account that the learner has both background knowledge and cultural representations of the language learnt. There is general agreement that this whole background of concepts and representations is of highly significant in terms of the reception and elaboration of experience involved in language learning.

In experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) experience plays a significant role in learning from immediate experience (cf. Knapp & Davis, 1978). As Keeton & Tate (1978) argue, experiential learning refers to learning in which:

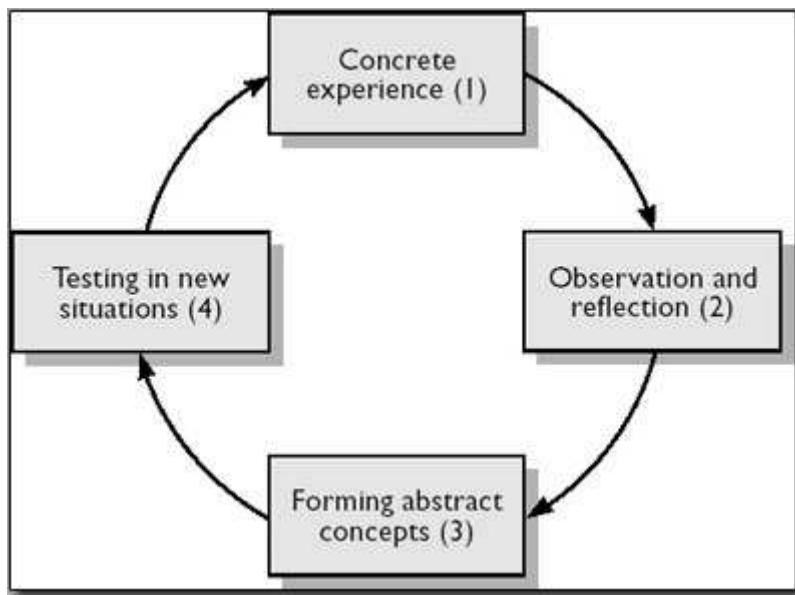
*“The learner is directly in touch with the realities being studied. It is contrasted with learning in which the learner only reads about, hears about, talks about, or writes about these realities but never comes in contact with them as part of the learning process. ...It involves direct encounter with the phenomenon being studied rather than merely thinking about the encounter or only considering the possibility of doing something with it” (Keeton & Tate, 1978: 2).*

A good starting point for the discussion of experiential learning is that learning from immediate experience engages learners in active participation. Furthermore, learning through experience entails the learner being directly in touch with the phenomenon being studied, rather than just watching it or reading, hearing or thinking about it (Kolb 1984; Kohonen 2001). Along this line, Kolb points out that:

*“In Experiential Learning, immediate personal experience is seen as the focal point for learning, giving life, texture, and subjective personal meaning to abstract concepts and at the same time providing a concrete, public shared reference point for testing the implications and validity of ideas created during the learning process” (Kolb, 1984: 21).*

But experience also needs to be processed consciously by means of reflection. Learning is thus seen as a cyclic process integrating immediate experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization, and action.

Kolb (1984: 42) advances a general theoretical model of experiential learning, integrating the views of Lewin, Dewey, and Piaget.



(Figure 1: Kolb's Theoretical Model of Experiential Learning)

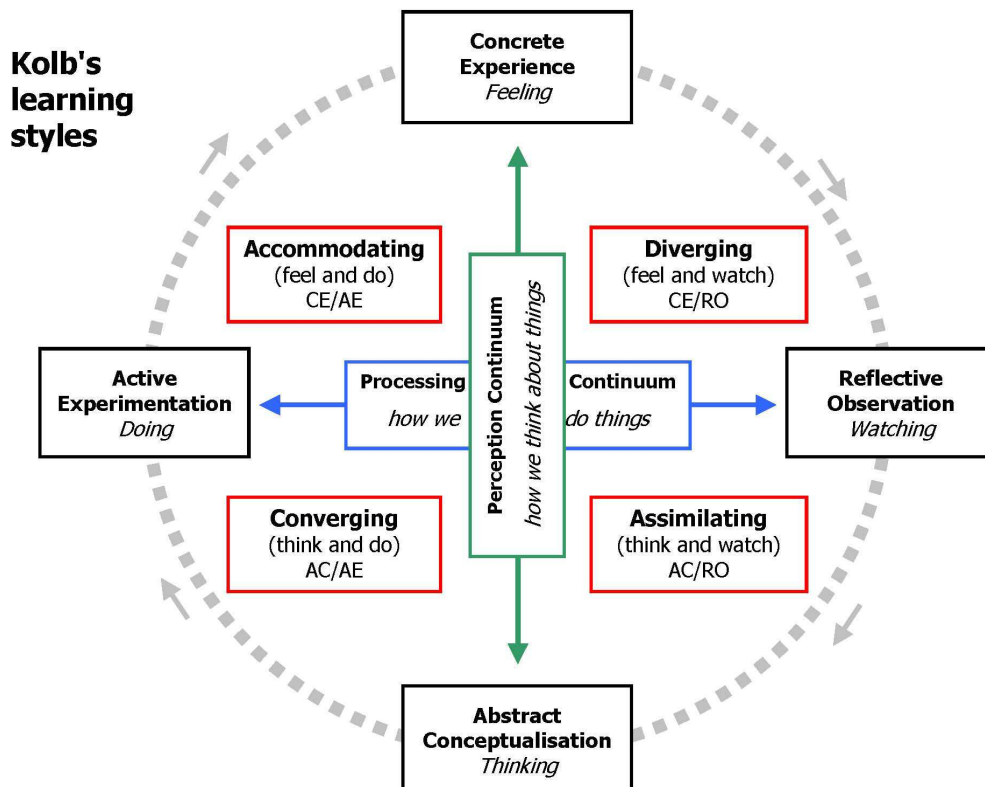
According to this model, we understand learning as a process of deconstruction of conflicts between two opposed dimensions, called the 'prehension' and 'transformation' dimensions. On the one hand, the prehension dimension refers to the way in which the individual grasps experience. The transformation dimension, on the other hand, refers to the processing of experience by an orientation towards either

action and active experimentation or reflective observation. We expect that an individual with an active orientation takes risks, in order to maximize learning success while showing little concern for errors or failure (p. 42-60). (We will devote a greater section to explain these concepts, since they share common traits with our Learning Styles Questionnaire).

The polar ends of the two dimensions thus result in four orientations to learning (Kolb 1984; Kohonen 2001):

1. Concrete experience: learning by intuition, with an emphasis on personal experiences, belonging, and feeling.
2. Abstract conceptualization: using logic and a systematic approach to problem-solving, with an emphasis on thinking, manipulation of abstract symbols, and a tendency to near and precise conceptual systems.
3. Reflective observation: The learner is concerned with how things happen by attempting to see them from different perspectives and by relying on one's thoughts, feelings, and judgement.
4. Active experimentation: learning by action emphasises practical applications in real work life contexts (p. 68-69).

Thus, simple everyday experience is not sufficient for learning, since it must also be observed and analysed consciously. For this reason, reflection plays an important role in this process by providing a bridge between experience and theoretical conceptualization. We see below an updated version of Kolb's diagram, by Kohonen (2006).



(Figure 2: Kolb's Diagram of Learning Styles)

Learning from experience and being able to transform that experience into new meaningful knowledge that allows learners to create a learning environment, where they can modify their behaviour and face



new learning experiences. In addition, learning demands for conflict-solving views among opposing perspectives to suit the world (Kolb, 1984). Thus, the theory of experiential learning is crucial for the purpose of this research because:

- (a) We can find a link between cognitivism and experience;
- (b) Experiential learning is dynamic because it fosters learning through action in real-life environments;
- (c) Learning through experience fosters personal development, since students may learn bearing in mind different points of view in terms of thinking, judgements, or feelings; and
- (d) This type of learning entails a relationship between background knowledge, observation from experience, and judgement.

### 2.3. THE RELEVANCE OF COMMUNICATIVE APPROACHES

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Communicative approaches have become highly significant, trespassing the barriers of rigid learning structures to a conception geared towards the promotion of communication in the classroom.

From Villanueva's point of view (2007), the development of the communicative approaches has been governed by two aspects:

- The gradual overcoming of the structuralist view of language which focused on the study of the sentence and subsequently, the demise of the conception of discourse as a sum of statements. In other words, the gradual opening up of discourse and text as units of communication with their own rules of coherence and cohesion whose framework allows open “strategy-talk” to take place.
- The gradual focus on the learner as an active subject in the learning process and who has specific needs as a foreign user of the language being learnt.

At this point, we deem it useful for the proper understanding of this work, to delve back into the history of the validity of the communicative approach and declare that today everything seems to be going down the path of eclecticism with ill-defined borders.

Faced with the rigidity of the American structuralist approaches (Bloomfield at Yale and Fries at Michigan) towards the end of the 60s, European linguistic thought was manifested in two ways that sparked off a crisis for the audiolingualism and audiovisual methods.

These new ways were two attempts to make the learning of structures less artificial by inserting it into a communicative context. Partly, we are referring to the Situational Approach proposed by Firth (1957) and influenced by the studies of Malinowski (1923). In general, in the European approaches the idea was to take the situational context of communication into account. Thus, at this point, emphasis was given to genuine and real-life documents. This interest in authenticity not only reflects a desire to provide the communicative episodes with socio-cultural context, but also offers the opportunity to mobilize language learners' psycho-pragmatic and cultural representations, as well as to turn these representations into tools with the purpose of formulating hypotheses. Authenticity and the development of autonomy appeared, above all in teaching-learning practice, as two concepts linked to each other.

Mentioning this historical background is relevant because it highlights a growing evolution in two directions: (a) the opening to both discourse and sociocultural contexts; and (b) the consideration of the learner as the centre of learning.

The effective spread of notional-functional methodology and the communicative approach throughout the '70s and '80s is closely related to the formulation of the Threshold Levels for European

Languages carried out by the Council of Europe's Living Languages Project Committee. This project, which began in 1971, produced the different ideas for the Threshold Levels<sup>1</sup> from 1975 down to the end of the '80s. In the 1975 formulations for English and those for French from 1976 and thereafter, the notional-functional approach was initially very much marked by the idea of drill work and by the weight of a structuralist conception of language. The first ideas for adapting the Threshold Levels to school contexts appeared in 1977 for English (Van Ek, 1977). The existence of an assessment of the application of the threshold level for English meant the suggested French syllabus was based on the speech act notion, which involves a communicative synthesis of notional and functional criteria.

However, ten years after, Holec (1982) indicated the risk of reducing speech acts to lists which would be still-lives. He underlined the need to approach communication as a process rather than as a list of pre-designed patterns. The key features of any communicative act are the notions of context and interactive process, so that in every communicative exchange the participants renew and reconstruct a set of speech acts. As a consequence, the need to develop strategic and discursive competence in students can be deduced. This competence adopts great relevance when learners have to face digital texts where a

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<sup>1</sup> The Common European Framework (Independent User B1).

set of speech acts appears interrelated due to hypertextual links, as is the case of the experimental situation in our study.

It is the development of reflection on the communicative dimension that led to the discursive consideration of linguistic analysis (Peytard & Moirand, 1992) which implies interaction strategies and a variety of uses. A Communicative Approach is necessary, but we should not conceive communication without taking into account a Cognitive Approach. Concerning the possibility that there is a new approach which might historically come to replace the communicative approach, Daniel Coste (2000) highlights the cognitive dimension into the communicative approaches to the teaching-learning of languages. As a consequence of this progress, a new perspective comes to light in which complexity and diversity would therefore be the features defining communicative methodologies at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This new approach is centred on the combination of previous knowledge and new knowledge, giving as a result the concept of *effective learning*. Learning is viewed as an active, creative, and socially interactive process. In turn, knowledge is considered as an entity to be constructed and not simply transmitted or transferred. This

perspective necessarily implies approaching learning practices from a perspective in which learners are central in the learning process.

The whole procedure is based on the view of learners as active subjects rather than the passive recipients of somebody else's decision/expertise. It also emphasises the importance of the development of the learners' metacognitive ability concerned with *learning how to learn* (Ausubel, 1968; Bruner, 1984; Benson, 2001; Little, 1991; Dickinson, 1976); Holec 1979, 1996; Coll, 1990; Villanueva, 1992). This view of effective learning is linked to the personal involvement of learners in the whole process, in which they participate actively and consciously.

In fact, learning is recognised as an act in which a learner plays the role of an active constructor of knowledge. This Psychopragmatic approach follows the pathway left by cognitive approaches that had already begun to analyze the learning process according to learners' experiences. In this sense, learners are provided with challenging learning tasks, whose main goal is to construct their intellectual scaffolding that helps them learn and progress in the different stages of the learning process.

The Psychopragmatic Approach clearly defines the teacher and learner's roles according to pedagogical premises that imply the adoption of:

- A flexible method that can be useful and a source of self-esteem for the learner.
- A method that caters for the diversity of the learners' cognitive profiles/styles, and their various learning needs and consequent choices.
- An enjoyable methodology that allows learners and teachers/counsellors to converse in understandable terms.

In this respect, this approach takes into serious account the kind of comprehension processes that may be involved in the different interactions. It also considers a diversity of tasks, which are built from clear and workable parameters based upon real language usage. These parameters are designed according to the initial representation that learners have of real communicative interaction in order to maximise and enhance their learning potential.

The consolidation of this new approach is reflected on the presence of aspects such as *cognitive diversity*, *learning to learn* or *learning styles* in the European Council Guide as well as in the Curricular Project of

the Cervantes Institute (1994). Furthermore, it is becoming more usual to find terms such as *autonomous work*, *language learning autonomy* or *attention to diversity* in the language learning discourse. However, in my view, it seems that there is still a mismatch between the theoretical discourse and the practical dimension, since these notions seem to be rare in present practical learning experiences if we compare it to language learning and teaching at universities today. Thus, Richards & Rodgers' (1986: 72) principles in the Communicative Approach represented a fundamental contribution in the language learning field, since they support learning by means of introducing real-life tasks that involve communication and supply the learners' educational needs. These principles are the following:

1. The principle of communication (activities involving real communication that promote learning).
2. The principle of tasks (those activities that involve using the language to carry out significant tasks that promote learning)
3. The principle of significant relevance (language becomes meaningful for learners in order to positively support their learning process).



As for the first principle, discursive competence was one of the dimensions taken into consideration as an optimal tool to promote communicative competence by the first authors who launched the notion of Communicative Competence (Halliday, 1970; Widdowson, 1978; Canale & Swain, 1980).

With regarding to the second principle, the notion of tasks became central in the Communicative Approach. The materials used for task design were taken from real-life resources and not manipulated at all for pedagogical purposes. The introduction of realia would become an important aspect to be taken into account, since realia are believed to be the most convenient kind of material to promote language learning due to their discursive and cultural context. Additionally, these aspects also afforded the opportunity to take into account learners' previous knowledge in pragmatic terms.

Along this line, we cannot deny the potential of the Internet, since multimedia technology (i.e. use of images, videos, sound, etc.) makes of Internet the perfect vehicle of transmission for real language and culture. However, it is important to mention the growing relevance of cybergenres, which started to be a focus of attention with Shepherd and Watters (1998). Cybergenres can be considered realia, since neither their content nor their context is manipulated when used for

language learning proposals. However, the use of the Internet and the selection of materials for pedagogical purposes should be done from a critical pedagogical perspective in order to obtain effective results in the language learning classroom.

Concerning the third principle, the Communicative Approach places the learner at the centre of the learning process. Therefore, learners' needs and objectives are the basis to construct a flexible and dynamic syllabus. By employing a Communicative Approach, an interactive and meaningful relationship among learners' needs, objectives and the syllabus can be achieved. This multiple relationship can increase learners' involvement in their own learning process.

As a conclusion, Richards & Rodgers' (1986) point of view towards language learning shows a lot of common features to Kolb's (1984) theoretical model. The reason for this resemblance is based on the fact that:

- (a) They focus on active participation in order to promote communicative competence ('principle of tasks').
- (b) They show the great importance of reflection, since by reflecting on our own thoughts and judgements, we can make

learning relevant and thus consciously promote our learning process ('principle of significant relevance').

(c) Learning by action in real-life contexts is very much taken into consideration, since activities that imply working in real-life contexts promote learning in an active way, communicating with others ('principle of communication').

#### 2.4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING AND ACQUISITION

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When we say that we want to learn a language, what we really mean is that we want to be able to take part in a conversation, establish agreements to produce a common project, or read a novel or poem in the original version. But this is far from a thorough acquisition of that language.

Language acquisition has many cognitive implications which have been emphasized on the cognitive revolution period. The cognitive trend showed a return to grammar explanation followed by various sorts of exercises to practice the rule in question. These exercises could be of the type used by previous grammar-translation or audio-lingual methods, but in both cases, the emphasis was on conscious

understanding of the rule under practice. Chastain (1976: 151) states that the “purpose of a cognitive exercise is the comprehension of forms, the conscious learning of forms, and the conscious selection of forms to fit the context”.

There are several methods which have been developed recently which are based on traditional principles of language acquisition. The central principle of all of them is that to make students acquire communicative competence, the key component of the course should allow them to use the language for real communication, and that exercises and drills are neither necessary nor sufficient. That is why Cognitive Approaches become relevant.

Among the Cognitive Approaches we find Suggestopedia and the Silent Way as two of the most prominent. Suggestopedia was developed by Lozanov (1978) and had many adaptations in which different rituals were used with a certain placebo effect. Gattegno's Silent Way (1972-1976) highlighted the role of consciousness in learning.

During the '70s and '80s there was no Notional-Functional Approach or Communicative Approach as such. Yet there was an interesting initiative which combined the Communicative Approach with the

cognitive perspective. At that time, Tracy Terrell (1977) and Stephen Krashen (1982) suggested what they called the *Natural Approach*. This approach was the only American method which included both communicative and cognitive aspects, though Krashen indicated in 1983 that the Natural Approach was similar to other communicative approaches. In addition, whereas some of the other approaches seem to be based on one or two central techniques (Suggestopedia, Total Physical Response, Silent Way, Counselling Learning), the Natural Approach is highly flexible with regard to the sorts of teaching techniques used in the classroom, and is able to incorporate any of the techniques of these approaches where appropriate, without depending exclusively on any of them.

Even if the Natural Approach is not adopted on the whole, we feel that any reduction of the dominance of grammar-based methods will improve language teaching. All human beings can acquire additional languages, but they must have the desire or the need to acquire them, and the opportunity to use the language they study for real communicative purposes. This background serves as an introduction to the hypothesis of the Monitor Theory of language acquisition and learning. Krashen's (1982: 10-44) theory of second language acquisition consists of five main hypotheses:

1. The Acquisition-Learning hypothesis,
2. The Monitor hypothesis,
3. The Natural Order hypothesis,
4. The Input hypothesis, and
5. The Affective Filter hypothesis.

The hypothesis of Acquisition-Learning distinction is the most fundamental of all the hypotheses in Krashen's theory and the most widely known among linguists and language practitioners. According to Krashen there are two independent systems of second language performance: 'the acquired system' and 'the learned system'. The 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language, in which speakers focus on the communicative act, rather than on the form of the speech.

The 'learned system' or 'learning' is the product of formal instruction and it comprises a conscious process, which results in conscious knowledge about the language, for example knowledge of grammar

rules. According to Krashen 'learning is less important than acquisition'.

The Monitor hypothesis explains the relationship between acquisition and learning, and defines the influence of the latter on the former. The monitoring function is the practical result of the learned grammar. According to Krashen, the acquisition system is the utterance initiator, while the learning system performs the role of the 'monitor' or the 'editor'. The 'monitor' acts in a planning, editing and correcting function when three specific conditions are met: the second language learner has sufficient time at his/her disposal, s/he focuses on form or thinks about correctness, and s/he knows the rule.

It appears that the role of conscious learning is somewhat limited in second language performance. According to Krashen, the role of the monitor is – or should be – minor, being used only to correct deviations from 'normal' speech and to give speech a more 'polished' appearance.

The Natural Order hypothesis is based on research findings (Dulay & Burt, 1974; Fathman, 1975; Makino, 1980 in Krashen, 1987), which suggested that the acquisition of grammatical structures follows a predictable 'natural order'. For a given language, some grammatical

structures tend to be acquired early while others late. This order seemed to be independent of the learners' age, L1 background, conditions of exposure, and although the agreement between individual acquirers was not always 100% in the studies, there were statistically significant similarities that reinforced the existence of a Natural Order of language acquisition. Krashen, however, points out that the implication of the natural order hypothesis is not that a language program syllabus should be based on the order found in the studies. In fact, he rejects grammatical sequencing when the goal is language acquisition.

The Input hypothesis is Krashen's attempt to explain how the learner acquires a second language. In other words, this hypothesis is Krashen's explanation of how second language acquisition takes place. Therefore, the Input hypothesis is only concerned with 'acquisition', not 'learning'. According to this hypothesis, the learner improves and progresses along the 'natural order' when s/he receives second language 'input' that is one step beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence. For example, if a learner is at a stage 'i', then acquisition takes place when s/he is exposed to 'Comprehensible Input' that belongs to level 'i+1'. Since not all of the learners can be at the same level of linguistic competence at the same time, Krashen



suggests that *natural communicative input* is the key to designing a syllabus, ensuring in this way that each learner will receive some 'i+1' input that is appropriate for his/her current stage of linguistic competence.

Finally, the fifth hypothesis, the Affective Filter Hypothesis, embodies Krashen's view of 'affective variables' that play a facilitative, but non-casual, role in second language acquisition. These variables include: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Krashen claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. In other words, when the filter is 'up' it impedes language acquisition; whereas when the filter is 'low' it means that the performer is more 'open' to the input. On the other hand, positive affection is necessary, but is insufficient on its own, for acquisition to take place.

Along this line, the notion of affective filter can be taken into account when analysing students' performance in a Cybertask. This can be reflected by taking into account that students will obtain better results

if they have a positive attitude towards the language they learn (low filter), rather than if they show a negative attitude (high filter).

However, there is general agreement that some of these hypotheses have provided uncertain evidence. Some of their most *uncertain* positions are the following (Villanueva, 2007):

- The rejection of explicit grammar considers that the existence of a theory of language is not important. In Villanueva's view, some grammatical instruction is important in order to be able to use the language. In our Cybertask about the 'writing process', this aspect is taken into account, because it provides us with the different steps we need to follow in order to produce any kind of writing. This information is shown to us in the same way we learn grammar rules.
- Villanueva criticises Krashen's rigidity in declaring that the mother tongue must not be used. In our Cybertask, the mother tongue has been used; although given the purpose of my investigation, I agree with Krashen up to a point. Our subjects (EFL students) were not expected to use their mother tongue (Spanish or Catalan) when performing a Cybertask in English,

whose purpose is to foster their English language skills. However, we need to bear in mind the 'students' language level.

- The Input +1 theory, which led to the rather inflexible establishment of the programme (I+1 Input Hypothesis). However, we consider together with Villanueva that the learner is able to learn more than I+1 with the facilitator's help and taking into account Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development Theory (1986).

- The idea that the acquisition of grammatical structures occurs in a predictable universal order (Natural Order Hypothesis). Contrary to that view, we deem it necessary to take into account not only the level of cognitive development for adults and children, since they do not learn in the same way, but also the context where the language (English) is learned, since we are not studying English in a natural context (e.g. United Kingdom, United States...).

In spite of all that, it must be accepted that other aspects of Krashen's theory have now been incorporated into general thought about language teaching. These are the following hypotheses:

- The *emotional filter* hypothesis. Creating a warm and welcoming environment in the classroom promotes more effective language learning. This is important, since students need to feel that they can take risks and make mistakes.
- The *monitor hypothesis*. Conscious learning acts as a monitor between the acquired system and production.
- The *acquisition/learning* hypothesis. Although today it is presented by different authors in a somewhat watered down form compared to the stricter formulations of the natural method.
- The importance of *comprehension*. We can acquire language when we understand the amount of input we are exposed to.
- The acceptance of a *latency period*. Children learn their mother tongue when they listen to spoken language that is meaningful for them. Furthermore, we learn foreign languages in the same way.
- The most adapted aspects of the *input information theory*. In fact, this theory is related to acquisition rather than to learning. In it, there are elements that give greater importance to meaning and to the learner's comprehension of the input: *what is*

*understood can be better comprehended.* In addition, input information must always be a little above the current level of competence. In fact, in reading some of these proposals, it is impossible to avoid recalling Vygotsky's Zone of Potential (or Proximal) Development Theory (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978).

From a cognitive and a socio-constructivist point of view, Krashen's well-known interrelated hypotheses are at many points learner-centred and affect-sensitive. In the Input Hypothesis (1985) he posits that acquisition occurs with  $i+1$  level of input, somewhat similar to Vygotsky's ZPD, slightly beyond the learner's present state of knowledge. In other words, input should be both too difficult, - and therefore frustrating -, nor too easy, and thus boring.

The most obvious connection of Krashen's work with affect is, however, his theory of the affective filter. He stresses that acquisition occurs most readily in environments where there is an absence of negative affect which would constitute a barrier between the language learner and the material to be learned.

Some of Krashen's hypotheses of second language acquisition are related to the background of the present study. Particularly, those that concern a difference between acquisition and learning, the importance

of previous knowledge, the importance of internal information processing, which in some way is related to the monitor hypothesis, and in general, the importance of comprehension processes and their relative autonomy in relation to expression.

From my point of view, the monitor hypothesis is relevant for the present study regarding the learners' use of the language they learn. What is interesting is the amount of monitor learners use while they are carrying out a task, particularly the development of the metacognitive competence. In spite of the fact that Krashen gives scant attention to the study of metalanguage expression, the relationship between the metacognitive and metalinguistic development is going to be paramount in the present work. In fact, this relationship is the basis for the development of autonomy (Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Ellis, 1997; Abraham & Vann, 1987; Breen, 2001; Allwright, 1984; Little, 1995).

As for the input hypothesis, it is interesting to highlight the level of linguistic competence students can acquire taking into account their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. This concept was developed by the Russian psychologist

and social constructivist Lev Vygotsky (1978) who defined it as follows:

*“...the zone of proximal development. It is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers”* (Vygotsky, 1978: 86).

Finally, the affective filter hypothesis is paramount for this study, because students need to feel motivated and self-confident for foreign language acquisition to take place. All these features must be borne in mind when students carry out their task (Arnold, 2006).

These three hypotheses (Krashen, 1982) are related to self-assessment in terms of:

- Language acquisition: learners develop metacognitive strategies that foster their language acquisition. Thus, thinking about their own knowledge will help them evaluate their learning.

- Re-mediation or correctness: learners' capacity to correct their mistakes in the language being learned, will allow them to develop criteria in order to evaluate learning
- Motivation and self-confidence: students who feel motivated and self-confident when learning a second language are better prepared to draw conclusions from their own learning assessment.

## 2.5. THE ROLE OF SELF-ASSESSMENT

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The notion of self-assessment transforms the role of the learner, who becomes an active, free subject, conscious of his/her own learning process. To learn how to learn, the language learner should integrate self-assessment into all points of the process. One function of self-assessment is the verification of acquisition, but it also has the roles of re-mediation, motivation, and of acquisition of strategies.

Little (1998) has referred to the capacity for learning to learn or learning competence as a strategic competence, and Carton (1993) has declared that self-assessment is a central focus in autonomy development.



The notion of self-assessment could be useful for us in relation to a plurilingual competence, the development of autonomy and the development of new literacies. But the most important aspect is the development of meta-cognitive awareness related to the idea of *introspection* (to think about one's own learning).

Since the '70s, the impulse in applying the innovation of methodologies in different teaching contexts is much related to the proposals and projects of the Committees of the Council of Europe. As a result, a common framework for the teaching and assessment of European languages was proposed. For this reason, the European Language Portfolios were created, whose 1996 and 2001 guidelines attempt to open a new stage in the common orientation for the language teaching-learning field in Europe. The Council of Europe's Rüsclikon Symposium (1991) constitutes a historic date, not only because of the opening up to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, but also because of the conclusions and recommendations that were formulated. Two important aspects to its resolutions are the following:

- The recognition of the assessment of learning processes, and
- The need to harmonise international assessment criteria

In the report from this Symposium drawn up by Richterich and Schneider (1992: 43-50), some principles were established that guided the proposals in the 1996 European Portfolio. These principles are:

- **Coherence.** It implies that the description is free from internal contradictions and requires a harmonious relationship among the components in educational systems: the identification of needs and objectives, the definition of content and selection of material, the establishment of the teaching/learning programmes and working methods, and the decisions of evaluation and assessment.
- **Transparency.** It means that information must be clearly formulated and explicit, available and readily comprehensible to users.

The proposals in the 1996 European Portfolio (Trim, 1998) specify these principles according to a series of parameters that must be used to guide teaching activities:

- **Negotiation and Interactivity.** It involves negotiation between the participants in the process of language teaching and learning.

- **Horizontality and Verticality.** The determination and grading of knowledge, skills (know-how) and knowing how to act must be taken into account.
- **Comparability and Flexibility.** It involves establishing flexible description and evaluation systems allowing equivalences to be compared, accepted and legitimised.

Today, communicative methodologies are directed towards considering the learner as a learning subject, with the following implications:

- Developing the capacity of learning to learn (autonomy),
- Capacity for self-assessment and for taking broad-based-assessment into account, and
- Development of strategic competence and metacognitive competence.

Mediation strategies reflect ways of adapting oneself to the demands of communication. It is a process of approaching the other involving planning activities taking into consideration the interlocutor's needs and characteristics.

Mediation competence involves a meeting point between two different types of competence: (a) capacity for introspection and reflection, and (b) capacity for defocusing. Perhaps, capacity for empathy is the matching device between both competences.

A field of research which rekindled great interest is that of the emotional and motivational aspects that involve language learning. Motivation is the result of intertwined pragmatic factors (needs, objectives), emotional factors (representation of oneself and one's relationships with others) and cognitive factors. Concerning the cognitive dimension of motivation, we should not forget that we give importance to an issue if we are interested in it. Thus, Claxton (1987) argues that:

*“The role of the teacher or counsellor and the relationship between equals and the democratic exercise of controversy can play a comparable role, making us give importance to something that previously did not have it” (Claxton, 1987: 21-31).*

Finally, it is important to point out the fact that the communicative culture in the third millennium is a culture of complexity (Morin,

1993). By 'complexity' we mean to own a capacity of relating different things and a capacity of integrating different aspects in a new unity of thought. This is particularly relevant when we talk about the management of different information and the texts that ICT makes possible. The use of ICT implies the challenge of developing a competence that enables arranging diverse types of simultaneous information, and builds the relevant knowledge that the 'learner', 'user', 'navigator' considers adequate for his/her aims in a given moment.



### **3. AUTONOMY IN LANGUAGE**

#### **LEARNING**

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### **3. AUTONOMY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **3.2. HUMANISTIC APPROACHES VS. GRAMMAR APPROACHES: CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **3.3. LEARNING AUTONOMY**

##### **3.3.1. ORIGINS IN THE CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY**

##### **3.3.2. DEFINITIONS OF AUTONOMY: TERMINOLOGICAL PROBLEMS**

##### **3.3.3. LEARNING TO LEARN LANGUAGES AND CONDITIONS FOR LEARNER AUTONOMY**

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#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

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The main focus of this chapter is the importance of helping students to become more autonomous in their own learning process.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section explains the main differences and characteristics that exist between ‘Humanistic’ and ‘Grammar’ approaches. Both approaches are relevant for the purpose of the present study, since they reveal the differences between traditional and modern instructional methodologies. We can confirm that our Cybertask is related to humanistic approaches considering the importance given to learners and their active role in their learning. The second section discusses two main aspects: On the one hand, the term

‘autonomy’ in the field of education, its origin, problematicity, and definitions. On the other hand, learning to learn languages and conditions for learner autonomy.

### 3.2. HUMANISTIC APPROACHES VS. GRAMMAR APPROACHES: CHARACTERISTICS

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The distinction between the Grammatical and Humanistic Approaches was clearly defined by two key notions: (a) the increased importance of the *learner’s role* in contrast to the teacher’s role supremacy, and consequently (b) the emergence of the *learning* dimension at the expense of the teaching dimension. Both aspects were investigated by Rogers (1961) and they would be essential for the later development of the notion of Language Learning Autonomy.

Humanistic methods clearly differ from grammatical ones, because the former emphasize the learner, that is, learners take an active role in their learning and they consider their needs in order to carry out learning. As a result of this process, the teacher’s role undergoes a change, in the sense that s/he is going to become a facilitator in learning, whose main role will be to create a friendly environment for the learning process to take place. The teacher is no longer seen as an

authoritative figure that has superiority over students, but as someone who can help them to carry out their learning process in the classroom.

On the other hand, Grammar or Grammatical Approaches give emphasis to the teacher's position and assume a passive role for the learner in the classroom.

Both approaches are clearly described by Sánchez (1997: 215). On the one hand, he characterises Grammatical Approaches as follows:

- (a) They are rationalistic. They place emphasis on the learners' cognitive capacity.
  
- (b) They do not give priority to students' communicative needs. As a consequence, the starring role is developed by the teacher, who is an external factor to the learner.
  
- (c) They are seldom flexible in the organization of the learning process, the contents to be learned, or the strategies that learners need to learn. They do not promote any responsibility on behalf of the learners.

(d) The learners' feelings, their affective context and their social or participative relationships are only scantily taken into account.

(e) They do not pay attention to the learners' social or participative relationships.

On the other hand, Sánchez (1997) describes Humanistic Approaches/Methods as those approaches or methods in which the rational organisation of the content is marginalised. Accordingly, humanistic approaches:

(a) adapt the learning method to the learners, taking into account their communicative needs and providing them with materials that help them meet those needs.

(b) understand that the teacher's role is not the main focus in the classroom. The teacher is free to decide on the most suitable content, methodology and techniques for each learning situation, which is always negotiated according to learners' needs.

(c) favour learners' freedom to learn by taking into account their interests and responsibility when learning.

Following on from this, in the following section we will focus on two aspects: on the one hand, we will discuss the term ‘autonomy’; on the other hand, we will analyse the process of learning to learn languages in order to promote learner autonomy.

### 3.3. LEARNING AUTONOMY

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Over the past decades there has been a gradual move towards an emphasis on the learner. The shift in emphasis to the individual learner has been accompanied by considerable changes in classroom practice. As Casado and García (2000) describe:

*“Los alumnos, por su parte, han pasado de ser meros receptores pasivos del saber a participar más activamente en los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje. La teoría cognitiva asume el papel del alumno como intérprete y organizador de la información facilitada por el profesor. El alumno toma la nueva información y la analiza, interpreta o revisa a la luz de los conocimientos que ya tiene. Al mismo tiempo, se contempla el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje como algo creativo que permite al alumno explorar el lenguaje y organizar sus nuevos conocimientos utilizando para ello sus propios esquemas organizativos”.*

*[...] “Todo ello conlleva una pérdida de autoridad por parte del profesor que deja de ser el foco de atención para orientar su enseñanza hacia las necesidades y los centros de interés de sus alumnos” (Casado & García, 2000: 79).*

It is clear from this description that in autonomous learning, or learner-centred environments, the role of the teacher has been altered dramatically. S/he is no longer the only source of knowledge and information but has become a counsellor, facilitator (Benson, 2001: 171) and a manager of learning resources. Many teachers feel that this change in their roles has undervalued their authority.

In the same sense, Little (1995) explains that seeking learning autonomy demands a change on behalf of the teacher’s role, so as to let learners be responsible for their learning. In Little’s words:

*“It is often argued that the pursuit of learner autonomy requires a shift in the role of the teacher from purveyor of information to facilitator of learning and manager of learning resources. Stories abound of teachers who, inspired by the ideal of learner autonomy, have interpreted this argument all too literally, telling their learners that it is now up to them to be responsible for their*

*learning and withdrawing to a corner of the classroom in order to manage the resources that will magically facilitate 30 or more individual learning processes. When nothing happens the teacher usually concludes that learner autonomy does not work” (Little, 1995: 175).*

In the teaching-learning field, Villanueva (2005: 16) explains that we need to take into consideration the fact that the research on learning and learning strategies is ‘research in action’, and what is useful for the learner is also valid for the teacher as a researcher (Villanueva, 2000; Breen, 2001). Along this line, it is worth mentioning the ‘mediation theory’ from Vygotsky and Bruner. Both authors give importance to the function of conscience and reflexion, and to the capacity of human beings to develop conscience of what they are doing. This capacity is favoured by communication and interaction.

Regarding these last lines, the relationship among learning, conscience and communication is shared by a number of researchers today in the language learning field (Hickmann, 2001).

However, these new roles can demand broader knowledge, expertise and initiative than those offered by the teaching model (Mishan, 2005: 9). Changing the terms used to describe what teachers do, as Little

(2004: 2) argues: “in no way diminishes their [the teachers] responsibility for making things happen” [...] “the teacher’s key role is to create and maintain a learning community; if teachers stop teaching, most learners will stop learning”.

The teacher remains, therefore, the learner’s most valuable resource. His or her key role is to present academic content in a way that promotes learning, or, as Hoffman (1991: 921) stresses, to organise and manage “the instructional environment in a way that serves to maximise student engagement in academics”.

If we want our learners to engage autonomously in language learning we have to make them feel motivated. The term ‘motivation’ has been proposed by Houser and Frymier (2009: 35) as “the energy needed to perform some tasks or achieve some goal”. Christophel (1990) and Frymier (1994) proposed to define ‘motivation’ as “a mediator between teacher communication behaviour and student learning” (quoted in Houser & Frymier, 2009: 35). Students feel motivated when they find that tasks are meaningful, feel competent to perform those tasks and finally they are successful at doing them. At the same time, the role of the teacher plays a crucial role as s/he has to feel close (the notion of ‘immediacy’) to the students, make the educational content relevant to them and show a positive attitude



towards them to learn a language. As a result, this motivation on the part of students increases their learning (Christophel, 1990).

But not only teachers play the most crucial role in students' successful learning. Students also play a relevant role in this respect, as "the learner's acceptance of responsibility for his or her learning entails the gradual development of a capacity for independent and flexible use of the target language" (Little, 1995: 179). But overall, "the basis of learner autonomy is that the learner accepts responsibility for his or her learning" (Little, 1995: 175); as well as Holec (1981) and Dam (1995) (in Little, 2000: 1) stated: "Learners take their first step towards autonomy when they accept responsibility for their own learning". Learning autonomy is mainly important for two reasons (Little, 2000: 1):

*(i) "If learners are themselves reflectively engaged in planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning, it should follow that their learning will be more successful than otherwise because it is more sharply focussed; and*

*(ii) The same reflective engagement should help to make what they learn a fully integrated part of what they are, so that they can use the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom in the world beyond. In the foreign*

*language classroom, this means that the target language must be used as the channel through which teaching and learning take place – including the reflective processes of planning, monitoring and evaluation.*

One of the aims of the educator, therefore, should be to help students manage self-directed, autonomous learning and, as Urquhart and Weir (1998) comment:

*“Teaching students to read effectively unaided would seem to be a potentially powerful contribution to this [managing self-directed, autonomous learning], if not the single most important. If we can help students to read carefully and expeditiously on their own for their own purposes, then this would be success indeed” (Urquhart & Weir, 1998: 181).*

However, learners may have problems with an autonomous approach towards language learning. In other words, it may be difficult for learners to determine learning goals, select learning materials to achieve those goals, and monitor their learning progress. Alcón (2000)

suggests that two assumptions should be considered when we concentrate on developing autonomy:

(a) The first one is that, although educational, cultural, and social factors may influence learners' beliefs and attitudes towards language learning, every human being is potentially an autonomous learner.

(b) The second assumption related to this process of autonomization deals with the interdependence between learner autonomy and teacher autonomy. As suggested by Little (1995: 179-180):

*“We must provide trainee teachers with the skills to develop autonomy in the learners who will be given into their charge, but we must also give them a first hand experience of learner autonomy in their training”.*

In formal teaching, the link between teacher training and learner training can be found in the fact that learners are reluctant to take charge of their learning. Teachers must help them to do so by reflecting on the meaning of the concept of learning to learn a language.

Considering the above mentioned assumptions, we might consider that an autonomous approach to language learning means that teachers and learners become actively involved in the challenge of learning to learn what goes on in the learning process.

### 3.3.1. ORIGINS IN THE CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY

Little (1990, 1991) and Holec (1981) offer the following definitions of the term ‘autonomy’ (see also Navarro-Coy 2003: 44; Sanz, 2004: 153):

*“La autonomía del aprendiz es esencialmente una cuestión de la relación psicológica del aprendiz con el proceso y el contenido del aprendizaje. La reconocemos en una amplia variedad de comportamientos como son la capacidad de objetividad, de reflexión crítica, de toma de decisiones y de poder actuar de forma independiente”* (Little, 1990: 7).

*“...having the capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action”* (Little, 1991: 4).

*“The ability to take charge of one’s learning”* (Holec, 1981: 3).

When we talk about ‘autonomy’ we do not refer to a new methodology to be carried out in the classroom, but rather to learners’ attitude towards their learning process based upon their responsibility.

The concept of ‘autonomy’ has been developed in different fields. One of the fields in which the concept of ‘autonomy’ was first developed is politics; later on, the concept was spread in the field of philosophy and more importantly in the field of language education (Ruiz-Madrid, 2005: 72-89; Navarro-Coy, 2003: 45-48).

The concept of ‘autonomy’ goes beyond the field of language education in this sense that it comes from pedagogy. It has been pointed out by several authors that the pedagogical origin of the concept of autonomy is considered by “Rousseau’s definition of the learner as an active individual, who is at the centre of the learning process” (1762: 6) (quoted in Boyd, 1956) referred to it in his ‘Emile’ as follows:

*“Make your pupil attend to the phenomena of nature, and you will soon arouse his curiosity. But to nourish this curiosity, be in no hurry to satisfy it. Suggest problems but leave the solving of them to him. Whatever he knows, he should know not because you have told him, but because he has grasped it himself. Do not teach him*

*science: let him discover it. If ever you substitute authority for reason in his mind, he will stop reasoning, and become the victim of others' opinions "[...]"*

*"If he goes wrong, do not correct his errors. Say nothing till he sees them and corrects them himself; or at most, arrange some practical situation which will make him realise things personally. If he never made mistakes he would never learn properly. In any case, the important thing is not that he should know the topography of the country, but that he should be able to get this information for himself"* (quoted in Boyd, 1956: 73-76).

However, after Rousseau's words there were other educators who became relevant to the field such as Dewey (1966), Freire (1974), Illich (1971), and Rogers (1969) among others. Dewey's contribution to the idea of autonomy lies mainly in three areas:

- a) The relationship between education and social participation,
- b) Education as a problem-solving approach, and
- c) Classroom organisation.

Freire (1974) and Illich's (1971) contribution to autonomy was based on Rousseau's views of education (i.e. learning from nature and not from institutionalised learning).

Another important aspect in this field is the idea of 'learning webs'. Illich stated his disagreement towards this way of learning. However, his negative idea on 'learning webs' turned into a positive achievement, because it allowed human beings to exchange and share information, empower learners and enhance autonomy; since learners were offered the possibility to interact with each other or among several students. Along this line, Kreeft (1999) underlies the possibilities opened up by computer networks:

*“Computer networks as a medium for communication have created opportunities for writing and learning that were never before possible. These opportunities include synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (time-delayed) interactions, one-on-one interaction between students and teachers or among students within classrooms, and wider communication with individuals and groups around the world” (Kreeft, 1999: 17).*

### 3.3.2. DEFINITIONS OF AUTONOMY: TERMINOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

It seems that there is no agreement among researchers about a single definition of the notion of autonomy. Thus, it is necessary to distinguish among the several terms that have been associated to autonomy: 'self-instruction', 'self-direction', 'self-directed learning' and 'individualisation' (in Ruiz-Madrid, 2005: 90-95; Navarro-Coy, 2003: 54-62). These terms have been employed to describe the same phenomenon. That is why they have caused terminological problems in the field, since although all of them imply a certain different degree of autonomy in learning; they should not be used as synonyms of autonomy as we understand it.

Concerning 'self-instruction', Jones (1998) defined it as a long-term learning project that students develop on their own without the presence of a teacher. According to this idea, learners study on their own, with little or no contact with teachers or speakers of the target language.

Along this line, Dickinson (1987: 5) offers the following definition of 'self-instruction' in which he states, "The 'self-instruction' label is used to refer to "situations in which a learner, with others, or alone, is working without the direct control of a teacher".



Research from the field of language learning suggests that ‘self-instruction’ is not an effective method of learning a language by itself, maybe because self-instructed learners do not have opportunities for communication and collaboration with a teacher, or with other learners; and this is paramount for autonomous language learning from a socioconstructivist perspective. Therefore, when researchers (Little, 1990; Riley, 1985) argued that autonomy is not a synonym of self-instruction, they referred to the strongest sense of the term: long-term self-initiated learning in isolation from teachers or other learners. Conversely, Learning Autonomy (LA) involves the ability to engage in self-instruction provided that self-instruction is understood as a training process for learning skills. Such a process involves specific training regarding learning goals, methods, materials and evaluations that can be set either by an external authority or by the learner himself/herself.

Regarding ‘self-direction’, there are two opposite views. On the one hand, Dickinson (1987: 10) described ‘self-direction’ as “a particular attitude to the learning task, in which learners accept the responsibility for making decisions about their own learning”, that is, learners put into practice their knowledge on the learning process. On the other hand, Holec (1990: 39-47) considered that “learners might not be able

to incorporate these decisions into their own learning process, because they might not know how to do it". Knowles (1975: 18) also referred to self-directed learning as follows:

*"In its broader meaning, 'self-directed learning' describes a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of other, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes".*

The idea of process is also present in Blue (1988), Riley (1989) and Little (1996). According to Blue (1981: 61), "self-directed learning was a process in which learners took responsibility for all the decisions related to different aspects of the learning process". Riley (1989) defined it as "a process in which learners constructed their own learning program". Finally, Little and Brammerts (1996: 23) defined autonomy as "a capacity for self-direction" as shown below:

*“(...) this capacity is exercised in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of learning activities, and necessarily embraces both the content and the process of learning. Learners take first step towards autonomy when they consciously accept responsibility for their own learning; and they develop their autonomy through a continuous effort to understand what they are learning, why, how, and with what degree of success”.*

Little’s definition shows how the boundaries between autonomy and ‘self-directed learning’ are confusing:

*“Autonomy defines both the broad field of inquiry and the global capacity to exercise control over one’s learning while self-directed learning tends to refer simply to learning that is carried out under the learner’s own direction, rather than others’ parameters”*  
(Little, 1996: 203-219).

Concerning ‘individualisation’, this term has been applied to several situations. These situations could be grouped into two types: (1) Situations that are a clear reflection of a teacher-learner relationship,

on the one hand; and (2) situations that have a close relationship with aspects that are implicit in the definitions mentioned above.

(1) As far as the first type is concerned, Logan (1973) stated that when we talk about individualised learning, we refer to the situation in which the teacher gives the materials and activities to learners, in order for them to work in an independent way. As a result, the teacher does not have to worry about individual needs.

(2) But regarding the second type, Sturtridge (1982: 8-9) pointed out that individualization implies that the teacher is conceived as a helper or a facilitator of learning, helping the learners in the process of learning to learn at the same time they learn the language. Along this line, Tumposky (1982: 5) also refers to the teacher as a facilitator of learning, that is, somebody who takes care of their own sensitivity towards the learners and their individual differences as far as the learning style and rhythm is concerned.

The only difference between both situations can be found in the context where they are carried out: the classroom or outside the classroom.

After having discussed the differences existing among the main notions identified with the term *autonomy*, we will now focus on the most frequent definitions of autonomy in the language-learning field. In spite of the efforts made by the profession in order to agree on a single definition, there is not a common approach to the term *autonomy*.

#### 3.3.3. LEARNING TO LEARN LANGUAGES AND CONDITIONS FOR LEARNER AUTONOMY

##### *a) Learning to learn languages*

Autonomy is related to the idea of learners taking control of their own learning process. Thus, “learning to learn languages is aimed at fostering learners’ self-identity as language learners by means of mobilising their representations of languages and language learning” (Riley, 1989: 65-72) (see also Navarro-Coy, 2003: 108-130; Ruiz-Madrid, 2005: 101-117).

In a general sense, learning to learn languages means developing an active process of internalising and integrating the linguistic experience as well as acquiring instrumental procedures for learning. These instrumental procedures are called ‘strategies’ (Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991; Dickinson, 1987). According to Richards and

Lockhart (1994: 63), learning strategies are “the specific procedures learners use with individual learning tasks”. When learners have to complete a task, they can do it by choosing several ways. Each choice or strategy offers advantages and disadvantages and “the use of an appropriate learning strategy can enhance success with the learning task” (Richards & Lockhart, 1994: 63).

Regarding Oxford (1990: 8), learning strategies are defined as “specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, and more transferable to new situations”. She suggests a number of features which she considers that language learning strategies must have (1990: 9):

- They contribute to the main goal: communicative competence.
- They allow learners to become more self-directed.
- They expand the role of teachers.
- They are problem-oriented.
- They are specific actions taken by the learner.
- They involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive.

- They support learning both directly and indirectly.
- They are not always observable.
- They are often conscious.
- They can be taught.
- They are flexible.
- They are influenced by a variety of factors.

According to Oxford (1990: 8) “a given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is thoroughly considered”. She also states that a strategy is positive and helpful if the following conditions are present:

- a) The strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand,
- b) The strategy fits the particular student’s learning style preferences to one degree or another, and
- c) The student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies (Oxford, 2003: 8).

“Learning strategies can also enable students to become more independent, autonomous, lifelong learners” (Allwright, 1990; Little,

1991; quoted in Oxford, 2003: 9). This is the reason why these learning strategies are relevant for our study, since we are trying to observe how students manage in autonomous learning environments.

*b) Conditions for Learner Autonomy*

It should be clarified that autonomous learning is achieved when certain conditions are obtained: cognitive and metacognitive strategies on the part of the learner, motivation, attitudes, and knowledge about language learning, i.e., a kind of metalanguage. In all likelihood, giving students a ‘helping hand’ can lead to or enhance learner autonomy, and this is mainly because teachers are ill-prepared or reluctant to ‘wean students away from teachers dependence’ (Sheerin, 1997, in Benson & Voller, 1997: 63). After all, “it is not easy for teachers to change their role from surveyor of information to counsellor and manager of learning resources. And it is not easy for teachers to let learners solve problems for themselves” (Little, 1990, in Gathercole, 1990: 11). Such a transition from teacher-control to learner-control brings a lot of difficulties.

In this section, it is of utmost importance to gain insights into the strategies learners use in acquiring the target language, as well as their motivation and attitude towards language learning in general.



#### b.1) Learner Attitudes and Motivation

Learners do not only reflect on their learning in terms of the language input to which they are exposed, or the optimal strategies they need in order to be successful. The success of a learning activity is, to some extent, conditional upon the learners' behaviour towards the world and the learning activity in particular, their sense of self, and their desire to learn (Benson & Voller, 1997: 134-136). As Candy (1991: 295-296) says, "The *how* and the *what* of learning are intimately interwoven. The overall approach a learner adopts will significantly influence the shape of his/her learning outcomes". In other words, language learning – as well as learning, in general – has also an affective component. "Meeting and interiorising the grammar of a foreign language is not only an intelligent, cognitive act. It is a highly affective one too" (Rinvoluceri, 1984: 5, quoted in James & Garrett, 1991: 13). Gardner and MacIntyre (1993: 1, quoted in Graham, 1997: 92) define 'affective variables' as the "emotionally relevant characteristics of the individual that influence how s/he will respond to any situation". Other scholars, such as Shumann (1978) and Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) do not give much importance to learners' emotions, claiming, "Social and psychological factors give a more suitable description for students' reactions to the learning process".

Amongst the social and affective variables at work, self-esteem and desire to learn are deemed to be the most crucial factors “in the learner’s ability to overcome occasional setbacks or minor mistakes in the process of learning a second or foreign language” (Tarone & Yule, 1989: 139). At this point, it is necessary to highlight learners’ attitudes and motivation.

Wenden (1998: 52) defines attitudes as “learned motivations, valued beliefs, evaluations, what one believes in acceptable, or responses oriented towards approaching or avoiding”. For example, if learners believe that certain personality types cannot learn a foreign language and they believe that they are that type of person, then they will think that they are not able to learn that language. Furthermore, if learners work under the idea that learning is successful only within the context of the ‘traditional classroom’, where the teacher directs, instructs, and manages the learning activity, and students must follow the teacher’s instructions, then they are likely to show resistance towards learner-centred strategies aiming at autonomy, and success is likely to be undermined.

Attitudes are “part of one’s perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living or the culture of the target language” (Brown, 1987: 126), and it seems clear that positive attitudes are

conducive to increased motivation, while negative attitudes have the opposite effect. But let us examine the role of motivation.

What most scholars seem to agree with is that motivation is:

*“One of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second or foreign language learning. Motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process”*  
(Dornyei, 1998: 117).

According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993: 3), motivation is comprised of three components: “desire to achieve a goal, effort extended in this direction, and satisfaction with the task”.

It is evident that in language learning, people are motivated in different ways and to different degrees. Some learners like doing grammar and memorising; others want to speak and role-play; others prefer reading and writing, while avoiding speaking.

#### b.2) Self-esteem

Closely related to attitudes and motivation is the concept of self-esteem, the evaluation the learner makes of him/-herself with regard to the target language or learning in general. “Self-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individual holds towards him/-herself” (Coppersmith, 1967: 4-5, in Brown, 1987: 101-102). If the learner has a “robust sense of self” (Breen & Mann, 1997, in Benson & Voller, 1997: 134), his/her relationship to himself /herself as a learner is unlikely to be conducted by any negative assessments by the teacher. On the contrary, a lack of self-esteem is likely to lead to negative attitudes, and conducting “a deterioration in cognitive performance” (Diener & Dweck, 1978, 1980, in Wenden, 1998: 57).

Stating that learner autonomy can be fostered is not to reduce it to a set of skills that need to be acquired. It means that the teacher and the learner can work towards autonomy by creating a friendly atmosphere characterised by “low threat, unconditional positive regard, honest and open feedback. Respect for the ideas and opinions of others, approval of self-improvement as a goal, collaboration rather than competition” (Candy, 1991: 337).

In the next section, some general guidelines for promoting learner autonomy are given. Autonomy does not mean leaving learners to learn in isolation.

b.3) How can Learner Autonomy be promoted?

Since fostering learner autonomy implies fostering teacher autonomy as teachers' autonomy goes deep into learners' autonomy' (Johnson, Pardesi & Paine, 1990, in Gathercole, 1990: 51). Nevertheless, our main focus will be on what the learner can do in order to attain a considerable degree of autonomy.

b.3.1) Self-reports

Self-reports allow students to collect the information they need, in order to carry out a learning task. According to Wenden, (1998):

*“A good way of collecting information on how students go about a learning task and of helping them become aware of their own strategies is to assign a task and have them report what they are thinking while they are performing it” (Wenden, 1998: 81).*

Wenden (1998: 81) distinguishes two types of self-reports: (1) introspective and (2) retrospective.

(1) *Introspective* reports allow learners to think about their own learning. In Wenden's words "the introspective self-report is a verbalization of one's stream of consciousness" (Wenden, 1998: 81).

(2) Another type of self-report is called *retrospective*, since learners are asked to think back on their learning. Retrospective self-reports have no limits on what students say in response to a question or statement.

Wenden states that retrospective self-reports are comprised of semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires. For the purpose of this work we will pay especial attention to structured questionnaires because they provide explicit questions and answers, by asking learners to express their opinions, their agreement or disagreement in relation to the learning task carried out.

In this perspective, in our study we take into account a retrospective self-report, and more specifically, a structured questionnaire. As a consequence, students have to complete different questionnaires before carrying out a Cybertask (a Learning Styles Questionnaire and a Level Questionnaire).

### b.3.2) Evaluation Sheets

Self-assessment sheets or questionnaires may help students to put things into perspective and manage their own learning in a more effective way. In this sense, learners can write down their expectations of a course and report the outcomes at the end of that course. Let us show an example of such a report:

*What do I want to do this year?*

*“I want to speak more English and I’d like to spell better than I do now. I would like to work with another boy or girl who is willing to speak in English with me and make some activities in English.  
Materials: Challenge to think and crosswords.*

*I would like to get a more varied language and I would like to be better at spelling, specially the words used in everyday situations.  
How: I will prepare a two minutes’ talk’ for every lesson, I will write down new words five times and practise pronouncing them.*

*I will get someone or myself to correct it. I will read at least two books ÷ difficult ones ÷ and make book-reviews”.*

*(Beginning of term ÷ 4<sup>th</sup> year of English*

[From Dam, 1990, in Gathercole, 1990: 30])

Along this line, self-assessment is of paramount importance for our study, students have to complete a Self-Assessment Questionnaire after having completed the task. This questionnaire allows us get information about: (i) task process, and (ii) task result.

On the one hand, concerning the task process, students provide information in relation to key words, the importance of contents offered, credibility of sites, students' reading ability, information management, links selection, and the like.

On the other hand, the task result offers information concerning students' degree of satisfaction with the task, strong and weak points, and the like.

One of the assumptions under the issue of learner autonomy is that the teacher has not abandoned his/her authority, so as to let the students make hypotheses and learn on their own with the objective of mastering the target language. In this perspective, we deem necessary to mention, "Learner autonomy is best achieved when [...] the teacher acts as a facilitator of learning, as a counsellor, and as a resource..." (Benson & Voller, 1997: 99-106). Wright (1987: 62, in Benson & Voller, 1997: 100).



From my point of view, there is a strong need for students to be autonomous when learning foreign languages, rather than considering the teacher as an authority in the classroom who carries out all the work. In this sense, students need to have the opportunity to experiment with the target language and consider the teacher as a counsellor, who gives advice regarding the student's learning approach.



## **4. LEARNING STYLES AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

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## **4. LEARNING STYLES AND LEARNING STRATEGIES**

### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

### 4.2. LEARNING STYLES

### 4.3. LEARNING STRATEGIES

#### 4.3.1. DEFINITION OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

#### 4.3.2. LEARNER TRAINING

#### 4.3.3. FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNERS' CHOICE OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

#### 4.3.4. IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND THE APPROPRIATE GUIDING OF TEACHERS' ROLES

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### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

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Enormous changes have taken place in modern foreign language teaching and learning over recent decades which have seen emphasis shifting towards learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching. Following from this idea, further investigation has shown the significance of language learning strategies in order to make language learning more efficient and in order to produce a positive effect on learners' language use (Wenden & Rubin, 1987; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Cohen, 1998).

The attention given to learner strategies arises from the need to show how successful learners have a whole range of available strategies to make language learning work for them and how they employ these strategies to process new information.

Following on from this approach, 'learning to learn' plays a very important role, since language strategies provide learners with what is necessary to make the most of their learning skills in order to manage their own learning. But quite clearly, not all 'good' language learners use all strategies. Individual preferences can be seen in terms of individual learning styles. For example, Reiss (1981) examined how strategy use depended on cognitive style, and Wesche (1979) suggested that classroom methodology could be varied and selected according to individual cognitive types. At this point, it is worth mentioning that 'learning how to learn' is also related to the term *adaptive learner*, a learner who is able to adapt his/her learning style according to the type of learning process.

The importance of the notion of 'strategy' in language learning increased when 'strategic competence' was included as one of the four major components of 'communicative competence' by Canale and Swain (1980).

## 4.2. LEARNING STYLES

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Language learning styles and strategies are among the main factors that help determine how our students learn a second or foreign language.

The concept ‘style’ is used in a variety of contexts, in high street fashion, the sports arena, the arts, the media and in many academic disciplines including educational psychology. The concept is always associated with individuality and is used to describe an individual quality, form, activity or behaviour sustained over time.

The concept ‘style’ represents a *distinct notion of coherent singularity* and might well reflect the need for a sense of identity which is arguably the essence of individuality (Rayner & Riding, 1997: 5-27).

Students might use learning styles in the classroom setting in order to learn a subject or a foreign language. In this case, a student will show a specific type of behaviour towards the language being learned, depending on his/her learning style. Furthermore, Cornett (1983: 9) states that these styles are “the overall patterns that give general direction to learning behavior”. Along this line, “learning styles are the biologically and developmentally imposed set of characteristics

that make the same teaching method wonderful for some and terrible for others” (Dunn & Griggs, 1988: 3).

As Villanueva and Navarro (1997: 50) pointed out, learning styles are characterised according to the more or less frequent use of a set of cognitive and pragmatic strategies related to different aspects of learning. We should not award a particular learning style label to each student. In other words, an individual student may have different strategies belonging, in a theoretical way, to different learning styles, if he or she faces different tasks or experiences. In this sense there is no need to interpret neither learning styles nor cognitive styles as fixed behavioural schemes that predetermine students’ behaviour. Thus, learning styles are characterised by a set of learning strategies that correlate in a significant way; however this does not imply that the same subject cannot experience learning strategies belonging to different learning styles.

Among the different style dimensions cited by Ehrman and Oxford (1990: 311-326) and which are of paramount importance for L2 learning, we will focus more closely on those dimensions relevant to the present work:



1- Visual: We could establish a relationship with our Learning Styles Questionnaire (see Annex I), since a visual learner prefers reading some information from the Web, especially if the text is accompanied by images. As a result, for this type of learners “lectures, conversations, and oral directions without any visual backup can be very confusing” (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990: 311-326). Visual students enjoy reading and obtaining a great deal of information from visual devices.

2- Intuitive-Random: “*Intuitive-random* students think in abstract, futuristic, large-scale, and non-sequential ways. They like to create theories and new possibilities, often have sudden insights, and prefer to guide their own learning” (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990: 311-326). In this perspective, this dimension is very much related to our Learning Styles Questionnaire (see Annex I) and more specifically, to the *inductive* dimension. This is based on the fact that inductive learners like discovering the rules of the language they learn.

3- Sensing-Sequential: On the contrary, *deductive* learners prefer initial instruction from the teacher; accordingly, they show a preference towards receiving teacher guidance on the rules of the language, in order to have a more consistent knowledge. In Ehrman & Oxford’s words: “*Sensing-sequential* learners like facts rather than

theories, want guidance and specific instruction from the teacher, and look for consistency” (see Learning Styles Questionnaire: Annex I).

4- Feeling: *Emotional* learners show feelings of empathy in relation to the language being learned. They learn under better conditions if a warm atmosphere surrounds them. In this way, Ehrman and Oxford argue, “*feeling* learners show empathy and compassion through words, not just behaviours, and say whatever is needed to smooth over difficult situations. They want to be respected for personal contributions and hard work” (see Learning Styles Questionnaire: Annex I).

5- Desired Degree of Generality: This dimension establishes a contrast between a learner, whose main focus is on general information, and a learner, who focuses on specific details.

On the one hand, synthetic students are more willing to read general information, because they retain more information. This learning style allows the learner to manage different sources of information, grasping general ideas and placing them within a kind of interrelated whole. Another term for this type of learners is: “Global or holistic students” (see Learning Styles Questionnaire: Annex I).

On the other hand, analytic students prefer focusing on small details, since they may have the perception that managing general information can involve learning important details on the way. Thus, “analytic students tend to concentrate on grammatical details and often avoid more free-flowing communicative activities. Analytic learners do not take the risks necessary for guessing from the context unless they are fairly sure of the accuracy of their guesses” (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990: 311-326).

6- Assessing L2 Learning Style: Finally, “the most common type of assessment tool for L2 learning styles is the written survey. Students answer questions that reveal their particular style preferences. Style surveys vary in reliability and validity” (Ehrman & Oxford, 1990). We deem it necessary to focus our attention on this dimension, since for the purpose of our study, students are required to complete a Learning Styles Questionnaire (see Annex I), in order to show their learning preferences.

Now we turn to learning strategies, which are related to learning styles but are far more specific.

### 4.3. LEARNING STRATEGIES

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Both educators and language learners should be aware of the importance of learning strategies, since they facilitate the language learning process. The main idea is that learners use those learning strategies that (from their point of view) adapt better in their attempt to look for answers to several questions.

In the following section (4.3.1.) we develop an appropriate definition of Learning Strategies, and explain in further detail the different learning strategies we may encounter during the language learning process.

#### 4.3.1. DEFINITION OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

Learning strategies are defined as “specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques - such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task - used by students to enhance their own learning” (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992: 63). When learners choose strategies that adapt to their learning style, these strategies become a set of tools that are necessary for language learning.

According to O’Malley and Chamot (1990: 1), learning strategies are “the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them

comprehend, learn, or retain new information”. Wenden (1998: 18) pointed out that “learning strategies are mental steps or operations that learners use to learn a new language and to regulate their efforts to do so”. The learning strategies and learning styles that people use “may partly reflect personal preference rather than innate endowment” (Skehan, 1998: 237). According to Oxford (2003):

*“L2 learning strategies are specific behaviours or thought processes that students use to enhance their own L2 learning. The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word strategia, which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war” (Oxford, 2003: 8).*

This same idea of the word ‘strategy’ was adopted by Riley (1985), who stated, “this term has different connotations such as ‘conflict’, ‘defeat’, ‘victory’, ‘incursion’, and the like”. “The warlike meaning of strategia has fortunately fallen away, but the control and goal-directedness remain in the modern version of the word” (Oxford, 1990). Thus, the concept of ‘strategy’ not only has to be understood in terms of ‘conflict’, but also in terms of ‘negotiation’ and ‘collaboration’.

It is worth considering that learning strategies are not always good or bad in a given context. A learning strategy is good for the learner as far as s/he considers it useful for the purpose of a task or context. When a learner chooses a learning strategy that is appropriate to him/her, learning becomes successful as a result.

*“We need to bear in mind that a given strategy is neither good nor bad; it is essentially neutral until the context of its use is thoroughly considered. What makes a strategy positive and helpful for a given learner? A strategy is useful if the following conditions are present: (a) the strategy relates well to the L2 task at hand, (b) the strategy fits the particular student’s learning style preferences to one degree or another, and (c) the student employs the strategy effectively and links it with other relevant strategies. Strategies that fulfil these conditions make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990: 8).*

Furthermore, learning strategies help students to be autonomous in their learning, but this is also true for lifelong learners (Allwright, 1990; Little, 1991).

In absolute terms, we cannot affirm, technically–speaking, that there are good or bad language learners. In this sense, those learners who

are usually referred to as ‘good language learners’ are able to guess the meaning of words or statements from the context. But this fact does not imply that these good learners employ a certain set of learning strategies; rather they have the capacity to use them in an appropriate manner, so that those learning strategies are useful for them.

On the contrary, those learners perceived as ‘bad language learners’ are not able to adapt learning strategies to their needs. Thus, these kinds of learners do not show any criteria to use a specific set of strategies that are useful for them, for the purpose of a given task. In an investigation by Nunan (1991), “more effective learners differed from less effective learners in their greater ability to reflect on and articulate their own language learning processes” (in Oxford, 2003: 10-11). Thus and so, bad language learners need instruction from skilled teachers, who help them to “develop an awareness of learning strategies and enable them to use a wider range of appropriate<sup>2</sup>strategies” (Oxford, 2003: 9).

In Oxford and Leaver’s words (1996), effective strategy instruction happens when a certain strategy is meaningful and useful for the

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<sup>2</sup> We will devote section 4.3.2 to develop teacher training on learning strategies in depth.

context of a task or a situation. Let us see six major groups of L2 learning strategies identified by Oxford (2003: 12-15):

1- Cognitive strategies, which “enable learners to understand and produce new language” (Richards & Lockhart, 1994: 64). This is manifested, for example “through reasoning, analysis, note-taking, summarizing, synthesizing, outlining, reorganizing information to develop stronger *schemas*, practising in naturalistic settings, and practising structures and sounds formally” (Oxford, 2003).

According to O’Malley and Chamot (1990: 44), cognitive strategies “operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning”. Learners may use any or all of the following cognitive strategies (Cook, 1993: 114-115):

- Repetition, when imitating others’ speech.
  
- Resourcing, i.e., having recourse to dictionaries and other  
Materials.
  
- Translation, i.e. using their mother tongue as a basis for  
understanding and / or producing the target language.
  
- Note-taking.



- Deduction, i.e., conscious application of L2 rules.
- Contextualisation, when embedding a word or phrase in a meaningful sequence.
- Transfer, that is, using knowledge acquired in the L1 to remember and understand facts and sequences in the L2.
- Inferencing, when matching an unfamiliar word against available information (a new word etc).
- Question for clarification, when asking the teacher to explain, etc.

2- Metacognitive strategies, which are useful for learners to organise, plan, and evaluate their own learning. For example, “identifying one’s own learning style preferences and needs, planning for an L2 task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy” (Oxford, 2003: 12).

According to Wenden (1998: 34), “metacognitive knowledge includes all facts learners acquire about their own cognitive processes as they

are applied and used to gain knowledge and acquire skills in varied situations”. In a sense, metacognitive strategies are skills used for planning, monitoring, and evaluating the learning activity; “they are strategies about learning rather than learning strategies themselves” (Cook, 1993: 114). Let us see some of these strategies:

- Directed attention, when deciding in advance to concentrate on general aspects of a task.
- Selective attention, paying attention to specific aspects of a task.
- Self-monitoring, i.e., checking one’s performance as one speaks.
- Self-evaluation, i.e., appraising one’s performance in relation to one’s own standards.
- Self-reinforcement, rewarding oneself for success.

3- Memory-related strategies, which help students to store and retrieve information (Richards & Lockhart, 1994); that is, they help learners

link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding (Oxford, 2003: 13).

4- Compensatory strategies, which “allow learners to communicate despite deficiencies in their language knowledge” (in Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Cohen (1998) stated that compensatory strategies that are used for speaking and writing are intended only for language use and must not be considered to be language learning strategies (in Oxford, 2003).

5- Affective strategies, which “help learners gain control over their emotions, attitudes, motivations, and values” (Richards & Lockhart, 1994) such as “identifying one’s mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, and using deep breathing or positive self-talk” (Oxford, 2003: 14).

6- Social strategies, which allow learners communicate with other people (in Richards & Lockhart, 1994) and “understand the target culture as well as the language” (Oxford, 2003: 14). For example, “asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native-speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms” (Oxford, 2003: 14-15).

#### 4.3.2. LEARNER TRAINING

For the purpose of our work, learner training in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) should not only be constrained to the acquisition of learning strategies at the pedagogical dimension, but learners should also be trained at a technological dimension.

In the light of these reflections, we will focus on both dimensions. On the one hand, we will refer to the pedagogical dimension (i.e. technical or methodological) of the learner training (i.e. learning strategies) and on the other hand, we will pay attention to the technological dimension (i.e. computer expertise applied to language learning).

Learner training at the pedagogical dimension has its origin in the great amount of works on learning strategies developed in recent decades (Cohen, 1998; McDonough, 1999; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991; Wenden & Rubin, 1987). Learners receive teacher instruction on learning strategies during the learning process in order to become more efficient learners. Thus, McDonough (1999) presented two possible alternatives to achieve an effective presentation of learning strategies, in order to help learners be aware that certain strategies may improve how they learn:

1- On the one hand, he suggested giving feedback to learners to compensate the lack of knowledge on learning strategies. The main aim of this alternative is to make learners be aware of the different alternatives that may help them accelerate their learning process. On the other hand, he suggested allowing learners to choose those learning strategies they feel more comfortable with.

2- The second alternative seems to be the best choice to develop learner autonomy, since teaching learning strategies in a mechanical way would not help to their meaningful integration in learners' learning. Furthermore, it could foster the ignorance of differences among learners (i.e. learning styles). McDonough's second option seems to be the most adequate to develop LA in a language learning context, although in order to improve its effectiveness it would be important to take into account the notion of the 'adaptive learner', since it would be highly recommended not only to train learners to become strategic learners but also adaptive learners. Adaptive learning refers to the system that learners have to follow their own learning path and monitor their own progress, making certain decisions concerning what and how to learn. This idea of adaptive learning is much related to the kind of Cybertask we present herein, as learners

have to follow their own learning path throughout the Web pages proposed.

Learner training has emerged from research on learning strategies, which were directly related to autonomy by Wenden (1991). Wenden stressed the need to introduce learning strategies in learner training, if the final aim was to promote an autonomous learner:

*“Learning strategies are mental steps or operations that learners use to learn a new language and to regulate their effort to do so. They are one type of learner training content that should be included in plans to promote learner autonomy” (Wenden, 1991: 18).*

This direct relationship between learning strategies and LA in language learning has also been reflected in by the scientific community (Cohen, 1998; Villanueva & Navarro, 1997; Manchón, 1994).

Regarding the technological dimension (computer expertise applied to language learning), we consider that any computer-assisted program

aimed at fostering learners' strategy-use awareness should provide an environment based on:

- Making a wide range of strategic tasks available.
- Providing information on the final goal of these tasks to encourage self-reflection and new strategic orientations in learners' actions.
- Providing strategic tasks with communicative goals in order to offer learners not only strategic knowledge but also linguistic knowledge.

Furthermore, it is extremely important to develop new strategies when learning takes place in virtual settings, which usually require an exhaustive knowledge of the new technological resources for learners to make the most out of them. Learners, thus, should acquire new strategies such as the following:

- 1- Planning the searching process. It seems essential for learners/users to know for instance what the Internet is, how information is organised, how to identify a Uniform Resource Locator (URL), what are a site's characteristics, or what a

browser can offer them. All these aspects can help them plan their search more effectively.

2- Selecting materials upon criteria based on relevance and pertinence. It is not only important to know how to find information, but also to know whether to accept it or reject it according to the goal pursued.

3- Globalising and contextualising within the hyperdocument. Learners should know how to find reference points in hyperdocuments looking at the icons, site maps, and guides.

4- Relating and linking the contents and the findings resulting from the hypertextual search.

5- Managing the information with personal criteria (i.e. organising it and saving it in order to be available for future retrieval).

6- Classifying information in a hierarchical way, categorising and labelling it. This skill involves the development and fostering of metalanguage and the capacity of abstraction.

7- Developing a critical perspective towards the information found in the Internet (i.e. asking about the information nature,



making comparisons to other kinds of information, creating different opinions about credibility and reliability of information taking into account the contents and the sources).

Working on the acquisition of certain strategies to acquire or improve computer expertise would be crucial in order to overcome learners' technical limitations. These strategies should focus on the following goals:

- To help learners to become familiar with computer facilities by exploring software and computer applications that could be relevant for them as language learners and as computer users.
- To provide learners with the possibility to create and implement solutions for their own technological lacks.

#### 4.3.3. FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNERS' CHOICE OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

There is general agreement that the use of learning strategies promotes learning, therefore we can conclude that they constitute an important factor to be considered in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning/teaching field.

Once strategies are identified, training and teaching to use good strategies should be carried out (Ellis & Sinclair, 1989). Thus, although learners have their own set of strategies, we deem it necessary to carry out some instruction on learning strategies. As a result of this instruction, learners are able to use a whole range of learning strategies and try to apply those ones that they consider that best adapt to their needs.

But, we should bear in mind that learners will choose those strategies that fit better depending on the context, task proposed, the learner's age, and the like. Thus, Rubin (1975) pointed out that the choice of learning strategies that students make depends on several factors such as: age, context, individual styles, cultural differences, etc. Bialystok (1979) speculated that such factors might relate to:

*“characteristics of the learner, such as language learning aptitude, attitude, and motivation, personality variables; or relate instead to characteristics of the learning situation, such as length of exposure to the language, the teaching method employed”* (Bialystok, 1979: 272).

As we have discussed in section 4.3.1. Oxford's (2003) classification of language learning strategies is very comprehensive. However, learners do not always use all learning strategies; they only use some of them. Many researchers have studied several factors that affect learners' language learning strategies choices:

##### *1) Sex*

There has been very little research on the relationship between sex and learning strategies. But in spite of this, some researchers have argued that there is in fact a relationship between them. Some experts such as Politzer (1983), who carried out a study that involved 90 university learners in the United States, discovered that male students did not use learning strategies as much as female students did. In this same line, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) and Ehrman and Oxford (1989) agreed with Politzer's results after carrying out a similar study with university students. From this study, they found out that female students used learning strategies more often than male students.

##### *2) Motivation and Attitudes*

Gardner and Lambert (1972) carried out a piece of research on the relationship between motivation and second language acquisition. As

a result of their research, they found that learners' motivation had a good effect on second language learning.

In the 80s, researchers began to study the relationship between motivation and language learning strategies' choice. For example, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) talk about the relationship between them as follows:

*“The degree of expressed motivation to learn the language was the most powerful influence on strategy choice...The more motivated students used learning strategies of all these kinds more often than did the less motivated students” (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989: 294).*

Nevertheless, in spite of all this research carried out, it is not clear if motivation affects language learning strategies' choice significantly. As a result, in order to clarify this issue, further research is required. In fact, what we know is that more motivated students are eager to use more strategies than less motivated students.

As a matter of fact, positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in second language learning. It is not clear if motivation

produces successful learning or if successful learning itself that fosters motivation.

Motivation also refers to learners' attitudes towards the second language community. If learners have positive attitudes towards the speakers of the language, this fact will promote their contact with the speakers of that language, thereby producing more frequent language practise.

### *3) Intelligence*

Intelligence levels are a good factor to know how successful a learner will be at language learning.

Some findings suggest that intelligence is more related to those second language skills which are used in the formal study of a language (reading, language analysis, writing, and vocabulary study), but is much less likely to influence the way in which oral communication skills are developed. Intelligence seems to be a strong factor when it has to do with learning second languages in classrooms if the instruction is formal.

#### 4) *Aptitude*

This factor makes reference to the fact that some individuals have more exceptional aptitude for language learning than others. Therefore, aptitude refers to potential for achievement.

Aptitude for language learning is usually composed of four different types of abilities:

- a) The ability to identify and memorize new sounds.
- b) The ability to understand the function of particular words in sentences.
- c) The ability to figure out grammatical rules from language samples.
- d) The ability to memorize new words.

In this sense, it is important to highlight that successful language learners are not necessarily strong in all of the components of aptitude. But, in spite of this, teachers can select appropriate teaching approaches and activities based on learners' aptitude profiles to accommodate their differences in aptitude.

### 5) *Personality*

We may find that the following personality characteristics might affect second language learning:

a) We tend to think that a learner with an extroverted profile is better suited to language learning. However, research does not always support this conclusion. On the one hand, some studies have found that success in language learning is highly related to learners' scores; but on the other hand, others have found that successful language learners do not get high scores in relation to an extroverted profile.

b) Inhibition discourages risk-taking, which is necessary for progress in language learning. As a consequence, inhibition is a negative factor in language learning.

c) Anxiety in foreign language is a complex phenomenon that occurs at each stage of the language learning process (input, processing and output).

### 6) *Learning styles*

Learners face a task using different learning strategies:

- a) Visual learners: They usually cannot learn something until they have seen it.
  
- b) Aural learners: They only need to hear something once or twice before they know it.
  
- c) Some learners feel compelled to memorise and will practise and practise until they have committed new information to memory.
  
- d) For others, there is a need to add physical action to the learning process. It is not enough to see, hear, or practise for these learners; but they also need to “live” or experience the new knowledge in ways that involve them more completely.

#### *7) Age of acquisition*

The learner's age is one of the numerous factors that determine the way in which an individual learns a second language. In addition, the opportunities for learning, the motivation to learn, and individual differences in aptitude for language learning are also important factors. Thus, adult learners may be able to communicate successfully in the language they are learning, although there will always be differences in terms of grammatical features, word choice, or even accent.



This is the reason why we feel that it is wise to begin second language instruction as early as possible. Particularly when the objective of second language learning is native-like mastery of the target language, it is usually desirable for the learner to be completely surrounded by the language as early as possible.

8) *Cultural background*

Bearing in mind the small amount of research carried out regarding the relationship between cultural background and language learning choice, Politzer & McGroarty (1985) reported as a conclusion of their study the following:

*“...cultural background [...] has a great deal to do with the type of language learning behavior likely to be used by students”* (Poltizer & McGroarty, 1985: 119)

O'Malley et al. (1985) pointed out that there are differences between Hispanic and Asian students in their strategy training in their study. Some research findings (Poltizer & McGroarty, 1985) indicate that Asians prefer strategies involving rote memorization and a focus on the linguistic code. Asians also showed more reluctance than

Hispanics to try new learning techniques and did not respond well to strategy training (O'Malley et al., 1985). Reid (1987) found some differences among English as a Second Language (ESL) students of different cultural backgrounds in their tendency to use or avoid certain strategies or approaches to learning.

#### *9) Teaching methods*

The teaching method can affect learners' choices of language learning strategies. For example, the grammar-translation method helps learners to use 'memory or practise strategies' (Oxford, 1990: 18-21), and communicative instructional methods help them to use 'social strategies' (Oxford, 1990: 18-21). Politzer (1983) points out as a conclusion that the students' language learning strategies choices changed according to the teaching method. Ehrman and Oxford (1989) also found that adult students, who were learning a foreign language for professional reasons, used communication-oriented strategies when their teachers used communicative teaching methods.

#### *10) Attitudes and beliefs*

These factors have a profound effect on the strategies learners choose, with negative attitudes and beliefs often causing poor or lack of strategy use. Basically all learners, and especially older ones, have

strong beliefs about how their language instruction should be carried out. Learner beliefs are usually based on previous learning experiences and the assumption that a particular type of instruction is better than others. As a result, some research findings indicate that learner beliefs can be quite significant factors in learners' L2 learning process.

#### *11) Tasks*

Depending on the task learners are faced with, they will choose a given learning strategy that best adapts for the purpose of that task. Bialystok (1981) carried out some research on the relationship between types of task and learners' language learning strategies choices. From that research, she found out that learners used different strategies according to the task requirement; for example, a "monitoring strategy was the most beneficial for tasks requiring attention to form" (Bialystok, 1981: 34).

To sum up, as many researchers' results have shown, these affective factors are very important for learners' language learning strategies choices. Therefore, when other researchers study the different learning strategies, they should bear these affective factors in mind.

#### 4.3.4. IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND THE APPROPRIATE GUIDING OF TEACHERS' ROLES.

Language learning strategies are good indicators of how learners approach tasks or problems during the language learning process. Language learning strategies give language teachers valuable clues about how their students assess the situation, plan, select appropriate skills so as to understand, learn, or remember new input presented in the language classroom. Fedderholdt (1997: 1) stated that *“the language learner capable of using a wide variety of language learning strategies appropriately can improve his language skills in a better way”*.

Taking into account Oxford's (2003) learning strategies, discussed in section 4.3.1; we can conclude that they can help the language learner build up learner independence and autonomy whereby he/she can take control of his/her learning. And according to Lessard-Clouston (1997):

*“Language learning strategies contribute to the development of the communicative competence of the students and those are used to refer to all strategies foreign language learners use in learning the*

*target language and communication strategies”* (Lessard-Clouston, 1997: 3).

Thus, language teachers aiming at developing the communicative competence of the students and language learning should be familiar with language learning strategies. In this sense, Lessard-Clouston (1997) pointed out that a teacher who trains his/her students in learning strategies should know about his/her students’ styles, motivations, interest, etc. Furthermore, language teacher should provide a wide range of learning strategies in order to meet the needs and expectations of his/her students. Hall (1997: 4) also stated that *“the most important teacher role in foreign teaching is the provision of a range of tasks to match varied learning styles”*. Lessard-Clouston (1997) claimed that:

*“The language teacher should be aware of whether his strategy training is implicit, explicit, or both. It should be emphasized that questioning himself about what he plans to do before each lesson and evaluating his lesson plan in terms of strategy training, then the teacher can become better prepared to focus on language*

*learning strategies and strategy training during the process of his teaching” (Lessard-Clouston, 1997:3-8).*

To sum up, what every teacher should know, is to make teachers and students aware of language learning strategies and the various ways they can be used to facilitate language learning.

All language learners use language-learning strategies in the learning process. Since the factors like age, gender, personality, motivation, anxiety, etc. affect the way in which language learners learn the target language, it is not reasonable to support the idea that all language learners use the same good language learning strategies and attempt to seek for the same answers to a wide range of questions.

Among all the learning strategies mentioned in section 4.3.1., we highlight those that are of special relevance for the purpose of our present study; hence, we pay more attention to *metacognitive strategies* due to their relationship with *learning to learn* and their capacity to improve self-evaluation. These aspects are going to be highlighted and taken into account for the purpose of the Cybertask proposed to the students and the results obtained.

To conclude this chapter, let us recall that we should bear in mind the development of learning strategies (from the point of view of both teachers and learners) towards language learning autonomy, because these entail *action-research-action* (Villanueva, 2006: 17) and the development of a certain set of new competences. The aim is to establish a communicative path between knowledge and learners with the integration of autonomy. Likewise, Villanueva points out that:

*"Apprendre une langue c'est entreprendre un voyage. Un voyage pour lequel il faudra faire quelques plans selon le temps dont on disposera, les intérêts personnels et les objectifs à atteindre. Il faudra de même penser aux bagages à emporter, et donc prévoir les nécessités [...]"* (2006: 17)

For this reason, a good language learner must be able to learn to make his/her own decisions, as well as to adapt his/her time and learning strategies to the context required according to certain objectives in order to become more autonomous. The learning process is expected to be a long-term one, and as a consequence, learners are expected to adopt their own reflections (Gremmo & Riley, 1997; in Villanueva, 2006: 18) on their own learning to finally be successful in being

autonomous language learners. To support these words, Villanueva (2006) states that:

*“[...] un “bon” apprenant de langues est celui qui est capable d’adapter de manière souple ses stratégies d’apprentissage selon les contextes et selon les objectifs à atteindre. Pour devenir un apprenant de plus en plus autonome, afin de poursuivre son apprentissage tout le long de la vie («apprentissage à long terme»), il est important de développer la capacité de réflexion sur soi-même et sur le propre apprentissage”. (Villanueva, 2006: 19)*



**5. NEW LITERACY AND  
CYBERGENRES: TOWARDS  
READING COMPREHENSION ON  
THE INTERNET**

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**5. NEW LITERACY AND CYBERGENRES: TOWARDS  
READING COMPREHENSION ON THE INTERNET**

5.1. INTRODUCTION

5.2. THE CONCEPT OF GENRE

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CONTEXTS

## 5.1. INTRODUCTION

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The present chapter presents an overview of the notion of genre and how this concept has evolved towards new types of genres in digital media, i.e. cyberggenres. In this context, we will show how these Cyberggenres in the new media age can help to develop different reading modes in a digital format, in other words, how people read on the Internet.

## 5.2. THE CONCEPT OF GENRE

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The notion of genre is not new. Rhetoricians since Aristotle have tried to classify communication events into categories or ‘genres’ that are characterised by form, topic and purpose. Numerous definitions of genre have been suggested. Genres are useful for making communication acts more easily recognizable and understandable by recipients. However, efforts to describe genre face many challenges. As new media have been incorporated into both our print and electronic collections, the need for a way to describe form has acquired new urgency.

Orlikowski and Yates (1994a: 543) define *genre* as “*a distinctive type of communicative action, characterized by a socially recognized*

*communicative purpose and common aspects of form*". A more elaborate definition of genre is the one by Swales (1990):

*"A genre comprises a class of communicative event, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community. The genre names inherited and produced by discourse communities and imported by others constitute valuable ethnographic communication, but typically need further validation"* (Swales, 1990: 58).

At this point, it seems that the concept of genre is not clearly defined. So, there are a number of fields where the concept of genre has been defined: folklore studies, literary studies, linguistics, and rhetoric; although for the purpose of the present study we are not going to develop a definition of genre in relation to these fields.

Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) define genre in their book *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication*, in relation to the following features:

- Situatedness. Genres not only respond to and reflect contextual or situational factors, but also, our knowledge of genres derives from our actual participation in them.
- Community ownership. Genres respond to and reflect the conventions, epistemology and ideology of certain discourse communities.
- Duality of structure. Genres articulate social praxis and the structures derived from it, and help perpetuate these in an orderly fashion.
- Form and content. Engaging in a given genre involves knowing (a) the content or topic(s) most suitable to the genre,

and (b) the lexical and structural resources that best meet the purpose(s) of the genre and the needs of those participating in it.

- Dynamism. The social nature of genres necessarily reflect all changes faced by society. Thus, genres are often adjusted according to contextual factors. This is because both the discourse communities and rhetorical purposes articulated by genres are dynamic ‘entities’ themselves –i.e., are in constant evolution and adaptation in agreement with social changes (Lemke, 1999).

According to Berkentotter and Huckin (1995), “*digital genres are constantly changing and evolving to new genres in a very short period of time*”. In Kwasnik and Crowston’s words (2005):

*“many technologies are converging – voice, image, text, databases, computing – creating opportunities for combining and recombining genres of many different kinds in inventive ways and for unexpected purposes”* (Kwasnik & Crowston, 2005: 7).

- Another aspect when dealing with digital genres is that of ‘multimodality’, proposed by Luzón (2007: 6):

*“A lot of digital documents represent information in several forms (e.g., videos, images, in print) and all these modes and the interplay between them must be considered when analysing a genre”.*

We deem it necessary to focus on the fact that in present genre research, texts are not homogeneous entities but, rather, are the heterogeneous result/product of the diversity of voices, linguistic and iconographic signs, and generic conventions conflating in a textual locus.

One of the factors underlying texts’ dynamism and heterogeneity is ‘intertextuality’, that is, the relationship(s) between a text and other texts (Culler, 1976; Barthes, 1977; Kristeva, 1977, 1980; Riffaterre, 1980; Genette, 1982).

Thus, intertextuality is understood as *“the knowledge structures which are activated by the participants of any communicative interaction, and are reflected –explicitly or implicitly– in the resulting text(s)”* (Caballero, 2008: 19).

Probably, John Swales provides a proper definition of genre bearing in mind the following characteristics (Swales, 1990: 45-57):



1. A genre is a class of communicative events. Language plays a significant role in a communicative event and sometimes it is difficult to know if verbal communication is part of an activity or not.

*“A communicative event comprises not only the discourse itself and its participants, but also the role of that discourse and the environment of its production and reception, including its historical and cultural associations”.*

Levinson (1979) illustrates the possibilities for speech contexts:

*“On the one hand we have activities constituted entirely by talk (a telephone conversation, a lecture for example), on the other, activities where talk is non-occurring or if it does occur is incidental (a game of football for instance). Somewhere in between we have the placing of bets, or a Bingo session, or a visit to the grocer’s. And there are sometimes rather special relations between what is said and what is done, as in a sports commentary, a slide show, a cookery demonstration, a conjurer’s show, and the like”*  
(Levinson, 1979: 368).

2. The principal criterial feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes. According to Miller (1984) and Martin (1985): “*genres are communicative vehicles for the achievement of goals*”.

3. Exemplars or instances of genres vary in their prototypicality. The *family resemblance* approach is somehow linked to the prototype approach. This prototype approach is associated with the work of Eleanor Rosch (Rosch, 1975; 1978; Mervis & Rosch, 1981; Armstrong, Gleitman & Gleitman, 1983; for a useful introduction see <sup>3</sup>Clark & Clark (1977: 464-8); for a full discussion of the issues see <sup>4</sup>Smith and Medin, 1981). Rosch and her co-workers studied that, for example: robins, eagles, swallows, ostriches and penguins are all types of birds. But they came to the conclusion that not all of them can be considered to be at the same level in terms of definition. This idea relies in the fact that some birds were better examples of ‘bird’ than others. Thus, according to Rosch (1975) a category has its own internal structure in terms of typicality.

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<sup>3</sup> CLARK & CLARK. 1977. *Psychology and Language* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York).

<sup>4</sup> SMITH & MEDIN. 1981. *Categories and Concepts*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.

4. The rationale behind a genre establishes constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their content, positioning and form. Members of a given discourse community employ a specific set of genres depending on the aims they want to accomplish. Thus, in Swales' (1990) words:

*“Established members of discourse communities employ genres to realise communicatively the goals of their communities. The shared set of purposes of a genre is thus recognized [...] by the established members of the parent discourse community”* (Swales, 1990: 52-53).

5. A discourse community's nomenclature for genres is an important source of insight. We should draw especial attention to genre nomenclatures applied by those members who feel more familiar with those genres. As a result, members belonging to a specific community will probably adopt a certain level of genre expertise.

### 5.3. GENRE DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS CYBERGENRES

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The appearance of ICTs caused a great impact in our daily lives. Thus, according to Caballero (2008):

*“The impact of the ICTs on human communication is best appreciated in the changes effected in some of our most popular activities: face-to-face conversation has given way to virtual electronic chats, forums and social networks, we no longer have to buy the daily newspaper or magazine to be updated to what happens in the world through the numerous online news sites and newspapers, and we seldom write letters but send e-mails instead”*  
(Caballero, 2008: 21).

Orlikowski and Yates (1994a: 545) argue that: *“People produce, reproduce and change genres through a process of structuring”*. Thus, genres may be modified and therefore, they might be accepted over a period of time (Askehave & Nielsen, 2005; Crowston & Williams, 1997). If those changes occur repeatedly, they may become accepted by a community and thus, they can be used together with already existing genres.

Along these lines, since genres depend on the community's acceptance, it is difficult to figure out to what extent a new genre emerges from an old genre. But after a long time remaining together, this new genre may be recognised as an isolated genre.

As we have explained in section 5.2., genres are characterised by being both flexible and dynamic. Thus, some genres may adapt more easily to the new medium than others. For example, some genres with traditional features (e.g. a book or journal) may need a longer period of adaptation; in contrast to other genres that own aspects unique to the Web (e.g. social networks).

In other words, cyberggenres seem to behave as traditional print genres. Following this idea, Tzvetan Todorov (1990: 15) asked: "*Where do genres come from? Quite simply from other genres. A new genre is always the transformation of an earlier one, or of several: by inversion, by displacement, by combination*".

To conclude this section, Shepherd and Watters (1998) point out that genres evolve over time in response to changes and social pressures. In some cases, these changes occur so repeatedly that they lead to the appearance of a new genre. In our case, we refer to the appearance of 'Cyberggenres'.

## 5.4. CYBERGENRE

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The growth of the World Wide Web (WWW) has provoked (a) the reproduction of already existing genres, (b) the evolution of already existing genres, and (c) the spontaneous appearance of new genres.

This evolution of Web genres makes difficult to know when one genre has crossed into another, or when a Web site represents the appearance of a new genre (Shepherd & Watters, 2004).

### 5.4.1. DEFINITION

A genre is a “*classifying statement, and is characterized by content and form where content refers to themes and topics and form refers to [...] observable physical and linguistic features...*” (Yates & Orlikowski, 1992: 299-326). As follows, the concept *Cybergenre* is understood as a new type of genre, and it has resulted from the combination of the computer and the Internet.

As we have previously stated, traditional genres (i.e. print documents) have moved to the Web. As a result, new genres have emerged (Crowston & Williams, 2000; Dillon & Gushrowski, 2000); in contrast to older genres, that have been mixed or changed, and incorporated into different social landmarks.

Still, genre seems to be a very useful concept, and as a consequence, some researchers need to pay special attention to the transition of genres, as well as on the issues of this transformation (Kwasnik & Crowston, 2005).

#### 5.4.2. FROM PRINTED TO ELECTRONIC TEXTS

The transformation of genres has to do with the conversion from printed texts, such as the book, to electronic texts (e.g. social networks). Thus and thus, it is worth mentioning that in the case of printed texts, the content of a book is not submitted to changes; whereas electronic texts can be edited over time. But if we think carefully about the advantages and disadvantages that both types of texts offer, we could conclude that although printed texts do not change over time; electronic texts provide some linking facilities that a book cannot offer. By linking facilities we mean having immediate access to information from the Web and from any part of the world. Along this line, Finnemann (1999) pointed out:

*“As a result, printed texts today lose their function as the basic storage medium in society, while in many cases they may still be used as a preferred reading medium”* (Finnemann, 1999: 17).

However, in spite of this difference in functions, printed and electronic texts are not considered to be opposed media. Thus, we can state that books are still being produced:

*“In fact, printed texts nowadays appear not only in books and on paper on the desks in offices, but everywhere: in factories, in transport systems, on the houses, on the streets. Likewise, texts are also found on a still growing number of goods – even on the food in our refrigerators and on our clothes [...] There is neither a decrease in the social and cultural importance and significance of printed texts nor in the amount of printed texts produced”*  
(Finnemann, 1999: 17)

As a result, the functions of printed texts may change over time, but in Finnemann’s (1999) words:

*“It seems evident that the relation between printed and electronically stored texts is not a relation between mutually exclusive, but between mutually reinforcing media [...] This is quite normal in the history of media: a new medium only seldom replaces older media but the functions of the older media are often*



*changed, they may be used to more specialised and eventually new functions. New genres also develop in old media as in handwriting after the invention of print and in painting after the arrival of photography” (Finnemann, 1999: 18).*

This same phenomenon occurs with these new genres or cyberggenres which can evolve into other types. Therefore, at this point, in the context of our research it is crucial to present the notion of Cybertask as a specific type of Cyberggenre.

#### 5.4.3. MULTIMEDIA GENRES AND HYPERTEXT

The World Wide Web (WWW) offers a wide range of information, thus, as Macluhan (1962: 26) pointed out “*the medium is the message*”. Therefore, the WWW should not only be seen as an important contextual feature of Web genres; but also as an integrated part of Web genres.

Following Askehave and Nielsen (2005a), the WWW has the following properties:

- 1- Intertextuality. Several electronic texts are interrelated through links, allowing the reader to move through different texts that have a relation among them (Mitra & Cohen, 1999).

2- Global reach. The authors of virtual texts use the Web to reach a global audience.

3- Immateriality. Web texts are usually dynamic, therefore, they can be replaced or changed.

4- Multi-mediality. The WWW comprises several media into one common format; allowing the user not only to read as in a printed format, but also to listen, interact, watch TV, and the like (Landow, 1997; Bolter, 2001).

5- Hypertext and hyper-reading. Hypertext offers students a new interactive way of learning languages; although in order to do so, they have to manage in the virtual context, reading and writing non-linear texts (Barnes, 1994). Thus, hypertext provides the reader with the information organised in an interrelated 'network', a term used to emphasise the non-linearity of hypertexts (Fritz, 1998). As follows, "*hypertext is a mode of interacting with texts*" (Heim, 1993: 29).

In order to read information on the Web, students must receive instruction on how to navigate through texts in a non-linear way, instead of following a single path. Along this line, Heim (1993) argued:

*“Instead of a linear, page-by-page, line-by-line, book-by-book approach, the user connects information in an intuitive, associative manner. Hypertext fosters a literacy that is prompted by jumps of intuition and association”* (Heim, 1993: 30).

Hypertext does not have definite beginnings and endings, so it allows the reader to move through the Web using navigational tools. In addition, a hypertext reader plays an active role constructing meaning through the reading process. Thus, the user not only interacts with the text, but also creates his/her own text (Shen, 1995). This way of reading is of paramount importance, since *“no piece of hypertext ever sings solo; it always collaborates in a choir with all of the other nodes of the network in which it is implicated”* (Fowler, 1994: 18). In relation to this new way of reading through virtual texts, emerges the notion of *hyper-reading*, which can be considered as a new reading technique taking into account the Internet. Along this line, Finnemann (1999) suggests the following:

*“In an ordinary text you are supposed to move from chapter 1 to chapter 2, while in a hypertext you are supposed to choose your own serial order at various stages on the journey. But even so, you*

*still have to choose, you have to determine the order in which you will read the text and this order will always have to be sequential. The optional freedom in hypertext systems is not a freedom from sequentialized linearity, since the user cannot make more than one choice at a time” (Finnemann, 1999: 25).*

At this point, we need to understand how several literacies and several cultural traditions combine in order texts are meaningful. This is relevant for this study, since the Cybertask I propose looks for teaching new literacies bearing in mind hypertextuality, empowerment of learning to write, metacognition, and test of degree of autonomy (i.e. evaluating the knowledge acquired by doing this Cybertask. Cybertasks promote new literacy skills and make the most out of such an activity for the development of language learning autonomy in ICT contexts.

### 5.5. THE TERM 'LITERACY'

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The term 'literacy' may encounter some problems, since it can be applied to several disciplines (i.e. music or images) and as a result, different terminologies should be employed.

Richard Kern (2000: 16-17), considers seven principles to what is to be literate: (1) Interpretation, (2) Collaboration, (3) Conventions, (4) Cultural knowledge, (5) Problem-solving, (6) Reflection and Self-reflection, and (7) Language use. But these seven principles can be summarised by literacy involves communication: When students practise literacy in a non-native language, they learn about vocabulary, grammar and discourse. Furthermore, they learn how to structure their thoughts.

In spite of this definition of literacy, Kress (2003) argues that the concept of 'Literacy' can be understood from two different dimensions: linguistic and cognitive.

1- Linguistic dimension of literacy. From a linguistic perspective, the term 'Literacy' has to do with how people use the language, and more specifically, how they use the written language. Despite the written language, literacy also requires not only people's involvement in

establishing relationships between long texts, but also in understanding relationships between oral and written language.

2- Cognitive dimension of literacy. Reading demands active participation at a cognitive level. That is to say, reading is a *thinking* process through which readers must relate the written symbols they perceive to their knowledge of language, of texts, of content areas, and of the world, in order to bring meaning to a text.

## 5.6. LITERACY AND THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES

In recent decades, the appearance of computers with linked information (Internet) has provoked changes in literacy. As a result, the screen has become the main source of communication. Thus, the union of reading and technology on the Web and the Internet has created a new form of literacy (Schmar-Dobler, 2003).

New literacy demands that students learn how to use the technological resources, as well as being able to surf the Web, use e-mail, evaluate information, and the like (Labbo et al., 2003).

In *Literacy in the New Media Age*, Kress (2003) looks at a kind of literacy that includes the reading of all kinds of semiotic, meaning loaded forms. As he states:

*“Two distinct yet related factors deserve to be particularly highlighted. These are, on the one hand, the broad move from the now centuries-long dominance of writing to the new dominance of the image and, on the other hand, the move from the dominance of the medium of the book to the dominance of the medium of the screen. These two together are producing a revolution in the uses and effects of literacy and of associated means for representing and communicating at every level and in every domain. Together they raise two questions: what is the likely future of literacy, and what are the likely larger-level social and cultural effects of that change?”* (Kress, 2003: 1).

Along this line, it is important to build a relation between ‘New Literacies’ and ‘Spontaneous New Literacies’, and this last one together with ‘New Technology Skills’.

The term ‘New Literacy’ is understood as a new way of reading on the Web. Traditionally, we used to read on paper format (books, articles,

review...), but with the arrival of the Internet in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a new way of reading appeared (digital texts).

In contrast to this idea, I suggest the notion of ‘Spontaneous New Literacy’ which implies surfing the net in order to gather information but with the specific feature of not having received any previous learning.

The last term I consider worth mentioning here is the idea of ‘New Technology Skills’, which I define as the knowledge and ability to use and combine Internet resources in order to solve problems, activities, tasks and the like, or simply to satisfy needs.

Along this line, the role of new literacy in this study is related to our subjects’ navigation. During the navigation process, students face Web pages provided with texts and images. The aim under investigation here is observing how they select some specific resources to gather relevant information to carry out the task proposed, whether these are provided with long texts or accompanied by images.

It is of paramount importance to make a clear distinction between features belonging to *Traditional Texts* in contrast to the *World Wide Web (WWW) / Internet*:



5- New Literacy and Cyberggenres: towards Reading Comprehension on the Internet

<i>TRADITIONAL TEXTS</i>	<i>WWW / INTERNET</i>
Print remains static as it does not change each time a book is opened.	Print information that is continually changing, as it is frequently revised, removed, or rearranged (Schmar-Dobler, 2003).
Print format is also linear, as it follows the intended path of the author (Coiro, 2003), and usually sequential – as it may follow a particular order or ranking.	Hypertextual networks that explore new forms of story grammar and various new formats.
Non-interactive with non-adaptable features.	These new formats feature non-linear hypertexts that allow readers to navigate their own course – by selecting links in a variety of orders – that may be different than the intended path of the author or other readers (Coiro, 2003).
Contains graphics that consist of static images (Sutherland-smith, 2002).	New formats are also typically non-sequential, as readers can jump from one place to another (Sutherland-smith, 2002).
	Digital texts are interactive.
	Graphics on the Web or Internet appear more lifelike than in conventional texts (Sutherland-smith, 2002) (multiple-media images that integrate a variety of symbols and multimedia formats, such as icons, photographs, animated symbols, cartoons, advertisements, audio and visual video clips, and virtual reality environments (Coiro, 2003).

(Table 1: Distinction between Traditional Texts and the World Wide Web)

Finally, it is important to bear in mind that though books and writing are being replaced by others forms, they will always be taken into account because they offer something unique that cannot be replaced by the screen, music, images, soundtracks, and the like.

### 5.7. READING MODES

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In this chapter, electronic texts acquire relevance, since teachers and learners are going to face some activities where they will have to put into practise their reading skills on the Web, as well as their ability to understand what they read.

Electronic texts imply the use of the Internet, and at the same time, the latter offers the user with new ways to search information. But searching information on the Web can be sometimes confusing when people are used to extract information from traditional printed texts (Coiro, 2003).

When observing students interacting with text resulting from an Internet search, they “*perceive Web text reading as different from print text reading*” (Sutherland-Smith, 2002: 664). This can consequently result in frustration due to the unsuccessful search of information.

In our society, electronic texts adopt new characteristics. Thus, Web-based texts are: (a) non-linear, (b) interactive, and (c) inclusive of multiple media forms.

(a) Non-linear hypertext. Readers navigate creating their own paths through the information in a non-linear way that may be different from the path of other readers or the intended path of the author.

(b) Interactive texts. Readers are invited to co-author online texts as they navigate various paths and construct a personal adaptation of the information. Goldstone (2001) points out that some authors have begun to adopt a facilitator role, inviting readers to construct their own story actively by “*co building the framework, supplying missing features of the story structure, and pulling together discrete narrative strands*” (Goldstone, 2001: 366). Thus, texts on the Internet become interactive environments as opposed to static words on a page.

(c) Multiple-media texts. Electronic texts can integrate a range of symbols and multiple-media formats including icons, animated symbols, photographs, cartoons, advertisements, audio and video clips, virtual reality environments, and new forms of

information with non-traditional combinations of font size and colour (Brunner & Tally, 1999; Reinking & ChanLin, 1994). Images and sounds are combined with written texts to create new ways of conveying meaning, explaining procedures, and communicating interactively (Downes & Fatouros, 1995).

Little research has been found on the use of Internet as a teaching tool for language learning. But perhaps, it may be a way of engaging students with real-life materials, and thus, it might help *“improve self-esteem and attitudes toward learning, especially when used in the context of collaborative learning activities”* (Solomon, 2002: 19).

Internet use involves students to interpret information when they read. And thus, reading becomes a selective process (Coiro, 2005; Schmar-Dobler, 2003). In this sense, online reading strategies comprise three dimensions:

1. Comparing paper reading with hypermedia and multimedia reading strategies. Readers employ the same reading strategies when they access information in paper, hypermedia and multimedia (Foltz, 1993). Although hypertext users need to rely on coherence, on order to make online texts coherent.

2. Labelling reading strategies used by ES/EFL learners in an online reading environment. Online readers usually transfer reading strategies from one medium to another (i.e. from printed texts to the Web) (Elshair, 2002). This move implies that both reading strategies are present when reading online texts.

3. Effectiveness of strategy use in a Web-based learning environment. We have proof that computer-assisted teaching has some advantages. For example, after reading online texts, students' reading comprehension improves and their use of reading strategies increases (Singhal, 1999). Furthermore, under Chang's (2005) point of view, self-regulated strategies make students take responsibility for their learning.

With the emergence and advance of multimedia technologies, some researchers have begun to investigate how hypertext could be used to enhance reading experiences and comprehension. Thus, according to Horney and Anderson-Inman, 1993, we may find three types of hypertext readers:

1. A 'Book Lover' is a person who typically reads everything in a linear form, and uses available resources thoughtfully.

2. A 'Studier' is an individual who navigates through 44 pages in a linear form, and uses backward navigation for reviewing and checking.

3. 'Resource Junkies' are students who feel excited by the resources provided. They spend most of their time looking for and using resources. Their navigation patterns and strategies are the most varied and complex.

Hill and Hannifin (1997) noted individual differences in searching strategies, whereas Korthauer and Koubek (1994) observed differences in the time users spent moving through selected pages. Anderson-Inman and Hoerney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless and Kulikowich (1996) suggest three general profiles that can be identified from users of hypertext:

1- 'Knowledge Seekers' look for knowledge related to the content of the hypertext.

2- 'Feature Explorers' spend more time trying to understand how the hypertext works rather than trying to gather information from the written text.

3- 'Apathetic Hypertext Users' are characterised by displaying no logical browsing strategy (how users move through the

hypertext), and appear to be lost in the complexity of the document.

Along these lines, different navigational tools between individuals have been identified as having holistic or serialist cognitive styles as defined by Pask (1972): Holists made greater use of navigational maps; and Serialists made greater use of a keyword index, which was consistent with their need to find specific information. Serialists spent a greater proportion of their time browsing high in the hypertext hierarchy, which was explained in terms of Holists being dependent on a need to grasp a sense of the structure of the hypertext.

Furthermore, individuals represent information in images or verbally: Imagers find concrete and readily visualised information easier with which to work, than acoustically or semantically complex information. Imagers also attempt to see their environment as a whole; whereas Verbalisers have a tendency to explore situations in parts.

5.8. READING ON THE INTERNET: A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMPUTER, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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It is interesting to see how a new conception of reading appears with the existence of the new technologies. For the purposes of this work, not only we are going to pay attention to how people read print texts, but we are also going to bear in mind how their reading skills can be applied in a similarly way when they have to face digital texts.

Literacy and technology are two interrelated dimensions that play a fundamental role when students read on the Internet. In order to have certain mastery on the new technologies use, readers must navigate through online texts and “*apply their knowledge of the reading process*” (Schmar-Dobler, 2003: 3).

In these terms, the union of reading and technology is leading to seek new meanings of being literate in today’s society (Leu, 2002: 310-336). Nevertheless, being able to successfully use the Internet places special demands on the reader (Kamil & Lane, 1998: 323-341; see also Schmar-Dobler, 2003):

- 1- The Internet reader must be able to handle a great amount of texts.



2- Readers must be able to evaluate a Webpage and decide on the most useful content, in spite of finding some distractions, such as blinking graphics, vivid colours, and eye-catching phrases.

As we have previously explained, printed and electronic texts are not conceived as two opposed disciplines, rather they are complementary. For this reason, let us provide some differences between texts in paper and electronic media (Kern, 2000: 224-225):

1- Paper texts are static. They are organized in a continuous linear sequence of units such as paragraphs, sections, and chapters, usually presented in discrete, rectangular blocks of writing, surrounded by white margins, on pages. We cannot change the physical order of pages, but we can go from one location to another.

2- Electronic texts are dynamic. Writers can easily move chunks of text from one location to another. They are also virtual and they can only be viewed one 'window' at a time. Because electronic texts are often interconnected with other texts in broad networks, it is sometimes unclear where the exact boundaries of a given text lie. The interlinking of texts and text

fragments also makes possible new forms of narrative, in which multiple alternative episodes and conclusions exist in parallel.

At this point, we will explore some features that are associated with digital technologies: Word processing, Hypertext and Reading on the World Wide Web (Kern, 2000: 225-230).

Word processing allows writers to move and edit text easily. Some scholars (Tuman, 1992) argue that word processing has not changed our conception of literacy, although it may be true that we do not conceive reading a paper text as having the same implications as reading on a screen. Therefore, word processing may have both positive and negative implications, as we can observe in the following table:

POSITIVE IMPLICATIONS
Besides moving text easily, writers can shift instantaneously from an outline view to a full display of a word processing document. Research studies have been inconclusive in determining whether the use of word processing software improves students' overall writing quality, although certain aspects of writing seem to be positively influenced, such as students' attitude toward writing, the length of their essays, and the reduction of surface errors (Hawisher, 1989).
NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS
Certain aspects of the writing process may be negatively affected. There are a number of studies showing that people read more slowly and less accurately on a computer screen, and that they have more difficulty getting an overview of the text and finding specific information. This reading difficulty has important implications for writing. Haas (1989) found that writers frequently printed out their writing because, as they put it, " <i>seeing it on the screen really isn't seeing it</i> " (1989: 17). Although moving large chunks of text to reorganize a piece of writing may be technically simple, many writers 'get lost' in the process when they are working exclusively online because of difficulty to represent the overall structure and meaning of the text when viewing it on a screen (1989: 23).

(Table 2: Positive and Negative Implications of Word Processing)

In sum, there are significant limitations to using computers for writing. And as Bolter (1991: 238) has argued, digital technology supports "*every form of reading and writing from the most passive to the most active*".

Hypertext is 'non-sequential writing' (Nelson, 1981), where chunks of text are linked electronically to other chunks of text.

The nature of hypertext requires new strategies in writing and reading, since there are not limited boundaries. So, it is up to the user which reading path to follow.

Hypertext has been used in foreign language contexts to support print literacy (through reading tutorials), and to extend literacy into the digital realm (through reading and authoring on the World Wide Web).

Reading on the World Wide Web. For language teaching, the World Wide Web has been used as a great resource of information. As Web documents can be manipulated like any ordinary computer file, students can cut and paste text, graphics, sound, and video into their own personal documents.

## 5.9. DIGITAL GENRES AS A TOOL FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

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In today's society, we are undergoing a great technological revolution from printed to electronic texts (Kellner, 2000: 246). Consequently, education is being transformed (Mcluhan, 1962, 1964; Ong, 1988). For this reason, education needs to be restructured.

### 5.9.1. USING DIGITAL GENRES AS RESOURCES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

Digital genres offer a lot of positive features as resources for language teaching. Warschauer et al. (2000) mention five reasons to use the Internet for English teaching:

- 1) Authenticity. Students are exposed to authentic materials. Our study presents authentic resources in the Cybertask. Students are exposed to different online resources (Web pages proposed) in English without any adaptation to their English level.
- 2) Literacy. Students are provided with a digital literacy (i.e. reading online texts during the experiment of our Cybertask).
- 3) Interaction. Students use communication tools that allow them to use the English language to communicate with people all over the world.
- 4) Vitality. Students feel motivated in an interactive and multimodal context.

5) Empowerment. All these features explained above help students to become lifelong learners from an autonomous point of view.

#### 5.9.2. MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION AND LEARNING IN DIGITAL CONTEXTS

In an era of technological revolution and new technologies we need to develop new forms of media literacy, computer literacy, and multimedia literacy. In this new environment, traditional print literacy takes a great importance in the computer-mediated cyberworld, emphasising the development of reading and writing abilities. For instance, *“Internet discussion groups, chat rooms, e-mail, and various forums require writing skills in which a new emphasis on the importance of clarity and precision is emerging as communications proliferate”* (Kellner, 2000: 249).

These new technologies are crucial sources of knowledge and information. They are very influential, since *“we are often not aware that media narratives and spectacles themselves are a form of education, imparting cultural knowledge, values, and shaping how we see and live our social worlds”* (Kellner, 1997: 4). A media literate person is thus, able to read, understand, evaluate, discriminate and

criticise media materials in order to use media as means of expression and communication.

Since media are a central part of our cultural experience, training in media literacy should begin early in life and continue into adulthood, as *“new technologies are constantly creating new media and new genres, technical innovations and conventions are constantly emerging”* (Kellner, 1997: 5).

At this point, it is the challenge of education and educators to teach media literacy while using media materials to contribute to advancing multicultural education. Thus and thus, many teachers have discovered that media materials can be valuable in a variety of instructional tasks, helping to make complex subject matter accessible and engaging. However, media cannot be a substitute for print material and classroom teaching, rather they should be seen as a supplement to traditional materials.

Carrying out tasks (Cybertasks) in media literacy can often involve student participation, where both teachers and students together learn media literacy skills and competencies. Moreover, educators should bear in mind that we are in the middle of one of the most remarkable

technological revolutions, and we must learn to adapt new computer technologies and resources to education.

The use of ICTs for constructivist pedagogies is evident for the enhancement of autonomous learning. ICTs can help learners to take responsibility of their learning process. It also supports the learner to develop cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and the development of an autonomising competence with the design of online learning tasks. As a result, students plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning.

In this project we take into account the design of language learning Cybertasks which help students develop an autonomising ‘wreading’ competence, where the ability to read online texts and construct one’s own texts meet. Luzón & Ruiz-Madrid (2008) define ‘wreading competence’ as follows:

*“The ability to understand the pragmatic, discursive and semiotic features of online texts, harness their affordances and interact with them in various ways, find relevant information in different semiotic modes within and across these texts, and relate and meaningfully use such information in order to achieve a specific purpose, complete a task or produce an output”.* (p. 28)



*“The “wreading competence” involves, therefore, i) technical skills of information elaboration and management; ii) linguistic and semiotic skills; iii) cognitive skills, and iv) metacognitive skills. Therefore, developing this competence, i.e. empowering students to wread hypertext, requires a new approach to language learning, which focuses on all these four types of skills”. (p. 28)*



## **6. TASK**

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## **6. TASK-BASED APPROACHES**

### **6.1. TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

### **6.2. FROM WEBQUEST TO CYBERTASK**

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### **6.1. TASK-BASED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

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Task-based activities are of paramount importance for the purpose of our study. A Task-Based Approach first appeared around the 90's as an evolution of the Communicative Approach framework with researchers such as Breen (1987), Candlin (1990), Nunan (1989), Zanón (1990), Hernández & Zanón (1990), Estaire & Zanón (1992); and is understood by many researchers in the field as a new way of teaching a foreign language. Furthermore, these activities are aimed at engaging students in a more effective classroom communication. Thus, a new methodological work in the classroom appears called 'Task', whose main objective is that students use English as a foreign language to communicate naturally in the classroom. Along these lines, in our experiment, a group of university students will work on an English task-based activity. In this activity, students will search information in relation to the writing process; the main aim of this is to get students to surf the Internet to get a specific outcome, that is, to

analyse how students read in a digital context ('Reading Modes') (see section 8.4).

In terms of learning tasks, Crookes (1986: 1) defined: "a task is a piece of work or an activity, usually with a specified objective, undertaken as part of an educational course, or at work". Furthermore, other definitions of task reveal that its main focus is on meaning (how we learn) rather than on content or form (what we learn), in other words, a task is defined as:

*"a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form"* (Nunan, 1989:10).

It should be borne in mind that the teachers' responsibility is to engage students in meaningful situations and authenticity in communication when they carry out a task in the classroom. Furthermore, Prabhu (1987) talks about the teacher as a person who controls and regulates the task process (in Aquilino Sánchez, 2004: 47) as he states:

*“An activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process, was regarded as a ‘task’” (Prabhu, 1987:24).*

Nevertheless, today we would talk about the ‘helper’ role on behalf of the teacher. The task must include some phases that facilitate the revision of the strategies followed and partial results; establishing a relationship with the final aim. For this reason, self-assessment is referred not only to the result, but to the process (Little, 2009).

*“...a goal-oriented activity with a clear purpose. Doing a communication task involves achieving an outcome, creating a final product that can be appreciated by other” (Willis, 1998:1).*

Thus, in our context, a task refers to a type of learning activity designed to engage students in searching information on the writing process, for the purpose of the present study, in order to obtain specific objectives. Then, the main aim of our task is related to

promote the reading capacity of texts that may encourage students learning to learn English, in other words, that students acquire a greater autonomy in:

(a) Selection;

(b) Evaluation, and

(c) Use of authentic and supporting materials to study English.

In contrast, Willis (1998: 4) argues that with this type of tasks students are encouraged to experiment with the English language, putting it into practise without worrying about failure or public criticism; taking control of their own learning. According to Willis (1998:1-2), Task-Based Learning have the following components: (1) Pre-task phase, (2) Task cycle, and (3) Language focus.

(1) Pre-task phase: It is all about an introduction to topic and task. The teacher discusses the topic with the students, emphasising useful words and phrases. At this point, the teacher acts as a helper understanding task instructions and preparing them. In this stage, learners have to hear a recording of others doing a similar task, or read part of a text as a lead into a task.



(2) Task cycle: It is divided into (2.1) Task, (2.2) Planning, and (2.3) Report.

(2.1) Task: Students do the task, in pairs or groups. The teacher steps back to act as a monitor in the background and encourages all attempts at communication. At this stage, students feel free to experiment; yet mistakes are not a key issue.

(2.2) Planning: Students are ready to report how they did the task to their peers and the teacher; whose role is standing by to give language advice.

(2.3) Report: Some groups present their reports to the class. The teacher acts as a chairperson, and then feels free to comment on the content of the reports.

(3) Language focus: Students examine and then discuss specific features of the text of transcript of the recording (3.1. Analysis); and then, the teacher conducts practise of new words, phrases, and patterns occurring in the data, either during or after the analysis (3.2. Practice).

Task-based activities integrate the use of the target language (English) and content on a particular topic of interest. Thus, Brinton, Snow, and Wesche (1989) argue that content-based instruction engage students to interpret authentic texts as in a real reading situation:

*“Employs authentic reading materials which require students not only to understand information but to interpret and evaluate it as well... [and] requires students to synthesize facts and ideas from multiple sources as preparation for writing”* (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989: 2).

Hence, content-based instruction offers a number of benefits:

1- Students’ interaction with authentic materials relevant to their goals, thereby enhancing their motivation to learn better (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Kasper, 2000; Warschauer, 1996).

2- Internet use integrates a great amount of reading and writing skills, as well as *“opportunities to practise them in meaningful contexts”* (Luzón, 2002: 21).

3- It promotes problem-solving and critical thinking (Warschauer, 1999).

4- The use of the Internet helps students become autonomous, so as they take control of their own learning (Luzón, 2003: 125). Furthermore, students choose the contents they want to

learn, as well as how much time they will devote to the tasks proposed.

These resources allow teachers to design online task-based activities using authentic materials. Along this line, in Kimball's (1997) words: *“Internet-generated materials can be flexibly arrayed to engage students with topics and cognitive tasks relevant to students' professional futures”*.

The evolution of the Task-Based Approach reveals an increasing emphasis on some features related to: a) interaction and cooperation, b) metacognition and autonomy development. At this point, metacognition refers to the ability of how an individual's way of learning works and understands why the results of a particular task have been positive or negative. In addition, metacognition in relation to a task implies three factors: (a) planning the task, (b) control of the learning process, and (c) self-assessment of the foreign language learning and results obtained. Thus, knowing about metacognition allows the identification of metacognitive strategies and incorporates those strategies to learning objectives and classroom activities through a Task-Based Approach.

We will devote the next section (6.2) to discuss in depth the evolution of Task-Based Approach: from WebQuest to Cybertask.

## 6.2. FROM WEBQUEST TO CYBERTASK

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To start this section, we should raise the following question: ‘Why does a Task-Based Approach appear?’ First of all, this approach appears in the Communicative Approach framework and it is seen as an evolution of the Notional-Functional Model and the proposals of the Council of Europe. Their concern was to teach from a language analysis as a tool for communication. According to Zanón (1999), the appearance of the Task-Based Approach is determined by three different research fields: (1) Linguistic Theory, (2) Foreign Language Acquisition Studies, and (3) Design of New Teaching Programmes.

(1) Linguistic Theory: Canale (1983), Canale and Swain (1980) include the following competences:

- Linguistic Competence: mastering the linguistic code (semantics, morphology...).

- Sociolinguistic Competence: ability to use the language appropriately in different contexts and communicative situations.
- Discursive Competence: ability to articulate and link different types of discourse.
- Strategic Competence: ability to use verbal and non-verbal strategies to compensate errors in communication.

(2) Foreign Language Acquisition Studies: Researchers in the field (Ellis, 1993, 1994) argue that a language is not acquired in a lineal way, but it is acquired through building new knowledge from previous knowledge.

(3) Design of New Teaching Programmes: These new programmes appear from tasks (Breen & Candlin, 1980; Stern, 1983; Richards, 1984; Johnson, 1987; Nunan, 1988). And as a result of all these views, a new learning model in the classroom appears.

Along this line, there has been a change in the learning-teaching field during the last decades. This change is due to two reasons:

- (a) The advent of computers in the classroom, and
- (b) The arrival of the Internet.

We should take into account that not all the information available on the Web is valid. For this reason, students need to be instructed on how to select information.

It is true that with the arrival of the Internet, new possibilities for learning have been provided, such as on-line courses and first generation WebQuests as a didactic tool to work in groups. WebQuests had their origin in 1995 with Professor Dodge, (San Diego State University), and with their creation, teachers all over the world started to feel interested about them.

According to Dodge (1997), a ‘WebQuest’ is a research guided-activity, where learners use information collected mainly from Internet resources. WebQuests can focus or be based on learning activities that offer the teacher the opportunity to integrate the Internet technology in the curricula, and thus allow learners to achieve their learning through knowledge construction. They are lesson plans based on student exploration of online materials in the process of answering open-ended questions about a topic of interest. Dodge coined the term ‘WebQuest’ as *"an inquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet"*. Tom March (2003) defined ‘WebQuest’ as follows:

*"A WebQuest is a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide Web and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests do this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect on their own metacognitive processes."*

(March, 2003: 43)

Webquests can be either short or long term investigations on a topic. Some Webquests involve group work in which each group member assumes a specific role or perspective. The teacher usually provides a preselected set of resources to be used in the activities. This strategy helps keep students focused on the topic, and enables them to use the information in their investigation instead of spending most of their time just looking for relevant information.

The realization of a WebQuest begins with setting out a problem on the part of the teacher. From that point s/he creates a Web where s/he presents the task to the learners, describes the different steps or activities to be carried out, and supplies them with all the necessary

on-line resources. Therefore, the learners themselves develop the topic, as well as the criteria that will be taken into account for their evaluation.

The following parts usually compose WebQuests: Introduction, Task, Process, Resources, Evaluation and Conclusion.

1- INTRODUCTION: The purpose of the Introduction section of a WebQuest is twofold. It guides learners to the task ahead and grabs their interest, drawing them into the project. A good introduction makes the topic seem:

- Relevant to the learner's past experience.
- Relevant to the learner's future goals.
- Attractive, visually interesting.
- Important, because of its global implications.
- Urgent, because of the need for a timely solution.
- Fun, because the learner will be playing a role or acting in a non-usual way.

2- TASK: The task is the most important part in a WebQuest. It is a description of what the learner should produce by the end of the exercise. Every task should have a series of characteristics such as:



- Authenticity. It must be as real as possible and similar to actions that can be carried out in our daily life.
- The demand for reality transformation. WebQuests are not used to search for a given piece of information, but they are usually used for a purpose, promoting critical thinking.
- Attractive and feasible.

3- PROCESS. The Process block in a WebQuest is where the teacher suggests steps that learners should go through in completing the task. It may include strategies for dividing the task into subtasks, descriptions of roles to be played or perspectives to be taken by each learner. The instructor can also use this place to provide learning advice and interpersonal process advice, such as how to conduct a brainstorming session.

4- RESOURCES. They consist of a list of Web sites that the teacher has supplied the learner with in order to help him/her complete a task, clearly presenting which ones are necessary for each stage. These are links to Internet sites that the teacher has previously prepared. It is paramount revising the Web pages in advance in order to be sure that they do not contain inappropriate information.

5- EVALUATION. Evaluation criteria should be precise, clear, consistent and specific. An effective way of evaluating the work realised on the part of the students is using an evaluation template.

It is important to involve students in the process of evaluation, so that they can know the criteria used.

6- CONCLUSION. It summarises the experience carried out, the final product and the obtained conclusions. It stimulates thinking about the process.

With this activity the teacher is supposed to cheer the students up and may suggest some other ways of doing things with the aim of improving the activity.

In spite of the general approach of every Webquest that follow this structure, different models have existed historically. We could state that the tendency has consisted in emphasising the following aspects:

- Fostering the self-assessment and metacognition.
- Promoting the thinking process.
- Opening several paths and solutions.
- Developing autonomy.
- Student-centred.

In order to show this evolution, we present some of the principal models:

- A) WebQuest Model
- B) TalenQuest Model
- C) Françoise Blin's Cybertask Model
- D) Cybertask 'The Writing Process' Model

A) WebQuest Model.

Bernie Dodge (1995) and Tom March (1998) already talked about the WebQuest model.

First, according to Dodge (1997: 2; 2000; 2001: 1-7), he pointed out the following guiding principles for WebQuests:

1- Find great sites. In order to find great sites for a WebQuest, we need to manage and be skilful with search engines. Once we master a few search engines we will be able to find interesting resources that may be appropriate to use for future lessons.

2- Orchestrate learners and resources. Dodge pivots around the idea of 'group collaboration' in the classroom. He considers that group work fosters cooperation, which is "*an integral element*

*of the process section of the WebQuest” (2001: 4). Furthermore, he thinks that ‘organising resources’ is also a key point for a WebQuest. Since sometimes may happen that there are not enough computers in a classroom, “... The creative response to that is to organize your activities so that whatever access you do have is used well” (2001: 3).*

3- Challenge your learners to think. Students think about the resources offered in a WebQuest. This thinking process “*is simply a matter of paraphrasing and summarizing*” (2001: 5).

4- Use the medium. In today’s society, computers and the Internet are considered as great resources of information. For this reason, both teachers and learners recognise the ICTs as paramount tools in the teaching-learning field. But sometimes, if there is only one computer available in the classroom, teachers may “*compensate by printing out selected Web pages so that students not seated at computers will have something to read*” (2001: 6). Dodge, argues that a WebQuest is designed to be completed online, and not on paper.

5- Scaffold high expectations. Scaffolding means building new knowledge from background information and as a result,

WebQuests demand students to do things they are not expected to do. Thus, this scaffolding process helps students to be more skilled than they were before. Dodge (2000) points out three types of scaffolding:

*“(a) Reception: provides guidance in learning from a given resource and retaining what was learned. (b) Transformation: WebQuests ask learners to transform what they read into some new form. (c) Production: WebQuests commonly require students to create things they’ve never created before [...] Over time, we hope, they internalize the structures we provide until they can work autonomously”* (in Dodge, 2001: 7).

6- Motivational elements. WebQuests should motivate students by including motivational elements (i.e. let learners play roles) (Dodge, 1997: 2). This factor will result in more motivated students to complete the WebQuest.

7- Short-term WebQuests vs. Long-term WebQuests. WebQuests can be Short Term and Long Term. Both use similar principles and methods but they are used for different purposes. Short Term WebQuests are designed to be completed over one

to three lessons. Their aim is for the learner to be introduced to a significant amount of new information and to get to some understanding of it.

On the other hand, Long Term WebQuests will usually take between one week and a month, though they may be extended over longer periods if desired. Their aim is that the learner is introduced to new information and analyses it thoroughly. From this analysis, learners extend the subject in some way and then demonstrate their understanding through a response. Thus, learning a language is not only a matter of acquiring a series of contents and concepts, rather it is related to the idea of a capacity conditioned by the individual's innate abilities (Skehan, 1986). Consequently, learning is not only focused on acquiring knowledge, but also towards being able to develop some communicative skills.

Second, according to March (1998), WebQuests comprise three components:

- 1- Motivation and authenticity. When students carry out a WebQuest, they are faced to authentic materials extracted from the Internet. These online materials may be attractive for students, since they offer interactive, visual, oral resources.

Thus, the completion of an online activity may enhance students' motivation.

2- Thinking skills. Students use a great amount of data found on the Internet. The difficult task students encounter is based on transforming that information, so as it is meaningful for them. Thus, students compare several sources of information on a given topic and finally they choose those ideas that best adapt to their task objectives.

3- Cooperative learning. The use of the Internet fosters communication and collaboration, since the new technologies allow peer and teacher communication, and thus take an active part in the process of learning.

Despite these components and the benefits previously explained, using the Internet in the English learning classroom may encounter technical problems for both teachers and learners:

1- Availability of resources and computer facilities: There are not enough ICT resources, limited lab access, online sites download very slowly, and the like.

2- Teacher's lack of technical knowledge and time: Some teachers do not have appropriate technical knowledge, in order to help students with the resources provided.

3- Teachers lose control: Luzón (2003) criticises the lineal features of Bernie Dodge's WebQuests pointing out that teachers "*... must be very careful when designing the activity to ensure that students can make the most of such activity*" (2003: 127). Along this line, the teacher transmits certain knowledge to the student through the Cybertask in order to increase his/her background knowledge. We should bear in mind that autonomy does not develop spontaneously, and it is true that if Cybertasks do not show lineal features, then the student feels reluctant to realise this type of tasks. But if Cybertasks are not lineal, then the student may achieve a certain degree of autonomy. Autonomy is a slow process that is never achieved 100%; furthermore, in order to achieve that degree of autonomy we need the scaffolding technique on behalf of the teacher. Following this idea, the teacher supplies the student with searching tools and with his/her help to guide him/her in the task process and make the most of such activities. But, in order to build new knowledge from the student's previous knowledge,



the teacher needs to know the student's objective, point of view... From this perspective we are interested in finding out what are the learning styles and online reading modes.

4- Some students do not feel comfortable working on their own, and especially with computers (Felix, 1998: 217).

5- Online task-based activities demand a great amount of effort and time on behalf of the students (Luzón, 2003: 127).

Due to these problems, Villanueva, Luzón and Ruiz-Madrid (2008) consider that students need to develop a 'wreading' competence in the Cybergenre Age. To help students reach this competence, a WebQuest model (Dodge, 1995; March, 1997; Luzón, 2002) should be taken into account as the pivotal framework for the design of language learning tasks. At the same time, this 'wreading' competence needs to be autonomous; thus, these learning tasks should be designed in a way that they engage students to develop some strategies (cognitive, metacognitive and intercultural). In addition, learners should be taught in the new literacy of 'wreading' in order to:

a) Evaluate a Webpage according to the students' objectives and source credibility.

- b) Relate and use information meaningfully in different semiotic codes (multimodality).
- c) Move from the reading to the browsing and navigating modes in the different stages of the WebQuest.
- d) Evaluate the process and the result of the task taking into account Internet navigation.

#### B) TalenQuest Model.

Along this line, we can find second generation WebQuests specifically meant for Foreign Language Learning. These are called ‘TalenQuests’ (from the Dutch ‘Talen’=’languages’), a concept defined by Ton Koenraad. These ‘TalenQuests’ consist of a task with the following features (Godwin-Jones, 2004; Koenraad, 2003: 7):

- 1- It should promote the use of the target language.
- 2- It should require the use of the same kinds of authentic materials used by native speakers.
- 3- It should require meaningful communication for the production of the end product.
- 4- It is expected to be attractive and student centred (2003: 7).


5- It should be flexible providing open-activities so that learners can have different choices, and “*provide them with more or less guidance, quantity and type of input materials, options in procedures and model of cooperation*” (2003: 7).

6- “*The task promotes the exchange of real information and expertise*” (2003: 7).

7- “*The task provides opportunities both for interim reflection on the process and finally, on the product*” (2003: 7).

8- It employs “*scaffolding activities and tools for language learning*” (i.e. form focus guides, text tools and strategy guidance) (2003: 9).

The following table shows the relationship between the different components of the TalenQuest and the original WebQuest (Koenraad, 2003: 9):

<i>Features of the WebQuest Concept</i>	<i>WebQuest learning activities</i>	<i>Characteristics of taskbased MFL education</i>
<b>WebQuests for learning</b>		
Definition of: Task, Problem, Mystery, Powerful question.	Consult WWW Information Sources	Realistic contexts and exposure to authentic, rich language-input.
Process	Select and digest relevant information	Learner driven processing of input
Guidance and Scaffolding	Use support tools to perform structured tasks	Well directed learning process. Use of scaffolding activities and tools for language- learning: - Form Focus guides - Text tools - Strategy guidance
Input transformation:	Create a new, original product	Active learners - (pushed) output - Attention for meaning and form - L2 used for communication and creation of information - Realisation of personal language acts
<i>Additional Features</i>		
Curriculum Standards		Related to curriculum objectives
Explicit rubrics		Performance criteria
Interdisciplinary / Integration of subjects		Content based approach

(Table 3: Relationship between Components of the TalenQuest and the WebQuest Model)

It is worth considering that Koenraad's TalenQuest model is very similar in structure and objectives to Dodge's WebQuest model. Perhaps, the most innovative feature that Koenraad provides in his TalenQuest is that this activity focuses on learning languages. Therefore, whereas Dodge centres on content learning, Koenraad is more interested in learning foreign languages using this type of task.

Furthermore, the emphasis of ‘TalenQuests’ is placed on creative and flexible use of language in the accomplishment of an open-ended task of genuine interest to the students involved. Ton Koenraad points out that the goal of a ‘TalenQuest’ is “*to replace the fossilized content of textbooks*” (in Godwin-Jones, 2004: 10). That helps students become autonomous and motivated through the development of the study/research skills and critical analysis.

Finally, performing online task-based activities provides students with a lot of real-life materials. Thus, teachers should structure this type of activities providing support to the students, so they can complete the activities without feeling frustrated by the high amount of information on the Web.

#### C) Françoise Blin’s Cybertask Model.

Taking into consideration Dodge’s original WebQuest model and Koenraad’s TalenQuest (WebQuest-based model); another WebQuest-based model arises proposed by Françoise Blin (2010). In her article ‘*Designing cybertasks for learner autonomy: towards an activity theoretical pedagogical model*’ in *Digital Genres, New Literacies and Autonomy in Language Learning* (2010: 1-20), she mentions a number of principles that a Cybertask includes (2010: 12-13):

- Principle 1: Activities in a Cybertask should focus on the object of the task and not on the learner. The reason for this lies in the fact that tasks should be designed to promote learner collaboration if students think that these activities are useful for real-life in their academic or professional future.
  
- Principle 2: The Cybertask should promote a horizontal language learning where learner collaboration is a key point. On the contrary, this learning process would not be possible if students work independently.
  
- Principle 3: Sometimes task-aim changes should be welcome during the task process, considering that this factor could give opportunities for further learning in the classroom.

*“Carefully throughout focus shifts should be built into the syllabus to avoid prolonged and unwelcome disruptions by providing students with basic digital literacies” (Blin, 2010: 12).*

- Principle 4: Possible contradictions that may appear should be identified and resolved during the task process. Therefore,

*“... Contradictions that cannot be resolved by the participants during the period allocated to the course, module or task should constitute the basis for future design initiatives” (Blin, 2010: 13).*

Along this line, Blin talks about Van Lier’s (2007) three pedagogical scaffolding timescales in order to build new forms of activities when problems during the task arise: (a) *Macro*, (b) *Meso*, and (c) *Micro*.

*“Macro: planning (a syllabus, a chain of tasks, a project, etc.) over a long-term period. Meso: planning the steps of a particular activity or task. Micro: moment-to-moment interactional work” (van Lier, 2007: 60; in Blin, 2010: 13).*

Following van Lier’s (2007) words, Blin (2004: 380) talks about learner autonomy at both (a) ‘macro level’ and (b) ‘micro level’. A ‘macro level’ *“at the level of a whole language learning programme”*; and ‘micro level’ *“at the level of a particular course or specific language task carried out over a period of time within the overall programme”*. Therefore, in our context, the Cybertask ‘The Writing

Process' is implemented following the basis of a 'micro level' since our university students complete the Cybertask in a particular course over a period of time within the subject's programme.

According to Blin's Cybertask model, we find more differences than similarities in relation to our Cybertask. These features are reflected in the following table (Table 4):

<b>BLIN'S CYBERTASK MODEL</b>	<b>CYBERTASK 'THE WRITING PROCESS'</b>
- Object-centred	- Learner-centred
- Horizontal learning	- Vertical learning
- Learner collaboration	- Learners work independently
- Focus shifts	- Focus shifts: How do we solve problems during the Cybertask process?

(Table 4: Differences between Blin's Cybertask (2010) and 'The Writing Process' Cybertask)



D) Cybertask ‘The Writing Process’ Model.

For the present study, I have decided to take into account this type of activity, adapt it to the university context and I have called the result ‘Cybertask’.

In our own specific context, WebQuests acquire new features. Therefore, the Cybertask ‘The Writing Process’ can be characterized as a third generation WebQuest that looks for teaching new literacies, bearing in mind two important aspects: multimodality and hypertextuality. In addition, our Cybertask also looks for developing autonomy and promoting an interest in developing learning capacities.

This Cybertask consists of a Short Term WebQuest-based-design activity to be realized and completed in a two-hour session, and it is designed with the purpose of learning to write through subtasks. Thus, (1) this activity is an objective that students covered in the subjects ‘Pronunciation and Comprehension of Spoken English’ (EA0910) and ‘Dialectology’ (H61); (2) this Cybertask allows in-depth analysis: (a) students’ representations on ‘writing’, (b) their representations on writing and the importance of learning to learn; and (3) their ability to think about their own learning using the appropriate metalanguage, that is, metacognitive awareness.

The main *objectives* of Cybertasks are to promote new literacy skills and make the most out of such an activity for the development of language learning autonomy in ICT contexts. Apart from these, this design includes other aims:

- Teaching “new literacies” (ICT)
- Empowerment in terms of learning to write
- Metacognition and test of degree of autonomy (i.e. evaluating the knowledge acquired by doing this Cybertask). The evaluation of this Cybertask ‘The Writing Process’ is a device that shows the student’s degree of autonomy.

In this context, our present study is centred in two main sections, Learning Styles and Reading Modes in language learning autonomy, and their relationship with a Task-based learning activity (Cybertask). For this reason, the next chapter presents the Research Questions that motivated our investigation and our task-based design: ‘Cybertask’.

# **7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CYBERTASK DESIGN**

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## **7. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND CYBERTASK DESIGN**

### **7.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **7.2. DESIGN AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE CYBERTASK**

### **7.3. THE CYBERTASK: 'THE WRITING PROCESS'**

Section 6.1 has already pointed out the most relevant aspects regarding task-based learning activities in this study. In this chapter, we pay special attention to the Research Questions which our study is based on, the design and pedagogical implications of Cybertasks that offer an alternative to traditional teaching, and the presentation of the Cybertask.

### **7.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

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Our present study is focused on Learning Styles and Reading Modes in relation to Cybertasks. For this reason, we want to find an answer to the following Research Questions:

- 1) To what extent do learning styles affect successful task completion?

2) To what extent do reading modes affect successful task completion?

3) Is there a relationship between the students' learning styles and their reading modes?

In order to find an answer to these questions above, we have designed an instrument: *The Cybertask: 'The Writing Process'*.

## 7.2. DESIGN AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE CYBERTASK

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Learners use, understand and reproduce academic registers, in other words, to what extent these registers are negative or positive. For the purpose of the present work, the Cybertask proposed is based on an academic setting since students use the ICTs in a university context. At the same time, students use different types of Cybergenres and Internet resources in the Cybertask proposed. Therefore, they have to read about the 'Writing Process' in a digital format, that is, 'Digital Literacy'. In this sense, students have to learn about 'Critical Literacy', which is the ability to interpret digital texts and be critical with them, in other words, how these digital texts work and how they can be improved. Critical literacy is related to our Cybertask if we

bear in mind that students need to take decisions in relation to the resources they use; as a result, they have to be able to employ relevant information in order to complete this task-based activity successfully. Furthermore, they also have to interpret the information they find as relevant so as to construct their own knowledge from previous knowledge.

With this type of challenges we find it pertinent to bear in mind (1) previous knowledge, (2) motivation, and (3) metacognition.

As we discussed in chapter 2, 'Previous Knowledge' is paramount *"for the reception and elaboration of experience involved in language learning"* and *"engages learners in active participation"*. According to Kolb (1984: 21), learning from immediate experience is the focus of language learning. He distinguished four types of previous learning (see section 2.2), but for the present Cybertask students not only rely on their own thoughts, feelings, and judgements (Reflective observation), but also on learning by action taking into account real-life situations (Active experimentation). Thus, these two types of learning are necessary to complete the task successfully.

As students build new knowledge from previous knowledge, in this case, students are going to use all their background knowledge to

implement that learning capacity in Cybertask completion. At the same time and as a result of this implementation, learners are going to build new knowledge developing autonomy. Furthermore, Diversity reflects to what extent every student is going to show learning differences in relation to their learning styles and reading modes. Bearing in mind these two factors, students will approach this Cybertask in different ways.

We deem necessary to consider constructivism as the basis for creating knowledge with the use of the new technologies. To what the ICTs are concerned, learners have to make decisions on what information to choose as relevant for the purpose of the present Cybertask.

*“...Web 2.0 technology is making the development of digital critical literacies more urgent as students, now exposed to a multitude of new information, must quickly take decisions on the value of that information”*  
(Orsini-Jones, 2010: 201).

*“Decision-making is itself a learning process. Choosing what to learn and the meaning of incoming information is seen through the lens of a shifting reality. While there is a right answer now, it may be wrong tomorrow due*



*to the alterations in the information climate affecting the decision”*  
(Siemens 2004).

Motivation is a very important factor to bear in mind if we want our students to engage in a particular task. Learners need to feel motivated in order to keep their attention in the university setting. For this reason, we propose this Cybertask to university students because it provides them with the following motivation factors:

- Topic of interest: We need to have our students’ attention by means of a Cybertask that provides them with a topic they are interested in. For this purpose, we think the following topic appropriate ‘The Writing Process’ since this subject provides students with different resources and tools that will help them how to write different types of documents (formal/informal letters, essays, projects...) not only as students in the university context, but also in their professional future.
- Awareness: Learners should feel conscious about the motivational factors of this Cybertask.

- Real-setting situation: If this Cybertask is related to a real setting that students may face in their daily lives or in the future, they will feel more motivated to complete this task.

And Metacognition implies that learners think about what they are doing in the Cybertask, in other words, how they progress along their navigation, i.e. why they choose a particular path in that process, etc. This progress is reflected in a Self-Assessment Questionnaire, which takes place after students complete the task. In this questionnaire, students also explain their difficulties and value their own work and efforts made when they carry out the Cybertask.

Regarding Autonomy and Multiliteracy Awareness, students are expected to be autonomous and be able to take responsibility of their work in the Cybertask. We take for granted that this autonomy and responsibility will depend on the student's learning style, which will allow students to make their own decisions in relation to the Cybertask presented and the objectives they have to cover. This factor is also related to the student's learning style in terms of reflexion: "thinking about what they have done, are doing and are aiming to do" (Orsini-Jones, 2010: 204). Finally, students think about what they have done in the Cybertask and value their work and effort to

complete that task. This feature is related to a ‘thoughtful’ learning style.

Concerning autonomy and multiliteracy awareness, (a) hypertextual text analysis, (b) genre are two Cybertask implications worth considering, and (c) Critical thinking.

(a) Hypertext takes part in the digital competence, in other words, being able to interpret and take decisions to click a specific link and not others, and why. Our aim is to find out if this hypertextual analysis encourages the student to access all the links or not. However, this process will depend on the student’s reading mode.

(b) In the Cybertask we propose, we offer different link resources where we can distinguish different types of genres. The main reason for the selection of the following resources lies in the fact that they all have one feature in common, ‘authenticity’. Real-life materials are pivotal in students’ academic education at the university because the way they learn in the classroom will be reflected in their professional careers. Following, we offer a brief description of each of these Internet resources:

1- TEN STEPS TO WRITING AN ESSAY (The American University in Cairo): <http://www1.aucegypt.edu/academic/writers/>

This Web page belongs to ‘The American University in Cairo’ (Egypt). The site offers information about the 10 steps students need to know to write an essay. Some of the steps offered in this page are: (1) Research, (2) Analysis, (3) Brainstorming, (4) Thesis, and (5) Outline... If students click on each one of these steps, they will have access to more developed information about the steps. This information will be useful to students in order answer Activity 5: Activity 5.1. “Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...” and Activity 5.2. “Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer” (Cybertask). Furthermore, students can find the answer to Activity 2.1. “In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?” (Cybertask).

2- IDEAS FOR TEACHING THE WRITING PROCESS (Kimberly Steele):

<http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/writing/writingprocess/menu.html>

This Web page is a school site for teachers that offers ideas for teaching the writing process. Considering that it is a school site, the information it contains is presented clearer and more concise. Although there are many models and criteria for writing, in this page there are only 5 steps included: (1) Prewriting, (2) Writing, (3) Revising, (4) Editing and Proofreading, and (5) Publishing. The reason why this page contains only 5 steps may be due to the features of this site: ‘school site’.

To conclude, students carrying out the Cybertask will use this page in order to answer Activity 5 (Cybertask).

3- THE PURDUE ONLINE WRITING LAB (OWL). (Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana): <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

This Web page belongs to ‘Purdue University’ (Lafayette, Indiana, USA) and it is the most complex page regarding the ten resources that we offered to students. Due to the complexity of this site, there is a “site map” that provides the different types of resources (with

headings and subheadings) in order to find in an easier way the information students need. Although it is the most complex Web page proposed to complete the Cybertask, it is probably the most complete, and as far as students are concerned, the most useful resource not only for the Cybertask's objective, but also for their academic and professional careers.

Among the several information students can find we highlight the following: 'One-on-One Tutorials', 'Writing Workshops', 'Instructor Consultation', 'Email a Tutor'...

Finally, students may use the information gathered in this page to answer Activity 5 (Cybertask).

4- THE WRITING PROCESS (Rutgers University, Camden, NJ):

<http://wire.rutgers.edu/process.html>

The present Web page belongs to 'Rutgers University' (New Jersey, USA). Although the main page is that from the university, in this case, we did not want students to get lost in the information it offered, thus, we provided them the exact link to access the information that we were interested in having them identify. Therefore, the link is that of the 'Department on English' and it provides information about the writing process. Again, the different steps for the writing process are

present: (1) Prewriting, (2) Planning, (3) Drafting, (4) Revising, and (5) Quick Check. By clicking on each of these steps, students have access to detailed description of each step, as well as examples and guidelines that help them in their writings.

For the purpose of the Cybertask, students will find this resource useful to answer Activity 5 (Cybertask).

5- THE WRITING PROCESS (Univision Forum):

<http://foro.univision.com/t5/Idioma-Inglés/The-Writing-Process/m-p/212040564>

Univision is a forum in Spanish, whose main aim is to comment on the process of writing in English language. People participating in this forum use both Spanish and English to communicate, thus, it is a resource of a great help especially for those people whose English level is not very good (probably with levels A1-A2).

As in every forum, students have the opportunity to express their opinions and feelings about the writing process, as well as enrich themselves from other people's comments.

6- WRITING (Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson):

<http://42explore.com/writing.htm>

The 42explore ‘Thematic Pathfinders for All Ages’ is a Web page created by Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson (university teachers now teaching online courses at ‘Indiana University-Indianapolis’, USA). More specifically, the main Web page is [www.42explore.com](http://www.42explore.com), which offers ‘General Themes’, ‘Social Studies’, and ‘Science’... But if we click on ‘Topic Index’ (on top of the page) we have access to different topics. In this case we chose that of ‘writing’. In this site students can find the answer to Activity 3.1. “Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process”.

In addition, this site provides more Web pages about writing, but they are far more specific like ‘fiction writing’, ‘parts of an essay’, ‘how to write an essay’, ‘kinds of essays’...

7- THE WRITING PROCESS (ORACLE ThinkQuest, Education

Foundation): <http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writingprocess/writingprocess.htm>

The Oracle Education Foundation is an organization that develops ‘ThinkQuest’, an online learning platform that helps students develop skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century like communication, critical thinking, and



technology skills. With this resource, students solve real-life problems. Moreover, this organization gives access to its library:

<http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing>

[process/writingprocess.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writingprocess/writingprocess.htm). In this library, students are again

provided with the steps they need to take in order to complete a

quality piece of writing. In this case, the steps offered are the

following: (1) Brainstorming, (2) Story Starters, (3) Graphic

Organizers, (4) First Draft, (5) Revising, (6) Editing, and (7) Final

Copy. By clicking on each step, students have access to detailed

information on every step. Furthermore, if students click on

‘Brainstorming’ and then on ‘Writing’, they will be able to read about

the different areas related to ‘writing’. At this state, by clicking on

‘History of Writing’, students will find the answer to Activity 3.2.

“What civilizations were the first to use writing?”

Returning to the main menu and clicking on the third step of writing

‘Graphic Organizers’, students will be provided with a wide range of

graphics (cluster diagrams, charts, story maps, cause and effect

diagrams, outlines...) that students will choose for the answer of

Activity 2.2. “Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the

most and give reasons of your choice” and Activity 6 “Imagine that

you have to write an article to your university newspaper about

“recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic”.

Finally, by clicking on the fourth step ‘First Draft’, students will not only read about what a first draft is, but also will find the answer to Activity 4 “According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer”.

8- WRITING (Lee’s Summit R7 School District):

<http://its.leesummit.k12.mo.us/writing.htm>

Lee’s Summit is an organization that offers information and help on any domain, providing products and/or services. Lee’s Summit is owned and operated by ‘Hometown Solutions, LLC’, a privately held company located in Lee’s Summit (Missouri, USA).

Regarding the Cybertask’s objectives, as researchers, we have given students the direct access to ‘writing’ in the link

<http://its.leesummit.k12.mo.us/writing.htm> in order to go directly to

the information under request. In this page, students find information about rubrics to assess writing, 10 steps to write a research paper, paragraph organizer (getting started, about paragraphs, how to write a

paragraph, tips and techniques), writing ideas... Furthermore, a wide range of graphic organizers is provided, which are very useful to answer Activity 2.2. and Activity 6.

9- YOUNG AUTHORS' WORKSHOP. Resource Pages. (Barbara Larochelle, University of Alberta, Canada):

<http://www.planet.eon.net/~bplaroach/index.html>

This page was prepared by Barbara Larochelle as the final project for the course ED PSY 597 at the 'University of Alberta' (research public university in Canada). More pages are included inside the main page 'Young Authors' Workshop', and for questions, comments or suggestions about those pages, people can e-mail to Barbara Larochelle.

The page offers a table at the bottom with the links for that step of the writing process: (1) Ideas, (2) Writing, (3) Revising, (4) Editing, (5) Publishing, and (6) Teacher resources. By clicking on each step, students find a brief description of that step, as well more links to identify more ideas related to the step in question.

Apparently, this Web page is quite simple and it is easy to identify the information that students need to answer Activity 5 (Cybertask).

10-THE WRITING SITE (Corporation for Educational Technology, Indiana Department of Education): <http://thewritingsite.org/>

This last resource is a blog called ‘The Writing Site’. It offers information on several categories like ‘Blog Writing’, ‘Book Writing’, ‘Business Writing’, ‘Essay Writing’, ‘Online Writing’, and ‘Writing Style’... By clicking on each of these categories, students find information that can use for Activity 6. For example, if students click on ‘Writing Style’, they can be provided with tenses in English grammar, some particularities of the English language like ‘Enquire vs. Inquire’, and so on.

Finally, all this information is useful for students in order to write the essay in the final task of the Cybertask (Activity 6).

All these links offered in the Cybertask are great resources for students, since they might contribute in their digital literacies and create their own navigation paths. In addition, these resources may be considered to be helpful depending on the students’ reading mode, in other words, learners’ choice of some links depend on their own objectives and preferences for the Cybertask completion. Furthermore, students should have their own criteria and creativity in their learning environment, and more specifically for the Cybertask completion.

This feature is of paramount importance since learners create a personalised learning context depending on their learning style and reading mode.

(c) Finally Critical thinking draws upon the idea of critically evaluate information on the Web (Luzón & Ruiz-Madrid, 2008: 32). Being critical with information implies decision-taking, judging links and credibility of Web pages. Decision-taking and judging links imply students' interpretation and their self-assessment of online information. In our Cybertask, students interpret information found on the Web and following, they evaluate that information, as well as task completion in a Self-assessment Questionnaire. Credibility of Web pages depends on hyperreaders, who have to evaluate and learn to distinguish relevant from irrelevant information taking into account their objectives for task completion.

Next section will be devoted to describe the main objectives of the Cybertask 'The Writing Process', as well as illustrate our Cybertask as it was presented to the students.

### 7.3. THE CYBERTASK: 'THE WRITING PROCESS'

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On the one hand, the main learning aims of this Cybertask are the following:

- a) Carry out an Internet search in order to gather information concerning the writing process.
- b) Acquire new knowledge using some Internet links about writing provided by the teacher.
- c) Focus on meaning rather than on form or content, writing thus meaningful answers according to the students' objectives and depending on the activities proposed in the Cybertask.
- d) Metalanguage: Think about our own language learning in order to learn how to guide it on our own. Metalanguage and Metacognitive awareness are related.

On the other hand, the student's aim of this Cybertask is to complete a final task (activity 6), where students have to organise information in a graphic organiser in order to write an essay.

The task consists in reading (reading comprehension), but in fact, it is about 'writing'. Therefore, our question here is: Why do we think 'writing' is relevant?

- 1- It is important because our present technological world demands immediate written communication. We find writing everywhere: Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, SMS, e-mail... The problem is that we need to give answers immediately and most of the times we do not pay attention to our writing.
- 2- Writing is related to cognitive, metalinguistic, and learning styles' capacities.
- 3- It is interesting to see how students design an outline (graphic organiser) and later they put that graphic into practice with a written essay (see Activity 6: Final Task, in the Cybertask).

Furthermore, 'Writing' has perhaps been our biggest frustration as students and as teachers, often leading us to unwanted, guilt-ridden failure. Thus, the student should consider the following ideas:

- a) How they could improve their writing
- b) Learn how to write in an appropriate, academic way
- c) Become able to write different types of genres: essays, business letters, research reports... in English.

Before presenting the Cybertask, we will discuss the skills that have been involved in each of the activities of the Cybertask. These skills will help us justify the students' grade in each of the activities.

Regarding the purpose of our present study, the results obtained in each of the activities will determine to what extent Learning Styles and Reading Modes affect successful task completion. We will discuss this relationship in Chapter 10 (Analysis and Discussion). Along this line, we will illustrate below the skills involved in each of the activities of the Cybertask (see Annex VIII):

**Activity 1: In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view (5 points).**

- Metalanguage (metalinguistic competence and cognitive awareness):

‘metalanguage’ refers to the use of language to make statements, thus, ‘metalinguistic competence’ looks at explaining how to transmit linguistic knowledge. Furthermore, it aims at reflecting on the use of language. On the other hand, ‘cognitive awareness’ refers to being conscious about what we know on a specific topic.

- Previous knowledge consists in adjusting the present knowledge to create/build new knowledge, being able to relate new information to what we already know (background information).



**Activity 2:**

**Activity 2.1. In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating? (5 points).**

- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis): how students apply certain cognitive strategies when they have to search information on the net. In this case, as researchers, we expect that with this activity the following strategies are highlighted: (a) ‘inference’ strategies, (b) ‘induction’ strategies, and (c) ‘synthesis’ strategies.

‘Inference’ strategies are based upon conclusions drawn from multiple proved observations. Furthermore, these strategies demand non-literal reading of the Web pages. ‘Induction’ strategies refer to learning from specific detailed information found on the Web and to establish generalizations. And ‘synthesis’ strategies demand a synthesis work on behalf of students, combining new information with existing knowledge in order to create new knowledge. Therefore, they pay more attention to specific details (from general information) synthesising their own ideas.

**Activity 2.2. Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reason of your choice (5 points).**

- Learning awareness (cognitive and metacognitive awareness):

students are supposed to choose two graphic organisers, relating those graphics of their choice to their own way of schematising the information. Accordingly, they have to imagine how they would use those graphics for a future writing.

- Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful learning abilities: being an

*'autonomous'* learner means being able to make decisions and justify them. *'Analytic'* ability is the skill to reflect and make decisions based on available information (concept or statement) on the Web. The student has to be able to identify the nuances/details in the information proposed. And finally, adopting *'thoughtful'* approach regarding the graphic organisers they have chosen is related to our expectation of obtaining better results in this activity.

With this activity, analysis and thoughtful strategies are expected to be manifested because students with these profiles are supposed to obtain better results. Accordingly, analytic students choose details in the information they find on the Web, and thoughtful students think and plan about the details of the information.

### **Activity 3:**

#### **Activity 3.1. Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process (5 points).**

This activity tries to highlight the following features:

- Metalinguistic competence aims at ‘know how’ in other words, know how to use specific language concepts and expressions (in English).

- Synthetic capacity through ‘skimming’ and ‘scanning’ techniques.

By ‘*skimming*’ we understand the ability to identify a topic or a piece of text and determine and remember central ideas or key words from general information. On the other hand, we refer to ‘*scanning*’ as a selective comprehension, in other words, look quickly over the information on the Web looking for specific words or expressions.

When a student gathers information on the Web in order to explain the importance of the writing process, s/he has to be able to synthesise the information found on the Web. For this reason, it is expected that s/he uses mechanisms like ‘skimming’ and ‘scanning’.

The initial expectation will be that synthetic students will be able to complete the Cybertask with more success.

**Activity 3.2. What civilizations were the first to use writing? (5 points).**

- Synthetic capacity ('scanning'): students have to look for concrete information in order to answer this activity. This capacity would be related to analytic students, since this type of students prefer considering specific details.

- Thoughtful profile: the thoughtful component is important to answer this activity because it determines students' capacity to find out in the Web pages proposed what information is necessary for them.

**Activity 4: According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer (5 points).**

- Autonomous capacity: it would be related to a profile of student capable of making critical decisions (decision-making of their own learning).

- Thoughtful capacity: the student has to know how to justify his/her choice (amount of drafts that are considered necessary).

- Synthetic capacity ('scanning'): students have to look for concrete information to answer this activity. This capacity is related to the

analytic profile because analytic students like considering specific details.

**Activity 5:**

**Activity 5.1. Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report... (5 points).**

This activity requires developing the same strategies as in the previous activity, except for autonomous and thoughtful strategies.

- Analytic capacity through several consulted resources:

a) identifying information in different texts (Analytic profile),  
and

b) finding common traits in the information found on the Web  
(Analytic and Deductive profiles).

- Metalinguistic abilities: related to the writing process.

**Activity 5.2. Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer (5 points).**

This activity implies skills belonging to the active-thoughtful opposite, but at the same time, these traits are complementary.

- Active or Thoughtful attitude: the *active* attitude is related to the pragmatic approach of a specific writing task when students have to make decisions about the steps involved in the writing process.

Nevertheless, the *thoughtful* component is important to determine if students add or modify some steps and why.

- Autonomous capacity: students develop decision-making of their own learning because they have to give a critical opinion of their choice.

- Metalinguistic competence: students have to be able to manage the specific terminology employed when they have to talk about the steps involved in the writing process.

**Activity 6: FINAL TASK (20 points).** Imagine that you have to write an article for your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

This activity does not demand reading comprehension skills, instead it involves writing an essay (writing production). This activity focuses on two features: schematising and writing.

**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER (5 points):**

- Analytic profile: students have to make plans and organizational schemas with the aim of using them in the essay task.
  
- Thoughtful attitude: this profile is necessary to complete a graphic organiser because students have to think about how to organise the information about “recycling” that they are going to use later to write their essay.
  
- Coherence between the Graphic Organizer and the Essay: there should be a coherence between the information that students write in the graphic organizer they have chosen and

the essay they have to write in the second part of this activity.

**ESSAY (15 points):**

- General text coherence and cohesion (5 points): *coherence* is adequacy of the text and semantic consistency. On the other hand, to what *cohesion* is concerned, we can talk about textual organizers to cohere a text (between lines, sentences and paragraphs).
- Semantic-pragmatic coherence (5 points): students have to write an essay about “recycling” bearing in mind the adequate vocabulary around this topic, correct grammar, spelling, and the genre used (“newspaper article”) for the purpose of this activity.
- New knowledge (5 points): students are expected to build/create new information about “recycling”.

After the description of the several skills involved in each of the activities of the Cybertask, we now present the digital version of the

<sup>5</sup>Cybertask as it is presented to the students:

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<sup>5</sup> See Annex VI for the digital version



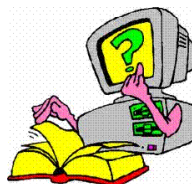
### THE WRITING PROCESS

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## Cybertask:

### 'THE WRITING PROCESS'

Designed by  
**Carolina Girón García**



Last updated on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012. Based on a template from <http://webquest.org>

### THE WRITING PROCESS

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[Task](#)  
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## Introduction

- HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT HOW YOU COULD IMPROVE YOUR WRITING?
- WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN HOW TO WRITE IN AN APPROPRIATE, ACADEMIC WAY?
- NOW YOU HAVE GOT THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO PUT AN END TO WHAT MIGHT BE, PERHAPS, YOUR BIGGEST FRUSTRATION, THAT IS, WRITING.

The following task consists in carrying out a search through the Internet. The goal is to gather information concerning the necessary steps to accomplish a writing task leading to the production of different types of texts. So, I encourage you to complete this task which will contribute to your acquisition of new knowledge, which may be useful when you need to write an essay, business letters, and research reports...in English.

This task may also help you to:

- Think about your own learning in order to learn how to guide it on your own
- Use the internet as a tool for your personal learning plan

ARE YOU READY?



### THE WRITING PROCESS

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### Task

In this task you will find several activities, they are mainly questions that you may solve using the information provided by the different web pages. So, you are expected to answer a total of six activities, including a report where you should provide your personal opinion about the task.

In the process of completing the task you will:

- Evaluate your English level about writing;
- Make a selection of online resources according to your needs and objectives;
- Build your own resources in order to do ACTIVITY 6 (FINAL TASK).



### THE WRITING PROCESS

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### Process

\* You do not need to surf all the web pages proposed, but you may enter those pages that you think are going to be the most interesting ones in order to carry out the task. As a result, you are going to create your own navigation "path", moving back and forward and giving meaning to the text found in those web pages.

\* You may also alter the order of the web pages, so it is not compulsory that you follow the exact order given (from 1 to 10).

In order to carry out every activity you will need to:

- Read carefully the suitable links
- Select the appropriate information
- Contextualise the information with the task and its objectives: that is, build the necessary knowledge adapting it to the situation.

## 7- Research Questions and Cybertask Design

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**ACTIVITIES**

**Activity 1:**

In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

2.1. In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

2.2. Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

3.1. Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

3.2. What civilizations were the first to use writing?

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.


**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

5.1. Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

5.2. Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

**ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about "recycling" (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.



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**Resources**

Below, you will find a wide range of resources. There are 11 Web pages, where you will have access to information related to *The Writing Process*. You need to search this information in order to give answer to the activities proposed (1-6) in PROCESS.

- 1- TEN STEPS TO WRITING AN ESSAY (The American University in Cairo):  
<http://www1.aucegypt.edu/academic/writers/>
- 2- IDEAS FOR TEACHING THE WRITING PROCESS (Kimberly Steele):  
<http://www.kimskomer4teachertalk.com/writing/writingprocess/menu.html>
- 3- THE PURDUE ONLINE WRITING LAB (OWL). (Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana):  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
- 4- THE WRITING PROCESS (Rutgers University, Camden, NJ): <http://wire.rutgers.edu/process.html>
- 5- THE WRITING PROCESS (Univision Forum): <http://foro.univision.com/t5/Idioma-Ingles/The-Writing-Process/m-p/212040564>
- 6- WRITING (Annette Lamb and Larry Johnson): <http://42explore.com/writing.htm>
- 7- THE WRITING PROCESS (ORACLE ThinkQuest, Education Foundation):  
[http://library.thinkquest.org/0001156/writing\\_process/writingprocess.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/0001156/writing_process/writingprocess.htm)
- 8- WRITING (Lee's Summit R7 School District): <http://lts.leesummit.k12.mo.us/writing.htm>
- 9- YOUNG AUTHORS' WORKSHOP. Resource Pages. (Barbara Larochelle, University of Alberta, Canada):  
<http://www.planet.eon.net/~bplaroch/index.html>
- 10- THE WRITING SITE (Corporation for Educational Technology, Indiana Department of Education):  
<http://thewritingsite.org/>

Cuestionario de autoevaluación experimentación CIBERTAAAL (HUM2005-05548FILO)

Usuario:

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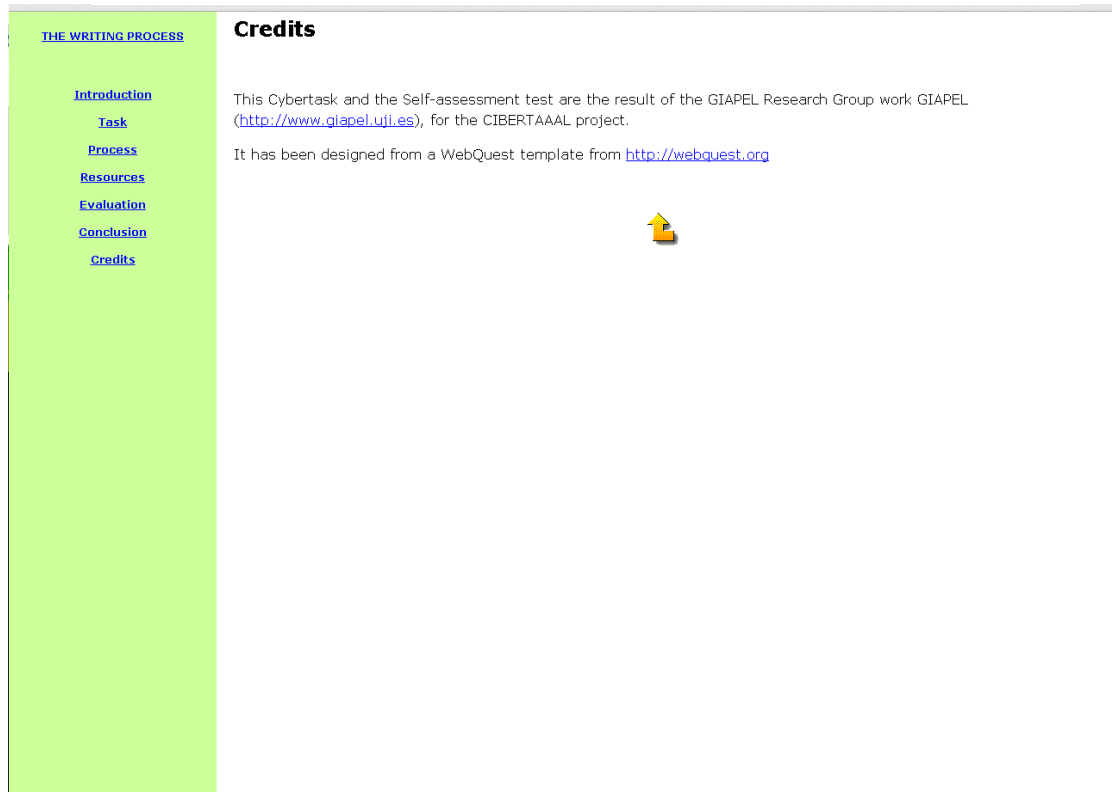
### Conclusion

The aim of our study is to analyse the effects of task design on the development of basic strategies of metacognitive awareness. Metacognition refers to active control over our own cognitive processes. Since metacognition plays a crucial role in language learning, it would be useful to learn how to apply your cognitive resources for your learning process.

1. How do you relate new information to former knowledge?
2. The learning process never ends, for this reason this  
Cybertask is aimed at improving your English writings.
3. How do you think about your spontaneous strategies and which is your perception about them when evaluating the process and the result of the task activities?

As a result of the activity, perhaps you have thought about how you learn English and you have developed a little more your ability to use the ICTs in order to learn. Maybe you have also learnt/acquired some knowledge about the different competences in relation to 'The Writing Process'.





The screenshot shows a web page with a light green sidebar on the left containing a navigation menu. The menu items are: THE WRITING PROCESS, Introduction, Task, Process, Resources, Evaluation, Conclusion, and Credits. The main content area is titled 'Credits' and contains the following text: 'This Cybertask and the Self-assessment test are the result of the GIAPEL Research Group work GIAPEL (<http://www.giapel.uji.es>), for the CIBERTAAL project. It has been designed from a WebQuest template from <http://webquest.org>'. A small yellow arrow icon points upwards from the bottom of the text.

After the completion of this Cybertask, students think about their own knowledge. Furthermore, they are asked to complete a Self-Assessment Questionnaire where they can make comments on the Cybertask's process and result.

The next chapter will be devoted to the 'Methodology' carried out in this study, which will lead to the choice of the case studies under investigation in the present work.



## **8. METHODOLOGY**

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## **8. METHODOLOGY**

### **8.1. CONTEXT**

### **8.2. PARTICIPANTS**

### **8.3. PROCEDURES AND DATA COLLECTION**

### **8.4. INSTRUMENTS**

#### **8.4.1. DETERMINING STUDENTS' ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL**

#### **8.4.2. GIAPEL LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **8.4.3. STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE**

### **8.1. CONTEXT**

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The quasi-experimental design used for the purpose of the present study is a qualitative case study. This section accounts for the epistemological and methodological reasons that led to the choice of six case studies as the research method for the present work.

Merriam (1998) described the main goal of case study research as follows:

*“A case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation. Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice, and future research”* (Merriam, 1998: 19).

Another important aspect is the type of study carried out. Although two distinct types of studies can be found, qualitative (Wenden & Rubin, 1987) and quantitative (Chapelle, 2003), Chapelle proposes nowadays that both types of studies should be used.

The case studies in this dissertation are based upon the examination and description of a pedagogical activity with 23 subjects; although due to research purposes only 6 were taken into account. In the design, each student was assigned a computer in order to carry out the task. Furthermore, their learning style was taken into consideration (Styles Questionnaire) and their level of English proficiency (Level Questionnaire) in order to achieve comparable results for the purpose of the study.

The aim of this study consists of the analysis of a task whose main goal is that students develop autonomous language learning skills

through the use of the new technologies (Internet). The specific purpose is to obtain information about the writing process and organize that information in order to answer a series of proposed activities related to the process and the result of the task.

The study was carried out in four stages:

- 1- Elaboration and design of a Cybertask
- 2- Implementation in a language programme
- 3- Realization of the Cybertask by the students

The “Cybertask” ‘The Writing Process’ deals with different strategies used when writing a document. It took 2 hours for the students to realize the cybertask, which consists of six activities (see Annex VI Cybertask: ‘The Writing Process’).

Finally, at the end of the task, students were asked to complete a Self-Assessment Test in twenty minutes. That test included a wide range of questions related to the process of the task and its results.

## 8.2. PARTICIPANTS

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A number of 23 participants were selected from the group taking the subject 'Dialectology' (H61) in the 4<sup>th</sup> year course of the English Studies degree at Jaume I University (Spain), and 'Pronunciation and Comprehension of Spoken English' (EA0910) in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of English Studies degree at Jaume I University (Spain). Among these twenty-three students, only 6 were selected for the purpose of case studies. Although they gave their permission to use their data, an individual identification code was provided in order to safeguard their privacy.

## 8.3. PROCEDURES AND DATA COLLECTION

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The study took place during the students' regular class time in the second semester (January-June) of the 2011-2012 academic years. The module was 'Pronunciation and Comprehension of Spoken English' (EA0910) and 'Dialectology' (H61) in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years of the English Studies degree at Jaume I University (Spain); the modules are respectively compulsory for all the students in the English Studies major. Their participation in this study, though, not mandatory, was

presented as one of the complementary activities to be given partial credit in addition to the final mark at the end of the semester.

In order for results to be available, students had to submit online the questionnaires they were asked to do, as well as the <sup>6</sup>Cybertask. All the Cybertasks were corrected by an anonymous teacher (Teacher's Assessment) from the English Studies Department (*Universitat Jaume I*). Afterwards, thanks to a computing programme created by the GIAPEL Group, all the questionnaires were sent so as to be able to observe what exactly the students had answered.

The level questionnaire programme is an application carried out in <sup>7</sup>Flash that works over a Web navigator. After students complete a series of survey questions, this programme obtains the username style sending the answers to a server programmed in PHP. This server keeps those answers in a database to finally have access to the results.

Both level and self-assessment questionnaires are <sup>8</sup>HTML surveys that send the results to the same database programmed in <sup>9</sup>PHP.

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<sup>6</sup> "Grupo de Investigación y Aplicaciones Pedagógicas en Lenguas"

<sup>7</sup> An application that runs in a web browser. It is commonly used to add videos and animations

<sup>8</sup> Markup Language for the creation of the design and structure of a web page

<sup>9</sup> Programming Language that is present in some web servers and generates dynamic web pages (for example in HTML)

In order to obtain the data from the database in an easier way, some pages were created where we could observe all the results (in a tabular format) ordered by language and group.

#### 8.4. INSTRUMENTS

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The main instrument for our study has been the ‘Cybertask: The Writing Process’ (see Annex VI). Nevertheless, we have used other instruments endorsed for data collection: (1) English proficiency level questionnaire (see Annex II), (2) GIAPEL learning styles questionnaire (see Annex I), and (3) Self-assessment questionnaire (see Annex IV).

##### 8.4.1. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to determine the students’ proficiency level, a questionnaire was used, namely, “Test de nivel para experimentación CIBERTAAAL” (HUM2005-05548FILO) that was created for the purpose of the present study. This online questionnaire (<http://www.giapel.uji.es/testnivel/testNivel.php?idioma=en>) elicits name and surname, year of degree course (First, Second etc.), age, mother tongue, and settings where students have been learning English

previously in their lives (e.g. in elementary school, high school, language school, abroad, and the like).

The questionnaire is structured into five competences: (1) Listening comprehension, (2) Reading comprehension, (3) Oral interaction, (4) Oral expression, and (5) Written expression.

Each competence offers a wide range of open statements available for students to choose depending on their previous experience and how they feel about the English language. Thus, students can select those options they feel identified with. As they have completed the questionnaire, they upload and send it online. Next, all the data are sent to a database management system that works according to percentages, assigning the language level that the student has acquired (A1/A2, B1/B2, and C1/C2) in accordance with the European Portfolio of Languages.

### 8.4.2. GIAPEL LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

This test (<http://www.giapel.uji.es/testestilos/Proyecto.html>) is conceived in such a way that the student is able to choose strategies that belong to different styles. These learning styles are grouped into eight different pairs: (1) Active vs. Thoughtful, (2) Inductive vs. Deductive, (3) Visual vs. Verbal, (4) Cooperative vs. Individualistic, (5) Synthetic vs.

Analytic, (6) Dependent vs. Autonomous, (7) Emotional vs. Rational, and (8) Positive attitude towards ICT vs. Negative attitude towards ICT.

Regarding Learning Styles, in order to establish a specific type of learning for every student, the GIAPEL Research Group has provided the following detailed description (Villanueva & Navarro, 1997) taking into account the following statements:

- Active: The student believes that to learn a language, this must be used by immersing himself in practice without having planned and thought about it. In this respect, reflection can come later.
- Thoughtful: So as to have a thoughtful style, a student thinks that before using the language it is necessary to carry out learning activities related to its use. In addition, a thoughtful student likes planning and reflecting before communication in the language s/he learns takes place. In conclusion, the student believes that it is worth thinking things twice.
- Synthetic: Synthetic students better addresses their tasks by making up general ideas of a problem and thus reaching a more concrete idea. In fact, the student with this learning style best



retains the general ideas instead of the small details. Sometimes it happens that while the student is in the process of developing a task s/he may feel bothered by small details about the language, as s/he believes that they have no importance.

- Analytic: The student who has an analytic learning style seeks to move forward little by little and does not pass to the next step if the previous one is not clear. In addition, s/he does not like handling different sources of information because these are generally considered to be unreliable.

- Inductive: An inductive student likes inquiring into the language and observing it until s/he discovers the rules by himself/herself. Besides, this type of student considers this process as fun and even a discovery game. In addition, inductive subjects believe they have the ability to go from general to specific ideas.

- Deductive: Deductive students are reluctant to discover the rules of a language by themselves, but instead, they prefer to have the rule first and then apply it. Otherwise, they believe that going from concrete ideas to general ideas is a waste of time. In addition, they learn the grammatical rules of a language through

simple sentences applied from a rule. The deductive students believe that it is better to learn a language with practical exercises using a rule.

- **Dependent:** Dependent students like their teacher to take control and responsibility over their language learning. Furthermore, they prefer to receive an external evaluation, either positive or negative. Generally, these students believe that best results are obtained if there is a competitive environment.

- **Autonomous:** Autonomous students do not feel the need to have a control of their work, since they are considered self-sufficient to assume that responsibility. In this way, unlike dependent students, these do not feel the need of a competitive environment in order to move forward. Their own self-improvement is their best stimulus.

- **Positive attitude towards the use of the new Technologies of Information and Communication (+) ICT:** Students with a positive attitude toward the use of new technologies to learn languages consider that the Internet is an important tool as it

offers many resources to learn languages. These students cannot live without their computers.

- Negative attitude towards the use of the new Technologies of Information and Communication (-) ICT: Students with a negative attitude toward new technologies believe that there is so much information on the Internet that they do not know how to handle it. For this reason, they prefer a book instead of a computer, as computers and they do not get on well.

Students are given the opportunity to choose those statements in the Learning Styles Questionnaire that characterise their personal learning profile. To determine students' learning profile, the results obtained are shown in percentages that express procedural tendencies and allow describing a learner's learning style with gradual and contextual criteria (Villanueva & Navarro, 1997). This questionnaire is designed so that within a multiple-choice set, a few questions indicate a variable and other questions the opposite variable.

Once the students have completed the test, the data are sent to a database management system.

#### 8.4.3. SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

In order for the students to evaluate their own task, they were asked to execute a 'Self-Assessment Questionnaire'. This survey includes a number of questions related to (1) the task process and (2) the results obtained from the surfing process. Thus, students feel free to click on those options as well as make comments on anything related to the Cybertask (e.g. criteria used to select information, information management, interesting <http://addresses>, previous knowledge on the topic, and the like), and to the result (e.g. their degree of satisfaction regarding Internet use in solving the proposed task, to obtain new information, to build new knowledge, and the like).

As the students finish completing this questionnaire, they send it via online and a database management system keeps all the data.

## **9. RESULTS**

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## **9. RESULTS**

9.1. LEARNERS' PERCEIVED LEARNING EXPECTATIONS,  
SELF-ASSESSMENT AND TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT

9.2. LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

9.3. LEVEL QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

9.4. NAVIGATION RESULTS

9.5. CASE STUDIES

9.6. CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, we present the different results obtained and which derive from our experiment with the Cybertask. These results reveal the students' English level, their learning style and their navigation type. Furthermore, due to the relevant characteristics of some of the students who participated in our study, we will analyse and discuss a total of 6 case studies out of 23 students.

In the first section, we will discuss what students expected to learn with our Cybertask regarding their self-assessment. In addition, we will show the teacher's assessment to the students' Cybertasks to what extent these students have learnt some new information.

### 9.1. LEARNERS' PERCEIVED LEARNING EXPECTATIONS, SELF-ASSESSMENT AND TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT

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This section shows the learners' perceived learning expectations and self-assessment from the 23 students in our experiment, and the global assessment. Among these 23 students, only 6 students stated that they had not learnt anything new in relation to the "writing process", while 17 students confirmed that they had acquired new knowledge after completing the Cybertask.

Table 5 shows the number of students who have (or have not) attained the desired learning expectations and the global assessment.

Combining 'Teacher's Assessment' and the application of information management criteria, we established the following grading scale as a global assessment scale: (1) Breadth (P-Poor), (2) Depth (G-Good), and (3) Re-use (VG-Very Good); defining them as follows:

- (1) Breadth: Students copy exact pieces of information, just as they appear on the Web.
- (2) Depth: Students are able to use specific information from the resources proposed on the Web.



- (3) Re-use: Students are able to use specific information from the resources on the Web and re-use that information, explaining the contents in their own words.

<b>Learners' Perceived Learning Expectations</b>		<b>Global Assessment</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Breadth (P)</b>	<b>Depth (G)</b>	<b>Re-use (VG)</b>
17	6	4	12	7

(Table 5: Learners' Perceived Learning Expectations and Global Assessment)

As for the “learners’ perceived learning expectations and self-assessment”, the following is claimed:

First, seventeen students confirmed that they had acquired some new knowledge about the writing process during the task, because in the Self-Assessment Questionnaire they stated that they knew nothing or

they only had some notions of 'writing' in English. On the contrary, six students claimed that they had not learnt anything new: they stated that they knew the topic quite well and that the Cybertask did not provide them with any information they had not known before. This is mainly due to the fact that these six students had already attended a course on 'writing' the previous academic year.

Second, only four students did not succeed in carrying out the task (Poor), out of seventeen students who claimed that they had learnt new information on 'writing'. These four students just copied some information they found on the web in order to answer the questions proposed (without producing any personal elaboration of that information). On the other hand, nineteen students succeeded (Very Good / Good), as they were able to use specific information from the resources proposed, and re-use that information (explaining the contents in their own words). This can be clearly observed in their answers to the Cybertask questions. For example, to the question: *Why is writing an essay so frustrating?* In this context, we find appropriate asking this question, because most students nowadays consider writing in English as a frustration. These students answered the following:

- Student al074451: *“Learning how to write an essay can be a maddening, exasperating process, but it doesn’t have to be. If you know the steps and understand what to do, writing can be easy and even fun”*.

When this student refers to ‘steps’, probably she is referring to the different<sup>10</sup> writing phases, although we could refer to the types of learning and learning plans as well.

- Student al118216: *“Writing an essay can be frustrating if you do not know the steps to write it”*.

Both students write negative comments on ‘writing’: Students **al074451** and **al118216** state that writing can be “a maddening, exasperating process” (**al074451**), and “writing...can be frustrating” (**al118216**). Furthermore, it is surprising the fact that student **al074451** not only shows a negative attitude towards ‘writing’, but also adds positive comments such as: “writing can be easy and even fun”.

From the six students who claimed that they did not learn anything new in the ‘writing’ activity, only three students succeeded (Very Good / Good) in carrying out the Cybertask. They tried to re-use the information gathered on the net, expressing it in their own words. The

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<sup>10</sup> Writing phases: in this case we refer to the various steps that appear on one of the pages proposed in the Cybertask (<http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/writing/writingprocess/menu.html>)

other three students were not successful (Poor), since they just copied the information as it appears on the web. For example, to the activity 3.1.: *“Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process”*. Students **al227819** and **al118191** answered the following:

- Student al227819: *“Writing process is both a key concept in the teaching of writing and an important research concept in the field of composition studies”*.

- Student al118191: *“The writing process is very important, because we need to write in order to communicate, and we need to write correctly. Writing is everywhere: in newspapers, in internet, books and so on and we need to follow a writing process to write coherently in order to communicate effectively”*.

Student **al227819** adopts a point of view of an advanced learner with thoughtful and autonomous traits since the task objective is presented not only from the teaching-learning point of view, but also from the investigation perspective.

The comment that student **al118191** points out means an open point of view when it comes to establishing relationships between coherence and communicative efficacy according to different contexts and resources.

Considering all these data, for seventeen out of twenty-three students, the task completion outcome confirms that there are perceived learning outcomes. In the case of the remaining four subjects, there appears to be a mismatch between perceived and actual outcomes.

To know if our students held the Cybertask successfully or not, we had in mind some <sup>11</sup>criteria for each of the proposed activities. It is important to point out that all the Cybertasks were corrected by a teacher from the 'English Studies Department' in our university (Universitat Jaume I). Regarding these criteria, Table 6 below illustrates the grade that our six case studies obtained in "Activity 1". We need to remember that the grade that we attributed to this activity was 5 points:

According to the perceived learning expectations, among students who show a 'Navigating' navigating mode (20 students) eight also present dominance for the active learning style (except 12 students who define themselves as thoughtful). It is remarkable to highlight that a 'Reading' student shows synthetic traits and a 'Navigating' student also shows synthetic features, but the latter is even more active than the former student. This idea could be related to the way in which students think about their own learning, their representations about

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<sup>11</sup> See annex VIII (Skills involved in each of the Activities of the Cybertask)

how to learn, and their metalanguage (i.e. words or expressions students use to talk about the task).

Regarding their expectations and previous motivation, most students (22 students) talk positively about the task. This feeling is observed in their answers in the first activity of the Cybertask. For this reason, we do not find necessary to show the answers of the 22 students that can be consulted in Annex IX (Cybertask Answers). We only provide some examples due to the interesting comments observed concerning their metalanguage used.

**“Activity 1: In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today’s class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view”.**

- Student al065111: *“I expect to learn how to write an essay in a better way and how to use internet resources in an appropriate way. Although I already use Internet in order to improve my works; it could be interesting do not frustrate oneself when writing”.*

- Student al118185: *“I expect to learn what previous steps should I follow when writing a text (of any kind) and some useful Internet sources to do so”.*

- Student al227819: *“It is supposed that we are going to learn how to search information in websites, and to realise if that we have found is pertinent, according to the question, or the topic”.*

- Student al236946: *“I expect to learn some useful information about writing an essay in English”.*

It would be interesting to establish a comparison between these four students’ metalanguage and the metalanguage used by the students that we selected for our case study:

- Student al205270: *“From today’s class, I expect to learn different skills to write properly in English, as well as learn to build accurate structures for my future writing process”.*

- Student al227924: *“I hope I learn how to write properly any kind of text. With the help of internet, and using the sources correctly in order to make a new text with my own ideas, but using strong statements that I find in the source”.*

- Student al118216: *“I expect to improve my writing skills, to discover new online resources and to feel that my English is improving”.*

- Student al121323: *“I expect improving my writing skills in specific purposes, like business, letters, reports. And to know more about webpages where I could look for information and if so, keep it for personal issues”.*

- Student al074451: “*I expect to learn how to find accurate information in different web pages according to my needs, and as a result to improve my writing*”.

- Student al118191: “*I think that the task is about how to write in a right way, searching for information in the Internet and using the correct sources*”.

According to all these<sup>12</sup> comments above, we could establish four tendencies: (1) How to, (2) Accuracy, (3) Usefulness of Web resources, and (4) Critical perspective of Web resources.

(1) *How to*. This term is related to “how to” do a given task. For example, students **al065111**, **al118185**, **al227819**, and **al118191** make comments such as “how to write an essay”, how to use some “useful Internet sources”, “how to search for information in Websites”, and “how to write in a right way”. All these students manifest their “how to” in all those different tasks.

(2) *Accuracy*. It has to do with ‘exactness’ and ‘precision’. Regarding our students’ comments and the Cybertask, *accuracy* is probably understood in this context as writing in a more appropriate, academic way. Students **al205270**, **al227924**, **al074451**, and **al118191** share this tendency if we pay attention to their words: “learn different skills to

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<sup>12</sup> See Annex IX (Cybertask Answers)



write properly in English”, “learn to build accurate structures”, learn how to write properly any kind of text”, “learn how to find accurate information in different web pages”, and “how to write in a right way”.

(3) *Usefulness of Web resources*. Students reflect online resources’ practical use in their words: “useful Internet sources” (**al118185**), “learn some useful information” (**al236946**), “improve my writing skills, to discover new online resources and to feel that my English is improving” (**al118216**), and “using the correct sources” (**al118191**).

(4) *Critical perspective of Web resources*. This tendency reflects the active and creative thinking of some students who achieve this aim by engaging with a variety of Web texts. We can observe this feature in the following words: [It is important to] “realise if that we have found is pertinent” (**al227819**).

An analysis on **Metalanguage** allows us to assert that these ten students talk positively about what they can learn with the Cybertask regarding their (1) metacognitive, (2) pragmatic, and (3) theoretical perspectives about learning:

(1) *Metacognitive perspective*. Students **al227819**, **al118185**, **al065111**, **al227924**, **al074451**, and **al118191** think about the previous steps to follow before writing a text, how to write an essay, and learn how to search for information in websites; i.e. these students reflect metacognitively on learning strategies.

(2) *Pragmatic perspective*. Students **al121323**, **al118216** think about improving their writing skills, i.e. reflect on the pragmatic consequences of their learning.

(3) *Theoretical perspective*. Students **al236946**, and **al205270** show a theoretical attitude towards learning, i.e. is concerned with the contents of learning.

On the other hand, only 1 student talks negatively about the task, in pejorative tones, as it can be seen in the following quotation:

- Student al121277: *“I don’t really think I am going to learn something. It might be interesting but don’t think I, personally, will put the attention it requires”.*

This student (**al121277**) shows a negative attitude towards the task, since she thinks that she is not going to learn anything with this Cybertask. She also feels that the Cybertask is not worth paying

attention to, and thus she states, “don’t think I, personally, will put the attention it requires”.

The attitude of this student turns out to be significant if we take into account her 100% positive toward ICT profile, compared to 0% (-) ICT. This data, along with her active profile appear to be contradictory with her lack of motivation for online learning. Perhaps we might explain this behaviour by her educational path as a 100% teacher dependent learner. Furthermore, this task has a very dull and automatic aspect and this feature may provoke a rejection on behalf of the student.

Finally, we illustrate students’ answers to activities 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the Cybertask in order to observe to what extent learners’ perceived expectations had an impact for the purpose of our present work. In this sense, in order to explain specific cases concerning the relationship between self-assessment and teacher’s assessment, we will exemplify some of the responses of 6 students in our case studies (see section 9.5).

### **ACTIVITY 3**

#### **3.1. “Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process”**

- Student al205270: *“The importance of the writing process, is based in the challenging experience the writing process is itself. It requieres differents steps that must be followed, and also the fluency a writer can use to actually show the knowdlege in the same text the writter will create. It is really important to know how to write properly, because each step of the writing process can make you jump forward to another idea to include in the text, or also, it can make you jump backwards to decide which idea is the best one to mention in each part of the writing process. Basically, the writing process is a a way to approach what you want to express, gaining more abilities and using them as tools”.*

Regarding this student’s metalanguage, and the use of the terms “*jump forward*” and “*jump backward*” shows her idea of process in which she can go forward and backwards in an online text. The student does not have a lineal representation of the text; this is the reason why she employs those terms (“*jump forward*” and “*jump backward*”). This process is reflected in her synthetic capacity (skimming and scanning), which is justified with her 100% synthetic profile in the Learning Styles Questionnaire. Furthermore, her language level (B2) contributed to the successful completion of this activity (4/5) as well

as her positive view towards the writing process: “*challenging experience*”.

- Student al227924: “*The writing process, helps you to clear your mind and structure your ideas. However, you don’t have to follow an order, because you can go back and forth the steps as many times as you like. This is the way, you can improve your text and your writing; you have to think about what you are going to say and who is going to read it. Depending on that you have to be more precise with you vocabulary, or you have to use common words. Without this process, your text can be a group of sentences telling something with no order, and no structures. With the consequence that the people who reads it , will not understand what you wanted to say*”.

In this case, this student does not use the appropriate metalanguage that this answer requires. And this lack of competence is quite surprising bearing in mind she has a high English level (B2). At this level, the student should have taken her metalanguage more into account. Instead, her metalanguage is very colloquial. Thus, expressions such as “*you don’t have to follow an order*” do seem a little confusing. Furthermore, she does not clearly explains what “*follow an order*” means, so this expression is not entirely clear, whether this refers to the order of the steps or the order of the navigation. On the other hand, her synthetic capacities are shown in her view of a text as structured ideas as going back and forth in the navigation process.

Nevertheless, her result in the teacher's assessment was not as good as it was expected (3/5) due to her metalanguage.

- Student al118216: *“Writing is used to express and explain ideas. Writing is the primary basis upon which your work, your learning, and your intellect will be judged—in college, in the workplace, and in the community”.*

This student highlights the importance of writing as a social tool. With regards to the activity result and her autonomous profile, she does not identify herself with the Learning Styles Questionnaire proposals. Probably, she showed a feeling of rejection towards the task. Her answers in the Learning Styles Questionnaire resulted in low percentage points. The brevity in her answer makes us think about her lack of motivation, and although she highlights the importance of the writing process, the result in this activity is 3/5 regarding the teacher's assessment.

- Student al121323: *“The writing process is actually a fluid and changing experience. In other words, each step of the writing process can move you forward to completing a piece of writing or backward in terms of rethinking, reshaping, and revising that piece of writing. There are several ways for writing processes. According to the webpage <http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm> they have focused in: Prewriting, Writing, Revising, Editing and proofreading.”*

*These stages are recursive; that is, they do not necessarily follow one another in order; you can go back and forth among steps, repeating those that you need to until you end up with the result you want.*

*Writing process is important because gives sense to the work you have done, a well structured, with paragraphs and the correct vocabulary you have used during the task. All this makes more easier whwn the reader gets into the writing. He or she will understand perfectly”.*

The student manifests his synthetic capacities in that he views the writing process as a “fluid and changing experience” in which the reader can move forward and backwards. Furthermore, his synthetic profile (in the Learning Styles Questionnaire) is understood in terms of ‘skimming’ and ‘scanning’, and he shows a good management of specific vocabulary and/or expressions in the writing process context. His language level (B1) is important to determine his ability in reading comprehension, since it has been proved to be another factor that has contributed in his successful task completion (5/5).

- Student al074451: *“The writing process is not just to write a composition. It contains different steps that have to be fulfilled in order to achieve a good result. It is important not to avoid or change the order of any of these steps because each step of the writing process will make you think and rethink in order to move forward or backward to change any piece of information given. Imagine you are in the final version of your essay but you have forgotten to include a very*

*important idea of your previous brainstorming. If that happens, you can move backwards and change your draft and template, in order to achieve your good result”.*

Regarding metalanguage, this student adequately uses the language, using words such as: “*brainstorming*”, “*draft*”, and “*template*”, which are characteristic of the writing process. The use of adequate vocabulary is reflected in her language level (B1), which may have contributed in her language choice.

Her high percentage points in the synthetic profile (66.67%) in the Learning Styles Questionnaire may have contributed to her critical view of the writing process. This personal perception is observed in her answer, as she states that: “It is important not to avoid change the order of any of these steps [...] move forward or backward...”

Despite her dependent profile (100%), her positive attitude toward ICT explains her capacity of managing different information on the Web pages in order to answer this activity successfully (5/5) regarding the teacher’s assessment.

- Student al118191: “*The writing process is very important, because we need to write in order to communicate, and we need to write correctly. Writing is*



*everywhere: in newspapers, in internet, books and so on and we need to follow a writing process to write coherently in order to communicate effectively".*

As far as metalanguage is concerned, she does not use specific vocabulary, but instead she writes correctly without grammar or syntactical mistakes. Probably, her writing abilities are related to her need "to write correctly", because she thinks that someone has to "write coherently in order to communicate effectively". In spite of her high percentage points in the synthetic profile (100%) in the Learning Styles Questionnaire, she does not show a synthetic capacity in her answer to this activity. Her attitude may be justified by her lack of interest or motivation in completing the task. Nevertheless, we think that the result obtained in this activity is very surprising, because in spite of the teacher's assessment, she successfully completes the task (3/5).

### **3.2. "What civilizations were the first to use writing?"**

- Student al205270: *"The first piece of writing, only contained numbers, but the first piece of true writing of language, was invented in Mesopotamia and Mesoamerica. However, there is a cultural confusion, due to the facts that Egypt and China could also have been the inventors of the writing of language. Also, there is a similar debate about the Indian writing of language during the Bronze*

Age. *It is said that writing was transmitted from one culture to another, so we can't really know what culture was the first one to use writing*".

In this answer, this subject is a very good example of a synthetic learner; as a matter of fact she shows a 100% synthetic profile in the Learning Styles Questionnaire. Since this is an activity that demands a synthetic capacity on behalf of the student in order to answer it successfully, it is not surprising the good result obtained: 5/5 in the teacher's assessment. Furthermore, she knows how to employ the language for the purpose of summarising the information she has found on the Web; in all likelihood, her good language level (B2) has contributed to this. Finally, induction is also important, because she ranks the information very well with the use of connectors (e.g.: the first, however, also, it is said).

- Student al227924: *"The ones settled between the rivers: Nile and Tigris. That were Egyptian and Sumerian"*.

The case of this student is relevant bearing in mind her high percentage points in the synthetic profile (66.67%) in the Learning Styles Questionnaire and her language level (B2). Since this task requires good synthetic skills, we do not understand how this student failed in answering this activity. Probably, this failure could be explained by her analytic (20%) traits because in the information she

found on the Web, there were lots of details, and as a result she did not know how to establish a rank in her answer. Since she did not have a clearly 100% synthetic profile, we could say that her profile, in this respect remained fuzzy. On the other hand, her dependent (66.67%) traits also affected her task result. The fact that this student needed guidance from the teacher may have resulted in her unsuccessful task completion (2/5) regarding the teacher's assessment.

- Student al118216: *“The Sumerians developed a form of **pictographic** writing that used word pictures like bird, fish, ox or grain etc., around 4000 - 3500 BC. In 3000 BC, it developed into a cursive form of **cuneiform** style of writing which was a wedge shaped linear impression on clay tablets”.*

This student has rushed to answer this activity. This behaviour has led her to copy and paste information, due to her low motivation. Her autonomous (100 %), active (75 %), and (+) ICT (100 %) learning styles corroborate this behaviour. As a result, this student has obtained 0/5 in the teacher's assessment.

- Student al121323: *“The Sumerian people who lived in the Middle East and the Egypt”.*

By applying the skills involved in each of the activities of the Cybertask, there is no significance in the little difference between the

styles synthetic-analytic (66.67 %-40 %) styles, because he does not manage several pieces of information for this activity. In addition, his synthetic profile (summarise) is important, but also ranking and drawing conclusions (inductive profile). In addition, a score of 0% in the thoughtful profile has to be related to the other traits in order to be able to solve the task. Finally, this student has not been able to rank ideas. Thus, as a result, all these features explain his result 2/5 in the teacher's assessment.

- Student al074451: *“The first civilizations to use writing appeared in the different cultures of Bronze age”*.

This student performs a very strong induction and expresses her answer very correctly through a general statement. Her result 4/5 is explained because she has been very stark in her response. Her learning styles have been characterized by being inductive (100 %), synthetic (66.67 %), and thoughtful (66.67 %), which were necessary to answer this question.

- Student al118191: *“The earliest writings recorded were from Mesopotamia”*.

This student had low percentage points in the thoughtful (33.33%) and inductive (50%) profiles, however if we take into account our pre-established values, a score of 100% is still insufficient as a measure of

the synthetic value. For this reason, she achieved unsuccessful task completion (2/5) according to the teacher's assessment.

**ACTIVITY 4: “According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.**

- Student al205270: *“There isn't a proper answer to the question of how many drafts are needed before the final text, but it is true pre-writing it's the main thing. Following this, the first writing starts to gain impotence, when this is finished, re-writing the whole piece is a very important step you must follow, to check out if there is anything you want to change, and finally, editing the text is the last thing to do before writing the final piece. So, I believe you must write at least 4 drafts before giving the final copy. However, it would be possible you'd need to write as many drafts as you consider”.*

In order to answer this activity synthetic, inductive, autonomous, and thoughtful capacities are required. There is a hierarchy in her response (*“the first [...] when this is finished [...] and finally [...] So, I believe...”*). Her thoughtful, synthetic, and inductive traits show her use of textual organizers. For this reason, her 5/5 result is justified in the teacher's assessment.

- Student al227924: *“Before you make the final copy, you need to make at least two drafts. This is because, the first draft you make, the ideas won’t be concise and also they won’t be organized. The second one you will have everything in order, more precise and you will give examples for your statements. In the second draft, you will edit what you don’t like, and change some words, and the final copy will be ready. In some cases you will need three drafts, but in my opinion that’s not necessary”.*

There is no hierarchy in her arguments and there is a substantiated conclusion. At all times she says things that are already presupposed. She makes an inventory of ideas without connection and without providing any new information. In order to be able to link ideas, she should be thoughtful and inductive. As a result, her learning capacities have not been sufficient for successful task completion (3/5), according to the teacher’s assessment.

- Student al118216: *“Only a first draft and then the final copy”*

This student gives responses to get by; she is short and hasty in her response. This behaviour is very much in line with a "cut and paste", which is her strategy. As a result, her grade is 2/5.

- Student al121323: *“The ideal number of drafts would be three, the first one for making questions and notes (that would be the skeleton) the second one would be a more expanded work with no taking care about spelling. And finally the good”*

*one, Wwth right spelling, correct expalined points and well diferenciaded paragraphs”.*

This student does not express his point of view, but he structures the text well. As far as opinion is concerned, he does not distinguish between the opinion he has about the Web and his personal opinion. Therefore, the result in this activity is 3/5 in the teacher’s assessment.

- Student al074451: *“Once you have written your first draft, it is important to write two or three more drafts in order to revise the information. There are writers who need more than three drafts. This step is very important because once you have revised all the information, the final step comes easily.*

*Another piece of advice frequently given is to wait some days between the revision of one draft and the revision of the following one”.*

This student does not give her own personal opinion (dependent profile 100%), instead, she gives the opinion she has found on the net. This behaviour justifies her result in this activity: 4/5

- Student al118191: *“In my opinion, we need three drafts. First we should make the brainstorming. Second, a draft with most of the information we find on the internet. And third, we should select the most relevant information. I think that all of us should follow the steps, but very few of us do. I am one of those that didn’t”.*

This is a very synthetic student, giving very precise information. She is also autonomous, she is not afraid of giving her personal opinion in this activity. For this reason, her result for this activity is 5/5 in the teacher's assessment.

## **ACTIVITY 5**

### **5.1. "Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report..."**

- Student al205270: *"First, research about the topic you are about to write must be done, therefore you'll gain a few ideas that you can add to the knowledge you already owe. Second, the analysis of the subject it's a very important process, in which you must decide how to use the different ideas in the text. Then, brainstorming is a good way to add different and possibly new ideas to the equation, in which you can decide which comes first, and which one is useless. After this, you must pick up the thesis, which will be your best idea and the whole text will be defined around it. However, the outline is also very important, because is where we decide how to start writing the ext, what comes first and why. Then, Introduction, different paragraphs and conclusion, will allow you to write a proper masterpiece in your writing essay".*

This activity demands analytic capacities, and metalinguistic abilities. In the case of this student, her language level (B2) has been a very important factor in her development of metalinguistic abilities in



relation to the writing process (research, brainstorming, thesis, outline...). Furthermore, considering that she shows an absolute profile with regards to the synthetic (100%) and inductive (100%) learning styles in the Learning Styles Questionnaire, these features have not created a barrier in identifying information from different texts, and finding common traits in the information that she has found (analytic profile). She makes bad use of connectors, she does not link the sentences well, such as "However, the outline ... " when there should be used in its place "Therefore". She reproduces the steps that she has gathered on the Web, but they are not properly reflected, instead, she makes a summary of the steps that must be used according to what she has seen on the information from the net. Finally, her result 4/5 in this activity is explained by her lack of capacity for analysis and consistency.

- Student a1227924: *"First of all you have to brainstorm and make a list with all the ideas you have. After that you have to structure them, making the outline. Then you look for some examples, or quotes for your statements. When you have all this done, you have to make the first draft, it doesn't have to be perfect. Depending on what you have and if you are so demanding with yourself when you write, you will need another draft, or just to edit the first one and then the final copy is perfectly done".*

Regarding this student's learning profiles, she needs analytic features in order to answer this activity, but in spite of her low percentage points (20%), she has succeeded in the activity result. It is surprising that she does not define the main steps in relation to her analytic profile, but she does synthesize the information very well in relation to her synthetic profile. In addition, she uses action verbs in relation to her active profile, for example "make a list", "you have to structure", "you have to make"... And she puts her requirements when she states: "...if you are so demanding with yourself..." Finally, she uses less metalanguage than **a1205270**. Thus, her result is that of 3/5 because she did not succeed in expressing the content that we expected, although the language and coherence are correct.

- Student a118216: "*There are 10 steps: research, analysis, brainstorming, thesis, outline, introduction, paragraphs, conclusion, MLA style and language*".

This student uses the 'inventory technique' (she is not an analytic student) in her response as follows: "*research, analysis, brainstorming, thesis, outline, introduction, paragraphs, conclusion, MLA style and language*". This quotation reflects her little capacity of identifying information from different texts, as well as her failure in finding common features in the information she found. As a result of this answer, she has mixed

logic elements (brainstorming, outline, introduction...) with form elements (MLA style, language...).

This activity required identifying and writing the main steps used to write an essay on any domain. Thus, she has to establish a difference between an inventory of steps and an analytic statement/narration. To conclude, this feature has had a negative influence in her result 2/5, according to the teacher's assessment.

- Student al121323: *"The main steps that should be used to write an essay are: Brain storming, first draft and final copy".*

His synthetic profile (66.67%) is related with his answer in this activity. As a result, he has generalised his response too much. This feature explains the bad result 2/5 in the teacher's assessment.

- Student al074451: *"Some steps have to be followed in order to get a good composition. Research, Analysis, Brainstorming, Thesis, Outline, Introduction, Paragraphs, Conclusion, MLA Style, Language. We will need to spend more time in some steps than in others".*

This student has synthesized the information too much, in relation to her synthetic profile. And bearing in mind she is not analytic, she has made an inventory of steps, which has had an influence in her bad result 2/5 in the teacher's assessment.

- Student al118191: *“The main steps for the writing process are: pre-writing, writing, revising, editing and proofreading and publishing”.*

Again, we find similarity between the outlook of two students (**al074451** and **al118191**). Despite her low results in her analytic (40%) and deductive (25%) learning styles in the Learning Styles Questionnaire, this student has been capable of solving the activity successfully. Her metalinguistic abilities (research, analysis...) and her language level (B1) may have been sufficient and determinant factors in her successful task completion (3/5), according to the teacher’s assessment, because she has devised her own categorisation of steps.

**5.2. “Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.”**

- Student al205270: *“I’d use them all, as I already used them before, because they truly helped to gain the knowledge I needed to structure my ideas and share them in a writing piece, as I believe you need to follow different patterns to express just what you really mean, and not many ideas that owe lack of importance”.*

This activity demands the complementation of the active attitude, as well as the autonomous capacity and the metalinguistic competence.

Regarding this student, her absolute active traits (100%) have led to the pragmatic approach in terms of making decisions about the steps involved in the writing process. Nevertheless, her low percentage points in the thoughtful (0%) and autonomous (33.33%) traits in the Learning Styles Questionnaire made us think that this student would not be capable of transmitting a personal opinion/justification of her choice. *“I’d use them all, as I already used them before [...] I believe you need to follow different patterns...”* Surprisingly, despite her low result in the autonomous profile, she was successful in this activity (4/5), according to the teacher’s assessment. She did not show much use of metalanguage, but probably this competence was supplied by her language level (B2). Finally, she does not give her point of view, instead she writes what she thinks the teacher is going to like reading (this behaviour is linked to her dependent profile). As a result, her mark 2/5 is due to her traditional criterion (teacher-dependence field) and not considering the activity criteria (“Justify your answer”).

- Student al227924: *“Since I’m not an organized person, I prefer to write down everything I want to say, with no order. The steps, of brainstorming and making and outline, doesn’t fit me. So I first, make the draft. Then I organize what I have written making the outline, so my text will be structured. And if I can I look for examples and quotes. Then I write it again, and if I see that it is clear, and all my ideas are structured that’s the final copy”*.

She does not identify herself with autonomous traits, but together with her active profile, she does however give her spontaneous point of view, which corresponds to her active and autonomous traits. For this reason, she has succeeded in her result 5/5, according to the teacher's assessment.

- Student al118216: *"No, never. The research depends on the topic, sometimes I need to do it but sometimes not. Concerning the brainstorming, the thesis and the outline, I usually do it together and I do not follow this order"*

Since this student does not have thoughtful traits, she does not justify her statements. She writes a hasty text (active profile), and since she is autonomous (100%), we cannot understand why she does not give her own point of view on what she writes. As a conclusion, her result in task completion is 2/5 because she expresses her preferences, but she does not give any reason.

- Student al121323: *"I usually make a first draft making myself questions, then I try to answer them and conect each other. Then I make a semi final draft with the possible final essay And finally I revise the spelling and I rewrite the final copy. I don not follow all steps I have read in the webpages because I personally thinks there are some stupid steps that for my level I don't need to do".*

This student is autonomous because he gives his opinion, but he is not thoughtful because he does not think about his strong statement at the end of his response: “...*there are some stupid steps...*” For this reason, his result is 4/5 in the teacher’s assessment.

- Student al074451: “*I will use some of the steps proposed above, but personally I will avoid some of them. I personally would use the rearch, the brainstorming, the thesis, the outline, a template, 2 o 3 drafts, the final composition and then I would revise the MLA Style.*”

Her thoughtful traits (66.67%) have contributed in her critical opinion about the steps she would add or modify. In spite of being thoughtful, she does not justify why she does not give so much importance to the introduction, paragraphs, and conclusion... (given the fact that in the activity 5.1 she mentioned ten steps). Considering she is an absolute teacher-dependent student (100%-dependent/autonomous 0%), it is quite surprising her decision-making capacity. In addition, she uses metalanguage (brainstorming, thesis, outline, template, drafts, final composition, and MLA Style), but she does not think about it. Finally, she establishes a relationship between what she has learned and how she is going to apply it for her future writing (“*I will...*”). To conclude, all these features justify her result 4/5 in the teacher’s assessment.

- Student al118191: *“I think that if we follow the five steps proposed, the result can be very good. I would not change any”*.

If we pay attention to this student’s answer, we could think that she is totally a dependent student because she believes and relies on the information she has gathered on the net. She shows autonomous traits (66.67%), which are reflected in her critical decisions about the steps of the writing process, although we think that those comments may not have any value if we consider her response: *“I would not change any”*. This answer is related to a dependent profile and she gets as a 3/5 in teacher’s assessment.

**ACTIVITY 6: “Imagine that you have to write an article for your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic”**.

- Student al205270:

*“GRAPHIC ORGANISER: OUTLINE*

*TITLE: RECYCLING FOR LIFE*

*1. Recycling is the best way to maintain the process of life in our world.*



A) *Recycling allows us to use the waste we cause.*

B) *School or television campaigns keep trying to indulge us the knowledge.*

C) *There are many different tools to recycle.*

2. *However, we are not used to recycle, and there are many people that can't see why we should.*

A) *At home, some families don't recycle.*

B) *Schools or television campaigns don't really persuade enough.*

C) *Some of the tools available to recycle, are removed due to different reasons: economical, useless.*

3. *As a conclusion, we should decide what to do with what we produce, because it is our world, and our own life.*

A. *We should think and speak for ourselves.*

B.”

This activity demands schematic organization and writing skills. With regards to the Graphic Organizer, students are expected to have analytic and thoughtful attitudes, as well as coherence between the Graphic Organizer and the Essay. On the other hand, regarding the Essay, students have to produce a piece of writing where general text

coherence and cohesion, semantic-pragmatic competence, and new knowledge are present.

Regarding the Graphic Organizer and given that she has not produced the second part of this activity (Essay), we cannot establish any coherence between her Graphic Organizer and the Essay. For this reason, her 3/5 result is justified in the teacher's assessment.

On the other hand, her Essay could not be evaluated because she did not write the essay about "recycling". Therefore, the teacher's assessment for the essay was 0/15.

To conclude, with regards to the whole activity, the overall result was 3/20, which we do not consider as successful task completion.

- Student al227924:

*"GOAL: Nowadays, recycling is important because without it we would live in a world surrounded by garbage. Do you recycle?"*

*Reason 1: Politicians should make new laws about recycling*

*Reason 2: Consequencies of not recycling*

*Conclusion: Recycling is the only way to make this planet a better place to live".*

The characteristics of this student are very similar to the features of the previous student (**al205270**). Regarding the elaboration of the Graphic Organizer, her 3/5 in the teacher's assessment is justified by the lack of coherence between the Graphic Organizer and the Essay, because she did not write the second part of the activity.

As we have mentioned about student **al205270**, this student has not written the Essay either. We may draw the conclusion that she probably did not have time to start the essay. Therefore, the result obtained in this second part of the activity was 0/15.

Finally, the overall result obtained was 3/20, which is not considered as successful task completion.

- Student al118216:

*“In the first place I would talk about what is recycling and its importance.*

*Then I would explain the different possibilities of recycling and which materials can be recycled.*

*Finally I would add my personal opinion and I will emphasize the importance of recycling.*

Essay

*Recycling is turning materials that are already used into new materials. Doing this we try not to produce so many waste and save raw materials. Recycling is not only important for our planet but also for our children, whose future could be better if we leave them a cleaner planet.*

*We can recycle paper in the blue containers, glass in the green ones and plastic and cans in the yellow one.*

*On the other hand, all the electrical appliances, such as televisions, DVDs, computers, fridges or washingmachines can be brought to a clean point, or ecopark where they separate the parts that can be reused. There is at least one in each city.*

*In my opinion, recycling helps the environment and helps ourselves. We should leave the best for our future generations and also show them how to keep their mother Earth clean and try not to waste natural resources”.*

Regarding the elaboration of the Graphic Organizer, this student knows how to make previous plans (analytic -20%) in order to use them in her writing (essay). There is coherence between the information she adds in her graphic and the information she uses later in the essay. Nevertheless, she has not used a graphic organiser (she has only used a schema). Therefore, this last factor may have influenced her grade (4/5), in the teacher’s assessment.

On the other hand, the result in her Essay has been that of successful task completion (15/15) for several reasons: (1) the text showed coherence and cohesive features, (2) the language used is appropriate to the content, form, and context (linguistic competence), and (3) the genre used was that of a “newspaper article” (pragmatic competence).

Finally, the overall result in this activity corresponds to that of successful task completion (19/20), regarding the teacher’s assessment.

- Student al121323:

**“Recycling**

*We all know that we have to recicle, but do we make it, or just we say we should do it?*

*When we are chidren we attend conferences, and go to recycling factorries to make us believe that we have to keep the planet cleen and not waste paper and try to reuse it.*

*Nowadays we have loads of facilities to recycle paper, glass or other products because of the different containers we have in our towns and cities. But many times there are inconvinients maybe because peopel is not conscient that we have to do it or maybe because we do not have close containser to drop separetly those rubish.*

*Another problem is that we had to have three or four different bins at home and many people don't want to.*

*It is a hard work recycling, but it is not necessary to recycle all, maybe if you focus in paper, for example you can contribute and you will do a good help for the planet”.*

Regarding the elaboration of the Graphic Organizer, this student has not used any of the graphic offered in the Web pages (proposed in the Cybertask resources). For this reason, we cannot establish any coherence with his essay. Bearing in mind he has some analytic (40%) traits necessary to complete a graphic organiser, therefore, the result obtained for this section of the activity was 0/5, in the teacher's assessment.

On the other hand, with regards to the Essay, he was capable of producing a newspaper article about “recycling” (pragmatic competence) in a coherent way, using textual organisers, and with semantic consistency. Nevertheless, we could state that he was not very competent at language use, especially on language form (linguistic competence). As a result and according to the teacher's assessment, this student obtained 13/15 in the essay.

To conclude, the overall grade was 13/20 in this activity.

- Student al074451:

*“OUTLINE*

*Name: XXXXXX*

*Title: Recycling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

*I. Have you ever thought about the millions of bottles*

*1. Advantages of recycling*

*A. Renewable energies*

*B. Good for the environment*

*2. Disadvantages of recycling*

*A. Expensive*

*B. Bad education*

*C. cultural*

*II although recycling have positive aspects, it also have some drawbacks.*

*Have you ever thought about the millions of bottles”*

Regarding the elaboration of the Graphic Organizer in this activity, this student has successfully completed the outline (5/5) in spite of her low analytic traits (20%), which are necessary to complete a graphic

organiser. Probably, her high percentage points in the thoughtful profile (66.67%) may have been sufficient for the successful elaboration of the outline.

On the other hand, we could not assess her Essay, because she did not write anything in relation to “recycling”. Therefore, regarding her results obtained, she did not achieve successful task completion (5/20), according to the teacher’s assessment.

- Student al118191:

**“RECYCLING**

*Nowadays and ever, recycling is and was very important.*

*We should separate paper, plastic, organics, batteries or medicines to say some because if not it is harmful for the environment. A few years ago, when people started to get more aware about recycling, there appeared a slogan: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. At home, we all should have a different dust bin for the different containers. Plastics, for example, take very long to degradate, so we need to separate him. In order to be easier for us to separate and recycle, we have different colours: blue for paper, yellow for plastic and bricks, green for glass, and for the organic garbage we should use the normal containers, here in Spain they are dark green.*



*As a conclusion, it is to say that we must separate things that we are going to throw away, because it will take very few time and in this way we help the enviroment. REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE”.*

Regarding the elaboration of the Graphic Organizer, it is not possible for us to evaluate this student because she did not produce any previous outline. Therefore, the teacher’s assessment was 0/5 for the graphic organiser.

On the other hand, regarding the Essay production, we could highlight her adequacy of the text and semantic consistency (coherence), as well as cohesion between sentences. Concerning the genre for this activity, she writes a newspaper article about “recycling” (pragmatic competence). Nevertheless, she does not manage language form adequately (linguistic competence), for this reason she has not obtained the highest grade for this section (14/15).

To conclude, we could state that this student has achieved successful task completion as an overall result of this activity (14/20), according to the teacher’s assessment.

To conclude this section, in Table 6 below we illustrate the grade that our six students obtained from the<sup>13</sup>teacher’s assessment in activities 3, 4, 5, and 6 in our <sup>14</sup>Cybertask:

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES	TEACHER’S ASSESSMENT
<b>al205270</b>	Activity 3.1.	4/5
	Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4	5/5
	Activity 5.1.	4/5
	Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6	3/20
<b>al227924</b>	Activity 3.1.	3/5
	Activity 3.2.	2/5
	Activity 4	3/5
	Activity 5.1.	3/5
	Activity 5.2.	5/5
	Activity 6	3/20
<b>al118216</b>	Activity 3.1.	3/5
	Activity 3.2.	0/5
	Activity 4	2/5
	Activity 5.1.	2/5
	Activity 5.2.	2/5
	Activity 6	19/20

<sup>13</sup> See Annex XI (Teacher’s Assessment)

<sup>14</sup> See Annex IX (Cybertask Answers)

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES	TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
<b>al121323</b>	Activity 3.1.	5/5
	Activity 3.2.	2/5
	Activity 4	4/5
	Activity 5.1.	2/5
	Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6	15/20
<b>al074451</b>	Activity 3.1.	5/5
	Activity 3.2.	4/5
	Activity 4	4/5
	Activity 5.1.	2/5
	Activity 5.2.	5/5
	Activity 6	5/20
<b>al118191</b>	Activity 3.1.	3/5
	Activity 3.2.	2/5
	Activity 4	5/5
	Activity 5.1.	3/5
	Activity 5.2.	3/5
	Activity 6	14/20

(Table 6: Cybertask Activities and Teacher's Assessment)

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## 9.2. LEARNING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

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In Table 7, we illustrate the different variables (V1, V2, V3, V4, and V5) presented in the Learning Styles Questionnaire. Each variable describes each one of the pairs (composed of opposing values) of gradual tendencies that characterise the styles of the questionnaire. These gradual tendencies do not exclude each other in each pair. In addition, the table reflects the number of students from 23 in total, which have obtained a high percentage in each of the values.

For the light of the results section, we deem it necessary to mention that we are not going to take into account the complete list of learning variables explained in this work. Instead, due to the relevance of the Cybertask proposed and Cybertasks as a proposal to teach and learn the English language, we feel there is a need to focus on the following variables in relation to the Learning Styles Questionnaire. Furthermore, each one of the variables may have two variants:

- V1- Active / Thoughtful: Using the language actively *vs.* Thinking about the language first and then speak.
- V2- Synthetic / Analytic: Using several texts at the same time in order to get information *vs.* Analytical learners are also called

sequential learners, because they like to take one piece of information at a time.

- V3- Inductive / Deductive: Guessing the rules of the language vs. Having the language rule beforehand and apply it later.
- V4- Autonomous / Dependent: Working on our own vs. Depending on other people to take responsibility for our work.
- V5- Positive attitude towards ICTs / Negative attitude towards ICTs

<b>V1</b>	Active	8 students
	vs.	
	Thoughtful	4 students
<b>V2</b>	Synthetic	8 students
	vs.	
	Analytic	2 students
<b>V3</b>	Inductive	9 students
	vs.	
	Deductive	1 student
<b>V4</b>	Dependent	4 students
	vs.	
	Autonomous	5 students

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<b>V5</b>	(+ ICT	13 students
	vs.	
	(-) ICT	0 students

(Table 7: Variables)

Given the importance of the pair dependent-autonomous, it may be worth looking at this pair with greater detail. We will consider as significant for the purposes of our study the data obtained by each student whose percentages obtained in the Learning Styles Questionnaire were: (a) 100% autonomous and 0% dependent on the teacher; or (b) in one of the variables the student had obtained a percentage over 50 %. Taking into account that the dominant culture in our context is a teaching culture, five students are completely autonomous (0% dependent). However, it is quite significant that 5 students considered themselves as very autonomous (66.67 %); although they also recognised the role of the teacher (33.33 %), probably as a guide or an adviser, if we take into account the correlation between the two sets of data.

According to Table 7 above we can conclude that most of the students are active, inductive, synthetic and positive toward ICT. The low results obtained are remarkable in the correlation dependent-

autonomous, since they are two profiles that are taken very much into account in our research.

The table shows the number of students who have obtained a high percentage in each of the values. To establish that a student prevails in one of the pairs of styles, we have taken into account the fact that between the two values there is a difference of 50 % and even in some cases 40% when one of the values is as low as 15 %. Hence, in order to consider a style relevant, this must have a minimum rate of 50% or higher. For example: both the results obtained 50% - 0 %, and 50% - 10% would be considered significant. On the other hand, if the result obtained were 50% - 15 %, this would be non-significant, since the difference between both is less than 40 %. For example, student “al227842” would not be relevant, since in the active-thoughtful correlation this student obtained a 50% percentage in the active profile and a 66.67% percentage in the thoughtful profile. Thus, there is only a difference of 33.33 % percentage points (less than 40%) and therefore this result is not significant for our purposes. These results can be explained thanks to the characteristics of our Learning styles questionnaire, since it allowed answering options belonging to theoretically opposed tendencies. In fact, student al227842 would have a mixed profile, where the thoughtful profile would be related to

a pragmatic (or language communicative use) perspective. Reflection would be applied through action, and from language use situations: “in order to use a language it is necessary to use it”, “reflexion can take place later”, or “practice makes teachers”. In any case, it is worth mentioning that all these formulations correspond to the Learning styles questionnaire that students completed.

In addition, a detailed description of the values is given in relation to the other values, specifying the exact number of students belonging to the different profiles regarding the learning styles questionnaire. And in the following tables, where we show the correlations of each variable with other variables, we have used shaded boxes to indicate that the different variants are related to the variant on top of the table:



ACTIVE (8 students)	
Synthetic	4 students
Analytic	0 students.
Inductive	5 students
Deductive	0 students
Dependent	1 student
Autonomous	2 students
(+) ICT	6 students
(-) ICT	0 students

(Table 8: Correlation of Variant “Active” with other Variables)

From 8 active students that are listed in Table 7 (Variables); 4 students are synthetic, 5 are inductive, and 6 are (+) ICT. The other values are irrelevant, given the fact that when performing the Learning Styles Questionnaire students have selected only one or none of the typical responses of the analytic, deductive and negative attitude toward ICT styles that we offered them.

Active students do not fear working with different sources of information because they are able to synthesise, delimit relevant information, and establish generalizations. Taking into account the

studies about autonomy, in which our work hypotheses are based, there should be a correlation between active and autonomous students. From this correlation we could tell as well that certain abilities related to synthetic and inductive behaviours favour autonomy, since they imply the capacity of managing different sources of information and the capacity of formulating inferences from different experiences.

THOUGHTFUL (4 students)	
Synthetic	0 students
Analytic	0 students
Inductive	1 student
Deductive	0 students
Dependent	0 students
Autonomous	0 students
(+) ICT	2 students
(-) ICT	0 students

(Table 9: Correlation of Variant “Thoughtful” with other Variables)

Out of 4 students who are listed in Table 7 (Variables) with a thoughtful style; we can only highlight 1 student with an inductive style, and 2 students with positive attitude toward ICT.

SYNTHETIC (8 students)	
Active	5 students
Thoughtful	2 students
Inductive	5 students
Deductive	0 students
Dependent	3 students
Autonomous	6 students
(+) ICT	7 students
(-) ICT	1 student

(Table 10: Correlation of Variant “Synthetic” with other Variables)

This “Synthetic” value provides indicative results, because of 8 synthetic students that are indicated in Table 7 (Variables), 5 are active, 5 are inductive, 6 are autonomous, and 7 are positive toward ICT. The rest of values (thoughtful, deductive, dependent, (-) ICT) proved to be irrelevant to the study, as the percentage of students with these values is very low and hence not significant.

This result seems to confirm the relationship between autonomy and an active profile; and synthetic and inductive behaviours. Furthermore, there is a positive attitude toward ICT. Following from this, we could say that autonomous students tend to consider ICT as a valid tool for work and they do not fear handling different sources of information.

ANALYTIC (2 students)	
Active	0 students
Thoughtful	0 students
Inductive	1 student
Deductive	0 students
Dependent	1 student
Autonomous	0 students
(+) ICT	2 students
(-) ICT	0 students

(Table 11: Correlation of Variant “Analytic” with other Variables)

Although the number of students with an analytic profile is very low (2 students) according to Table 7 (Variables); out of these 2 students, 2 have also obtained a high percentage of positive attitude toward ICT. On the other hand, in this correlation we have ruled out the active, thoughtful, inductive, deductive, dependent, autonomous and negative attitude toward ICT styles, because the low percentage obtained for these values does not bring us any conclusive information.

INDUCTIVE (9 students)	
Active	5 students
Thoughtful	0 students
Synthetic	5 students
Analytic	1 student
Dependent	1 student
Autonomous	1 student
(+) ICT	5 students
(-) ICT	0 students

(Table 12: Correlation of Variant “Inductive” with other Variables)

Out of 9 inductive students that are listed in Table 7 (Variables), only 5 show an active, synthetic, and (+) ICT profile. The other values do not show any relevance due to its low percentage of responses for those styles.

DEDUCTIVE (1 student)	
Active	0 students
Thoughtful	0 students
Synthetic	0 students
Analytic	0 students
Dependent	0 students
Autonomous	1 student
(+) ICT	0 students
(-) ICT	0 students

(Table 13: Correlation of Variant “Deductive” with other Variables)

Regarding Table 7 (Variables), the only deductive student also shows autonomous characteristics in the Learning Styles Questionnaire. This case may suggest the need of deepening the concept of autonomy and

which not necessarily has to be linked to an experimental and inductive tendency. The personal organization of tasks and learning plans would be compatible with a deductive behaviour in grammar learning, provided that this conduct does not mean an excessive dependence on external evaluation and a negative interpretation of the error as a risk of punishment.

DEPENDENT (4 students)	
Active	1 student
Thoughtful	0 students
Synthetic	0 students
Analytic	1 student
Inductive	1 student
Deductive	0 students
(+) ICT	4 students
(-) ICT	0 student

(Table 14: Correlation of Variant “Dependent” with other Variables)

The “Dependent” value shows that from 4 students who are listed in Table 7 (Variables) with a dependent style, only the dependent- (+) ICT correlation is indicative. On the other hand, the other values: active, thoughtful, synthetic, analytic, inductive, deductive, and negative attitude toward ICT have proved to be an extremely low percentage for this correlation. The positive attitude toward ICT does not seem to be necessarily related to favourable attitudes towards self-directed learning.

AUTONOMOUS (5 students)	
Active	2 students
Thoughtful	0 students
Synthetic	1 student
Analytic	0 students
Inductive	1 student
Deductive	0 students
(+) ICT	1 student
(-) ICT	0 students

(Table 15: Correlation of Variant “Autonomous” with other Variables)



The “Autonomous” value has shown that from 5 students that are listed in Table 7 (Variables) with an autonomous style, only 2 students with an active profile have obtained a high percentage of statements selected in the Learning Styles Questionnaire. On the contrary, the other values (thoughtful, synthetic, analytic, inductive, deductive, (+) ICT, and (-) ICT have proven to be an extremely low percentage in this correlation.

It is worth highlighting again that the impossibility of establishing sometimes correlations in quantitative terms may be due to the orientation of our qualitative Learning Styles Questionnaire, open to the consideration of mixed profiles, that is to say, open to the fact that in an individual there may be combinations of features belonging in theory to different styles.

(+ ICT (13 students)	
Active	6 students
Thoughtful	2 students
Synthetic	3 students
Analytic	2 students
Inductive	6 students
Deductive	0 students
Dependent	4 students
Autonomous	1 student

(Table 16: Correlation of Variant “(+ ICT” with other Variables)

This “(+ ICT” value is very relevant in view that 13 students listed in Table 7 (Variables) have a positive attitude toward the ICT profiles. Out of these 13 students, only the active-(+) ICT and inductive-(+) ICT correlations are indicative. The other values: thoughtful, synthetic, analytic, deductive, dependent, and autonomous show an extremely low percentage and therefore are not considered important for this correlation.

Regarding the results shown in the table above (Table 15), we find it relevant to highlight the fact that the active-(+) ICT and inductive-(+)

ICT correlations have obtained significant values. This aspect seems quite remarkable to us, since the expected result would be to obtain a high percentage in the pair of opposites autonomous-(+) ICT.

On this occasion, we would have to re-emphasise that the qualitative characteristics of our Learning Styles Questionnaire prevents us to establish correlations of a quantitative nature. In this way, this qualitative approach allows us to apply a mixed profile to various styles on the same subject. Along this line, in order to deepen in the value of these correlations we should consider the set of traits that constitute the learning profiles as mixed profiles. In other words, we should establish what other tendencies are associated to the traits whose correlation has been shown as significant. For this reason, it is necessary to address a qualitative study that completes and modulates quantitative results. This qualitative study is possible with a case study that retrieves the data from the Learning Styles Questionnaire and that allows us to consider the mixed nature of learning profiles.

Finally, the “(-) ICT” value has shown no students with a (-) ICT style. This result obtained may be relevant, since the values of our present education system demands high mastery in the use of the new technologies for educational purposes in different competencies.

The table below (Table 17) reflects the different learning styles, according to the Learning Styles Questionnaire. Furthermore, the percentages shown refer to the statements selected by students in the Learning Styles Questionnaire.

9- Results

STUDENT	V1		V2		V3		V4		V5	
	Active	Thoughtful	Synthetic	Analytic	Inductive	Deductive	Dependent	Autonomous	(+) ICT	(-) ICT
al236946	25%	33.33%	0%	40%	50%	0%	33.33%	33.33%	100%	0%
al229578	25%	33.33%	33.33%	100%	25%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
al227819	50%	100%	66.67%	40%	50%	25%	66.67%	33.33%	66.67%	33.33%
al227844	50%	0%	100%	40%	50%	0%	33.33%	66.67%	66.67%	33.33%
al227888	75%	100%	33.33%	40%	25%	0%	66.67%	100%	100%	33.33%
al228860	75%	33.33%	100%	20%	20%	25%	33.33%	66.67%	66.67%	0%
al205270	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%	66.67%	33.33%	100%	0%
al227924	75%	0%	66.67%	20%	50%	0%	66.67%	33.33%	100%	0%
al074451	25%	66.67%	66.67%	20%	100%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
al228747	50%	0%	100%	0%	50%	0%	33.33%	66.67%	100%	0%
al227821	25%	100%	66.67%	40%	25%	25%	66.67%	66.67%	100%	0%
al106682	50%	100%	66.67%	40%	0%	25%	33.33%	66.67%	100%	33.33%

9- Results

STUDENT	V1		V2		V3		V4		V5	
	Active	Thoughtful	Synthetic	Analytic	Inductive	Deductive	Dependent	Autonomous	(+) ICT	(-) ICT
al227842	50%	66.67%	33.33%	40%	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%	0%
al185922	50%	66.67%	100%	20%	100%	0%	0%	100%	66.67%	33.33%
al121277	50%	0%	33.33%	40%	25%	25%	100%	0%	100%	0%
al118191	75%	33.33%	100%	40%	50%	25%	33.33%	66.67%	100%	66.67%
al121324	75%	100%	33.33%	60%	75%	25%	66.67%	33.33%	66.67%	33.33%
al118185	100%	0%	66.67%	0%	100%	25%	66.67%	66.67%	66.67%	0%
al065111	25%	66.67%	100%	20%	25%	50%	66.67%	33.33%	66.67%	33.33%
al118216	75%	0%	33.33%	20%	0%	25%	0%	100%	100%	0%
al099409	75%	100%	33.33%	20%	0%	25%	33.33%	100%	33.33%	0%
al121323	50%	0%	66.67%	40%	25%	25%	0%	100%	33.33%	0%
al121300	100%	66.67%	66.67%	60%	0%	50%	0%	100%	33.33%	66.67%

(Table 17: Learning Styles Questionnaire Results)

### 9.3. LEVEL QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

In this section we present the levels of language of the 23 students who participated in the experiment. Furthermore, we can observe the different levels obtained in each of the competencies according to the European Language Portfolio in the following table (Table 18). We have always thought that the language level is related to the type of navigation and the strategies to solve the task: (a) key words, and (b) spend more or less time in some web pages compared to other pages.

STUDENT	LISTENING COMPREHENSION	READING COMPR.	ORAL INTERACTION	ORAL EXPRESSION	LISTENING EXPRES.	LEVEL
al236946	B1	B1	A2	A2	B1	B1
al229578	B1	B2	B2	B2	C1	B2
al227819	A2	B1	A2	B1	B1	B1
al227844	B1	B1	B1	B1	B2	B1
al227888	A2	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1

## 9- Results

<b>STUDENT</b>	<b>LISTENING COMPREHENSION</b>	<b>READING COMPR.</b>	<b>ORAL INTERACTION</b>	<b>ORAL EXPRESSION</b>	<b>LISTENING EXPRES.</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>
al228860	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
al205270	B2	B1	B2	B2	C1	<b>B2</b>
al227924	B2	B2	B2	B2	B2	<b>B2</b>
al074451	A2	B1	B1	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
al228747	B2	B1	B2	B1	B2	<b>B2</b>
al227821	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
al106682	A2	B1	B1	A2	B1	<b>B1</b>
al227842	B1	B1	A2	A2	A2	<b>A2</b>
al185922	X	X	B1	B2	B2	<b>X</b>
al121277	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
al118191	B1	B1	A2	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
al121324	A2	B1	B1	B1	B2	<b>B1</b>



<b>STUDENT</b>	<b>LISTENING COMPREHENSION</b>	<b>READING COMPR.</b>	<b>ORAL INTERACTION</b>	<b>ORAL EXPRESSION</b>	<b>LISTENING EXPRES.</b>	<b>LEVEL</b>
<b>al118185</b>	B1	B1	B1	B1	B2	<b>B1</b>
<b>al065111</b>	A2	B1	B1	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
<b>al118216</b>	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
<b>al099409</b>	A2	B1	B1	B1	B2	<b>B1</b>
<b>al121323</b>	B1	B1	B1	B1	B1	<b>B1</b>
<b>al121300</b>	B1	B1	B1	B1	B2	<b>B1</b>

(Table 18: Level Questionnaire Results)

In fact, in order to address a quantitative study we will bear in mind not only the correlations among learning styles, but also the language levels and reading modes. Hereunder, we present the navigation results.

#### 9.4. NAVIGATION <sup>15</sup>RESULTS

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As for the types of navigation, we designate as ‘Navigating’ method the rate of up to five seconds employed visiting the same site.

We define as ‘Browsing’ method the rate where the student spends between five and fifty seconds in the same page.

Finally, we understand by ‘Reading’ method, the method followed by students who employ more than fifty seconds in the same page.

In order to determine these time spans for each navigation type, we bore in mind the degree of complexity of the web pages proposed by the researcher. That is, if the site contains a low degree of complexity, we would need to apply less time to the types of navigation, since the time applied to the ‘browsing’ method (up to fifty seconds) in a very complex page could correspond to a ‘reading’ method in a very simple web page.

It is important to highlight that before determining these time spans for the definition of each type of navigation, a first working hypothesis was tested which consisted in assigning up to one second to the ‘Navigating’ method, up to 2.5 seconds to the ‘Browsing’ method and more than 2.5 seconds to the ‘Reading’ method.

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<sup>15</sup> See Annex III (Navigation Paths)

Considering these time spans, a first check was carried out, which produced a great majority of subjects applying the 'Reading' method, as a provisional result. As that first hypothesis did not provide us with any relevant results, we decided to establish a second hypothesis that could show up greater contrast between the different methods. Therefore, we decided to assign new time spans: up to 5 seconds to the 'Navigating' method, up to 50 seconds to the 'Browsing' method, and more than 50 seconds to the 'Reading' method. As a result, from this second hypothesis a clearer contrast between the different types of navigation resulted. In this sense, it is worth mentioning that we considered a time span of up to 50 seconds for the 'Browsing' method because the students who realised the Cybertask were not native English speakers and therefore they present a slower reading score. Furthermore, the web pages proposed by the researcher were very dense, thus we also found it more appropriate to consider this time span (up to 50 seconds) due to the web pages characteristics.

Apart from the time spans stipulated in the navigation that students carried out, it is important to emphasize that to assign a type of reading mode to each one of the subjects we have not taken into account neither the previous navigation to the initial Web page or the navigation after the concluding Web page:

- Initial web page:

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm>.

- Concluding web page:

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/conclusion.thm>.

We do have taken into account all the Web pages from their initial navigation to their ending (concluding Web page), as well as the Web pages offered in the Cybertask and the Web pages of their own choice.

According to Table 19 (Navigation Results), out of 23 students who completed the Cybertask 20 students presented a 'Navigating' mode, 1 student developed a 'Browsing' mode, and 2 students the 'Reading' mode. These results are shown hereunder:

9- Results

STUDENT	READING MODE
al236946	Navigating
al229578	Navigating
al227819	Navigating
al227844	Navigating
al227888	Navigating
al228860	Navigating
al205270	Browsing
al227924	Navigating
al074451	Reading
al228747	Navigating
al227821	Navigating
al106682	Navigating
al227842	Navigating
al185922	Navigating
al121277	Navigating
al118191	Navigating
al121324	Navigating
al118185	Navigating
al065111	Navigating
al118216	Navigating
al099409	Navigating
al121323	Reading
al121300	Navigating
al121282	Navigating

(Table 19: Navigation Results)

## 9.5. CASE STUDIES

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The observations and conclusions obtained in the group study presented herein, acquire a new dimension from the point of view of an analysis of particular cases. In the study of cases, the qualitative analysis of the responses of a same subject allows us to discover a network of strategies, behaviours and emotional, cultural and cognitive trends that offer a different perspective in the study of the learning profiles concerning the use of ICTs as a learning resource (Navarro, Luzón & Villanueva, 1997: 139).

The 6 case studies presented below have been selected out of 23 students who carried out the Cybertask. The reason for this choice lies in the fact that these subjects obtained significantly different results in terms of students' profiles as language learners, understanding the term significance as the established criteria (as we have explained in section 9.2). To each of the responses to the Learning Styles Questionnaire we have applied a scale of significance, establishing percentage limits that allow us to set the criteria of significance.

Next, we will describe these six subjects in pairs: (a) Student al205270 and Student al227924; (b) Student al118216 and Student al121323; and (c) Student al074451 and Student al118191. Our approach has taken into account the differences among language level, navigation mode and different degrees of autonomy. I have paired the students following this procedure so as to clearly present opposites; all the other values are taken into account in the case studies. Furthermore, we will make general comments after each pair.

1) STUDENT al205270 and STUDENT al227924

- Common traits: B2, Dependent.
- Differences: Browsing (al205270) / Navigating (al227924).

2) STUDENT al118216 and STUDENT al121323

- Common traits: B1, Autonomous.
- Differences: Navigating (al118216) / Reading (al121323).

3) STUDENT al074451 and STUDENT al118191

- Common traits: B1, Synthetic.
- Differences: Dependent, Reading (al074451) / Autonomous, Navigating (al118191).

For each of these six cases we have devised a representation tab that summarises their language level, reading mode, cognitive profile (learning style), and their own assessment of the task (task process and task result). In this way, then, we will discuss in detail the profiles of each of these six students.



9.5.1. STUDENT al205270

<b>Student al205270</b>
English Proficiency Level: <b>B2</b>
Reading Mode: <b>Browsing</b>
Learning Style: <b>Active (100%) / Thoughtful (0%), Synthetic (100%) / Analytic (0%), Inductive (100%) / Deductive (0%), Dependent (66.67%) / Autonomous (33.33%), (+) ICT (100%) / (-) ICT (0%)</b>
Self-Assessment Questionnaire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Task Process:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>credibility of the site</b></li><li>- <b>previous knowledge about writing</b></li><li>- <b>information management (4 / more texts)</b></li></ul></li><li>• Task Result:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>high degree of satisfaction</b></li></ul></li></ul>
Teacher's Assessment: <b>40/ 60 points</b>

The **language level** of this student corresponds to an independent user (B2). She can understand the main ideas of complex texts, interacting with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, as well as producing clear texts explaining a viewpoint on a topic.

According to the **types of navigation**, this student presents a '*Browsing*' method profile, which is characterised by a quick

navigation, in which the student employs more than 5 seconds in the same page and she is simply dedicated to “pecking at” information, doing a quick sweep of the contents that she feels are relevant to achieve her objectives. An example of this method is observed in the following link, where she devoted 5.35 seconds:

[http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl\\_go\\_chart.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl_go_chart.htm)? (Resource library; see section 6.4).

As already discussed in chapter 5 (section 5.7), we said that users of the hypertext could also be classified as: 'Knowledge seekers', 'Feature explorers', and 'Apathetic hypertext users' (Anderson-Inman & Horney, 1993; Bowdish et al., 1994, and Lawless & Kulikowich, 1996). Therefore, taking this classification into account, in this case we can talk about a student who simply seeks knowledge related to the content of the hypertext; one whom we may call a '*Knowledge seeker*'. According to the observation notes taken during the experiment on the part of the researcher, we are faced with a student with an initial predisposition to quickly consult several Web pages to return to the activities and answer them.

As far as the **Learning Styles Questionnaire** is concerned, we identify this student with a clear tendency towards the following

cognitive and learning profiles: *active, synthetic, inductive, dependent* and *positive attitude toward ICT*. This student thinks that putting a language into practice is a necessary first condition in order to learn it, even before planning and thinking about all the theoretical details that concern that language. Practice is of paramount importance for her, as she considers that it makes learners become masters in the language they learn. She is 100% synthetic, she prefers paying attention to general ideas rather than to specific information, and she is able to deal with different information resources at the same time, because she only takes into account general features to accomplish her objective. She sometimes does not accept remarks on special details of the language, because she thinks they are not very important. At the same time, she thinks that elaborating small schemas may imply missing important information. She also likes discovering the rules of the language on her own by means of observation. She needs external evaluation on her work and depends on someone else to take responsibility for her. This student enjoys surfing the net. Seemingly, she does not have any problem when reading and interpreting any site, and is able to decide on what information to select as relevant for the task.

Concerning the **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** results, the following was observed:

I- Task Process:

This student shows skilful management in the new technologies, which is reflected in her positive attitude toward ICT expressed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire (100%). On the contrary, she does not feel motivated to learn more skills in depth, as she argues that she knows how to manage most of them.

As for the selection of information on the net, we need to recall that some students bear in mind the degree of credibility of the Web site they are visiting at a given moment. Therefore, it may happen that a student does not consider a Web page, because s/he thinks it is not reliable enough, or it does not provide consistent data for the type of task s/he is carrying out. In accordance, this student has in mind the credibility of the site. She looks for quality in the contents and in the information; she states that this is a crucial criterion for her.

Regarding information management, this is a student who states having been able to deal with four or more texts; she establishes relationships among images, text documents, and audiovisual documents. Nevertheless, we should point out that having entered four

different texts does not necessarily imply the fact of having successfully managed them at the same time.

She concludes saying that even if the links she has used have made her feel lost in her search, they have also helped her to better understand the information.

Considering the http:// addresses, she states that the most interesting ones for her have been the following:

<http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/writing/writingprocess/menu.html> and <http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writingprocess/writingprocess.htm>.

Her language comprehension ability confirms that using the English language has not implied any difficulty in carrying out the task.

Finally, she concludes, by stating that she knows quite well the topic proposed in this Cybertask 'The Writing Process'.

## II- Task Result:

An analysis of her task results reveals a high degree of satisfaction about the use of the Internet with the purpose of solving the given task. The process of obtaining new information and relating it to her

background knowledge to build new knowledge also contributed to her contentment.

Furthermore, she declares a high degree of satisfaction on the use of the Internet and the satisfaction about the task of gathering information to improve her foreign language knowledge. This feature is confirmed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire, as she shows a positive attitude toward the use of ICT.

This is a student who has had feelings of frustration at the end of the task, because she states that she was unable to find, in a few instances, the information that she really wanted in order to complete the task.

Regarding <sup>16</sup>**Teacher's Assessment**; this student obtained a total of 40 points out of 60 in the Cybertask. We can confirm that the active, synthetic, inductive, dependent and (+) ICT learning profiles, together with her 'Browsing' navigation mode favour 'Successful Task Completion'. We will compare these results with those obtained by student 'al227924'.

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<sup>16</sup> See Annex XI (Teacher's Assessment)

9.5.2. STUDENT al227924

<b>Student al227924</b>
English Proficiency Level: <b>B2</b>
Reading Mode: <b>Navigating</b>
Learning Style: <b>Active (75%) / Thoughtful (0%), Synthetic (66.67%) / Analytic (20%), Inductive (50%) / Deductive (0%), Dependent (66.67%) / Autonomous (33.33%), (+) ICT (100%) / (-) ICT (0%)</b>
Self-Assessment Questionnaire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Task Process:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>importance of contents / credibility of the site</b></li><li>- <b>excellent reading ability (English mastery)</b></li><li>- <b>visit different http:// addresses</b></li></ul></li><li>● Task Result:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>high degree of satisfaction</b></li></ul></li></ul>
Teacher's Assessment: <b>31/60 points</b>

The **language level** of this student corresponds to an independent user (B2). She can understand the main ideas of complex texts, interacting with a degree of fluency and spontaneity, as well as producing clear texts explaining a viewpoint on a topic.

According to the **types of navigation**, this student presents a '*Navigating*' method profile. She devoted very little time to read the

resources proposed in the Cybertask. An example of this reading method is observed in the following link, in which she devotes “2.48” seconds: <http://www.thewritingsite.org/>.

As a student with a 'Navigating' reading mode, we could also highlight her ability to create her own navigation path when she tracks for information on the Web. Thus, she moves through the hypertext by creating her own text without following the order of the Web pages offered in the Cybertask presentation. At the same time, this behaviour is confirmed bearing in mind the observation notes taken during the experiment. This disordered behaviour can be displayed in her non-linear reading and her field independence of learning traits.

As far as the **Learning Styles Questionnaire** is concerned, we identify this student with a clear tendency towards the following cognitive and learning profiles: *active, synthetic, inductive, dependent* and *positive attitude toward ICT*. Thus, in terms of learning styles we can confirm that this student shares the same learning styles profile as her pair (student “al205270”). This student thinks that practising the language is very important for her if she wants to acquire a certain degree of mastery in language learning skills. In this sense, thinking and planning before using the language is not a paramount criterion for her. Furthermore, she is 66.66% synthetic and she likes



considering general ideas rather than concrete details. Regarding this synthetic profile, she shows a certain risk-taking fear. This behaviour explains that she is able to manage two or more online sources at a general level, but she feels so overwhelmed dealing with so much information and details during the task process that she ends up taking into account general features to attain her goals. In order to solve this stressful feeling and bearing in mind that she has a dependent profile, she needs the teacher's support and a guide in order to consider so much information. In addition, she barely accepts specific remarks on the language, because those specific details are not relevant to her. Concerning her synthetic learning style, she may think that writing small schemas might imply missing important information. She also likes guessing the language rules by herself; as well as receiving external evaluation or approval on her work. Thus, depending on someone else, instead of assuming her own responsibility, is of paramount importance for her. In relation to her new technologies skills, this student enjoys surfing the net. She does not have problems when she has to read or interpret the web sites she visits. An example of this ability is that she considers herself able to decide what information to select as relevant for the task proposed.

Concerning the **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** results, the following was observed:

I- Task Process:

This student shows skilful management in the use of new technologies, which is reflected in her positive attitude toward ICT expressed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire (100%).

As for the selection of information on the net, she thinks that the degree of credibility of the Web is a factor to bear in mind; since she looks for quality in the contents and in the information. Thus, she states that this is a crucial criterion for her. In addition, she declares her own mastery of the English language, since she has excellent reading ability.

Considering the http:// addresses, she states that the most interesting ones for her have been the following:

<http://wire.rutgers.edu/process.html> and

<http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing>

[process/writingprocess.htm](http://process/writingprocess.htm), because she prefers visiting those Web pages that contain schematised information.

Her language comprehension ability confirms that using the English language has not implied any difficulty in carrying out the task; and she concludes by stating that she is quite familiarised with the topic proposed in this Cybertask, 'The Writing Process'.

## II- Task Result:

An analysis of her task results reveals a high degree of satisfaction regarding Internet use with the purpose of solving a given task. The process of obtaining new information and relating it to her background knowledge to build new knowledge also contributed to her contentment.

Furthermore, she declares a high degree of satisfaction on the use of the Internet and the satisfaction about the task of gathering information to improve her foreign language knowledge. This feature is confirmed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire, as she shows a positive attitude towards the use of ICT.

She is a student who declares that thanks to her background knowledge on 'writing', the realization of her task proved to be quite easy. In addition, the fact of handling more than two sources at the same time has implied a great problem for her in terms of speed and simplicity to answer the activities proposed in the Cybertask; this

explains her need for help on behalf of the teacher to carry out a selective choice of Web pages according to her needs. Furthermore, since she had to answer in a foreign language, this fact has slowed her down and complicated her clarity of expression when giving some explanations.

Regarding <sup>17</sup>**Teacher's Assessment**; this student obtained a total of 31 points out of 60 in the Cybertask. However, in relation to her learning profile (active, synthetic, dependent, and (+) ICT) and her 'Navigating' mode of navigation, we do not consider that this student had successfully completed our Cybertask proposed. We consider her Cybertask result as "unsuccessful" because it is not an absolute "success", but instead we could describe it as a "relative success". In other words, although she has obtained more than a 50% of correct answers in the Cybertask, we do not consider this result as 'Successful Task Completion' *per se*.

Finally, we can highlight that **Student al205270** uses the 'Browsing' mode of navigation and solves the task satisfactorily. Furthermore, her behaviour is that of a 'Knowledge seeker', supported by her synthetic and inductive capacity. Her active (100%) profile can cause her to take risks such as that of a 'compulsive clicker'; this behaviour would

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<sup>17</sup> See Annex XI (Teacher's Assessment)

justify that she recognises: “not having been able to find, or a few times at least, the information that she really wanted in order to complete the task”. Concerning her [http://](#) addresses selected, she opts for pages that contain links (e.g. ‘Prewriting’, ‘Writing’, ‘Revising’...) that allow easy access to the information she is looking for. These pages contain visual elements such as graphics (‘Graphic organizers’), tables (‘Writing process timeline’)... and that even allow the user a quick access to other related web pages.

On the other hand, **Student al227924** would also be a ‘Knowledge seeker’ but with a ‘Navigating’ mode. Furthermore, she is also a ‘Feature Explorer’, what would explain her ‘Navigating’ mode of navigation. She creates her own navigation path and is able to extract relevant information. We appreciate that she quickly selects the information that she needs and obtains a high degree of satisfaction in her task result. In addition, her synthetic (66.66%) capacity would be related to the ‘Navigating’ method; and maybe her self-assessment about managing more than 2 sources of information, responds to an excessive fear of error in relation to her teacher-dependent learning trait. Regarding her web selection, she prefers web pages with similar characteristics to those chosen by the previous student. Hence, she opts for links that contain visual elements, such as images. Although

these iconic elements are not interactive, they are considered helpful in understanding the written text better, as well as enhancing the fun of navigation.

To conclude our first pair of case studies (**al205270** and **al227924**) and regarding our research questions proposed for the present study (see chapter 9) we may argue that the first student likes taking more risks in completing the Cybertask (active profile), whereas the second student does not like taking risks due to her excessive fear of error (dependent profile) and so she needs the teacher's support. Furthermore, the second student is characterised by an inductive profile, which has a strong influence on the lack of structure in her answers and also on information-finding on the Internet. All these features, together with their modes of navigation, 'Browsing' mode in the case of the first student and 'Navigating' mode in the case of the second, have influenced their results obtained in the Cybertask. Thus, our first student has successfully completed our Cybertask (40/60), whereas the second student has obtained a low score in Cybertask completion (31/60).

9.5.3. STUDENT al118216

<b>Student al118216</b>
English Proficiency Level: <b>B1</b>
Reading Mode: <b>Navigating</b>
Learning Style: <b>Active (75%) / Thoughtful (0%), Synthetic-Analytic (33.33%-20%), Inductive (0%) / Deductive (25%), Dependent (0%) / Autonomous (100%), (+) ICT (100%) / (-) ICT (0%)</b>
Self-Assessment Questionnaire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Task Process:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>key words</b></li><li>- <b>importance of contents</b></li><li>- <b>credibility of the site</b></li><li>- <b>excellent reading ability (English mastery)</b></li><li>- <b>information management (3 texts)</b></li><li>- <b>links selection</b></li><li>- <b>no previous knowledge on 'writing'</b></li></ul></li><li>● Task Result:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>high degree of satisfaction</b></li></ul></li></ul>
Teacher's Assessment: <b>41/60 points</b>

The **language level** of this student corresponds to an independent user (B1). She can manage different situations, understanding simple texts,

describing experiences, as well as giving explanations about her opinions and plans.

According to the **types of navigation**, this student presents a ‘*Navigating*’ method profile. She devoted very little time to reading the resources proposed in the Cybertask. An example of this navigating method is observed in the following link, where she devotes “0.15” seconds:

<http://www.planet.eon.net/~bplaroeh/index.html>.

As a ‘navigating’ student, she has the ability to perform a non-linear path in her navigation by creating her own text and choosing the Web pages offered in the order she prefers. At the same time, this behaviour is confirmed bearing in mind the observation notes taken during the experiment, since she performs a disorderly progression of the Web pages proposed as they appear in the Cybertask presentation. In addition, she seems lost, and moves back and forth. Furthermore, and regarding the classification (see chapter 5, section 5.7) suggested by Anderson-Inman & Horney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless & Kulikowich (1996); this student could be classified as an ‘*Apathetic hypertext user*’, characterised by displaying no logical browsing strategy through the hypertext.



As far as the **Learning Styles Questionnaire** is concerned, we identify this student with a clear tendency towards the following cognitive and learning profiles: *Active, Synthetic-Analytic, Deductive, Autonomous* and *Positive attitude toward ICT*. If we compare this student with the first pair (“al205270” and “al227924”), we are faced to a student who also thinks that practising the language is more important than thinking about how to solve a specific task.

Furthermore, she shows a mixed profile in the Synthetic-Analytic values, thus, regarding this variable she prefers taking into account general ideas rather than specific information. Therefore, we could say that this student could be able to deal with different information materials at the same time, because she only bears in mind general ideas to accomplish her goal. However, she shows some characteristics of an analytic profile, because she states that elaborating small schemas may imply that important information is not taken into consideration. In addition, she likes having the rule first in order to use it later in specific cases and avoids the risk of making errors (deductive profile). This behaviour is surprising since she is 100% autonomous. Thus, we can confirm that a deductive student can also show autonomous features. Furthermore, this student enjoys

surfing the net and has no problems in reading and interpreting any site.

Concerning the **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** results, the following was observed:

I- Task Process:

This student shows skilful management in new technologies, which is reflected in her positive attitude toward ICT expressed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire (100%).

As for the selection of information on the net, this student considers that key words and the importance of contents are two important features worth considering when facing a new web site. Furthermore, she thinks that the degree of credibility of the Web is a factor to bear in mind; since she looks for quality in the contents and in the information. In addition, she declares herself as having mastered the English language, since she has excellent reading ability.

Regarding information management, this is a student who states having been able to deal with three texts; she establishes relationships among images, text documents, and audiovisual documents.

Considering the http:// addresses, the student says that in fact she believes that all pages are complementary, and that there is no highlighted preference.

Her language comprehension ability confirms that using the English language has not implied any difficulty in carrying out the task; and she concludes stating that the topic in this Cybertask ‘The Writing Process’, was familiar to her.

II- Task Result:

An analysis of her task results reveals a high degree of satisfaction about the use of the Internet with the purpose of solving the given task. The process of obtaining new information and relating it to her background knowledge to build new knowledge also contributed to her contentment.

Furthermore, she declares a high degree of satisfaction on the use of the Internet and the satisfaction about the task of gathering information to improve her foreign language knowledge. This feature is confirmed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire, as she shows a positive attitude toward the use of ICT.

Finally, this was we are faced with a student who, being familiar with the topic of 'writing' was faced with the setback of not actually knowing what 'graphic organizers' were. She did not find them in the recommended web pages, and consequently, she had to look for them in the network. This fact is quite surprising bearing in mind that this is a student who shows skilful management in the new technologies (as we have discussed at the beginning of 'Task process' section'. The reason may be because the student has carried out a very messy navigation, and this has led her to failing to find the answers of the activities in the resources offered. Perhaps it is a subjective appreciation because she did not follow the instructions in the training plan: the web pages that the teacher has actually proposed.

Another of her weaknesses has been that, since she had to answer in a foreign language, sometimes a word in her mother tongue came into her mind and showed doubts as to which word was the most appropriate to use in English. This factor is relevant, because she mentioned before that she had no difficulties in using the English language in order to carry out the Cybertask.

Regarding <sup>18</sup>**Teacher's Assessment**; this student obtained a total of 41 points out of 60 in the Cybertask. We could state that the active, synthetic-analytic, deductive, autonomous, and (+) ICT profiles favour her decision-taking in completing the Cybertask. Furthermore, her autonomous characteristics may have provoked her lack of fear to take risks and thus follow a disordered navigation, which we could associate to her 'Navigating' mode of navigation. As a result, bearing in mind all these features, we can confirm her 'Successful Task Completion'. Finally, we will establish comparisons between this student (al118216) and our next student (al121323).

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<sup>18</sup> See Annex XI (Teacher's Assessment)

9.5.4. STUDENT al121323

<b>Student al121323</b>
English Proficiency Level: <b>B1</b>
Reading Mode: <b>Reading</b>
Learning Style: <b>Active (50%) /Thoughtful (0%), Synthetic (66.67%) / Analytic (40%), Inductive-Deductive (25%-25%), Dependent (0%) / Autonomous (100%), (+) ICT (33.33%) / (-) ICT (0%)</b>
Self-Assessment Questionnaire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Task Process:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>key words</b></li><li>- <b>importance of contents / credibility of the site</b></li><li>- <b>excellent reading ability (English mastery)</b></li><li>- <b>information management (3 texts)</b></li><li>- <b>different http:// addresses</b></li><li>- <b>blogs, forums, e-mail, chats...</b></li><li>- <b>no previous knowledge on 'writing'</b></li></ul></li><li>● Task Result:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>high degree of satisfaction</b></li></ul></li></ul>
Teacher's Assessment: <b>42/60 points</b>

The **language level** of this student corresponds to an independent user (B1). He can manage different situations, understanding simple texts,

describing experiences, as well as giving explanations about his opinions and plans.

According to the **types of navigation**, this student presents a 'Reading' method profile. He devoted plenty of time to read the resources proposed in the Cybertask. An example of this reading method is observed in the following link, where he devotes "676.08" seconds:

<http://www1.aucegypt.edu/academic/writers/brainstorming.htm>.

As a 'Reading' student, we could also highlight his ability to read all the information carefully, paying attention to texts, images, visual titles...that have helped him find relevant information to complete the task. At the same time, this behaviour is confirmed bearing in mind the observation notes taken during the experiment, since he respects the order of the Web pages proposed as they appear in the presentation of the Cybertask. Furthermore, and regarding the classification (see chapter 5, section 5.7) proposed by Anderson-Inman & Horney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless & Kulikowich (1996); this student could be classified as a '*Knowledge seeker*', characterised by the urge to look for knowledge related to the content of the hypertext; and a 'Feature explorer', since this student considers graphic and design aspects in a Web page, rather than the contents.

As far as the **Learning Styles Questionnaire** is concerned, we identify this student with a clear tendency towards the following cognitive and learning profiles: *Active, Synthetic, Inductive-Deductive, Autonomous* and *Positive attitude toward ICT*. This student shows some similarities with his partner (student “al118216”) concerning his learning profile, but also some differences such as reflecting a 66.67% synthetic profile, and a 25%-25% Inductive-Deductive profile. Thus, regarding these last features, this student considers that he sometimes likes discovering the language rules by himself through observation. On the other hand, he also shows a deductive learning profile, which is reflected on his idea of wasting a lot of time if he infers the general rule from particular cases. As an autonomous student, he prefers working alone, independently. He thinks that organizing the group work is a waste of time, because to agree with others takes a long time. Finally, this student enjoys surfing the net. He does not show any difficulty in detecting, reading and interpreting information. This ability is shown in his optimal decisions concerning what information is relevant for the task.

Concerning the **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** results, the following was observed:



I- Task Process:

This student does not show skilful management in new technologies, which is reflected in his low percentage obtained (33.33%), and in his positive attitude toward ICT expressed in the Learning styles questionnaire.

As for the selection of information on the net, this student considers that key words and the importance of contents are two important features worth considering when facing a new web site. Furthermore, he thinks that the degree of credibility of the Web is a factor to bear in mind as he looks for quality in the contents, as well as in the information. Thus, he states that this is a crucial criterion for him. In addition, he declares himself to have mastered the English language, since he has excellent reading ability.

Regarding information management, this is a student who states having been able to deal with three texts; establishing relationships among images, text documents, and audiovisual documents.

Considering the http:// addresses, the student says that all of them have helped him for several reasons: (1) because of the drawings that the pages contained, (2) some web pages were more targeted to a

younger crowd, or (3) the information in the web pages posed no difficulty in their understanding.

Despite the fact that he had not any previous knowledge on the topic in this Cybertask 'The Writing Process', his language comprehension ability confirms that using the English language has not implied any difficulty in carrying out the task.

## II- Task Result:

An analysis of his task results reveals a high degree of satisfaction about the use of the Internet with the purpose of obtaining new information, and relating it to his background knowledge so as to build new knowledge.

Furthermore, he declares a very high degree of satisfaction about his individual work, and a high degree of satisfaction on the use of the English language to access new information and improve his foreign language knowledge.

Finally, we are faced with a student that even though the topic of 'writing' was not familiar, his weak point has been that it was hard to find the answer to some questions and therefore it has taken him more time to complete the task. On the other hand, the student states that his

strong point has been that from the information that he has read, he has been able to rewrite it in his own words without changing the meaning.

Regarding <sup>19</sup>**Teacher's Assessment**; this student obtained a total of 42 points out of 60 in the Cybertask. We consider this result as 'Successful Task Completion' taking into account his learning features (active, synthetic, autonomous, and (+) ICT) together with his 'Reading' mode of navigation. All these characteristics have favoured his success in solving our Cybertask.

Finally, we can highlight that **Student al118216** shows a 'Navigating' mode of navigation but she states considering key words in order to find information. We could think that her behaviour does not correspond to the image she has of herself, since she makes her own order when visiting the Web pages proposed in the Cybertask presentation and at the beginning we might think that she is an 'Apathetic user'. She does not identify the information in the web pages offered and she starts surfing the net. However, as the result of the successful task, there should be another explanatory hypothesis: like to investigate by herself on the Internet...What seems a disordered navigation is perhaps a "browser" behaviour related to her degree of

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<sup>19</sup> See Annex XI (Teacher's Assessment)

autonomy. She states that she likes to find resources on the Internet to improve her English language competence and she has a very positive evaluation of her own competence. This self-esteem corresponds with her lack of fear in risk-taking, her compensatory strategies (for the sake of the speech fluency, she uses words in her mother tongue) and her active and experimental facet.

On the other hand, **Student al121323** shows a 'Reading' mode and the features in terms of level and styles are similar to the previous case. Nevertheless, the skill in the management of the ICTs is lower. Thus, is this trait related to the 'Reading' mode? There is also a lower tendency to the active behaviour (50% versus 75 %) and a greater tendency to reflection. In the synthetic behaviour, there is a slight positive difference with respect to the previous case. The result of the task is equally satisfactory and may even be noted a greater ability to build knowledge expressing it in his own words.

We may conclude that the navigation mode is a strategic behaviour related to the learning style and not only with the ability in the management of the ICTs.

With respect to the language level, both students have obtained a B1, which gives them a certain degree of autonomy in the use of the

language. Perhaps for this reason we could justify the researcher behaviour of the student al118216. Furthermore, her active and experimenting profile, along with her self-esteem, are determining factors in favouring eagerness to overcome problems and improvement of the language. On the other hand, the student al121323 is able to construct new knowledge using his own words, because his B1level allows him to develop this capacity. The surprising thing here is that, unlike student al121323, student118216 is not able to express the information in her own words and uses her mother tongue to speak with more clarity in spite of having the same level as the other student. A possible reason would be that student al118216 shows a 'Navigating' mode of navigation, and therefore she reads the information more quickly, and on the other hand, student al121323 shows a 'Reading' mode, and thus he devotes more time to reading the information carefully, resulting in this student needing more feedback as well as finding it easier to build new knowledge.

To conclude our second pair of case studies (**al118216** and **al121323**) we may explain that the first student's active profile and 'Navigating' mode favour her lack of fear in risk-taking. Furthermore, she presents autonomous features which we think may be determinant when following a disordered navigation style. As a result, this student

obtained 41 points out of 60 in Teacher's Assessment, which we rate as Successful Task Completion. On the other hand, our second student presents a 'Reading' mode, which allows him to receive more feedback from the Web pages visited in the Cybertask process, as well as build new knowledge from the information he has consulted. Finally, this student has also attained a Successful Task Completion by obtaining 42 points out of 60 in the Teacher's Assessment.

9.5.5. STUDENT al074451

<b>Student al074451</b>
English Proficiency Level: <b>B1</b>
Reading Mode: <b>Reading</b>
Learning Style: <b>Active (25%) / Thoughtful (66.67%), Synthetic (66.67%) / Analytic (20%), Inductive (100%) / Deductive (0%), Dependent (100%) / Autonomous (0%), (+) ICT (100%) / (-) ICT (0%)</b>
Self-Assessment Questionnaire:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Task Process:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>key words</b></li><li>- <b>importance of contents / credibility of the site</b></li><li>- <b>information management (3 texts)</b></li><li>- <b>visit different http:// addresses</b></li></ul></li><li>● Task Result:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>high degree of satisfaction</b></li></ul></li></ul>
Teacher's Assessment: <b>38/60 points</b>

The **language level** of this student corresponds to an independent user (B1). She can manage different situations, understanding simple texts, describing experiences, as well as giving explanations about his opinions and plans.

According to the **types of navigation**, this student presents a 'Reading' method profile. She devoted plenty of time to read the

resources proposed in the Cybertask. As an example of this reading method from the following link, where she devoted “20.47” seconds: <http://wire.rutgers.edu/process.html>, we can highlight that this is a student who reads all the information carefully, paying attention to texts, images, visual titles...At the same time, this behaviour is confirmed bearing in mind the observation notes taken during the experiment, since she learns quickly the content of the page and starts an activity. Furthermore, the student begins surfing to get an overview of the Web pages offered in the Cybertask, and then she joins the navigation again respecting the order of Web pages as they appear in the Cybertask presentation for each of the activities. Following from this, and regarding the classification (see chapter 5, section 5.7) suggested by Anderson-Inman & Horney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless & Kulikowich (1996); this student could be classified as a ‘*Knowledge seeker*’, characterised by looking for knowledge related to the content of the hypertext.

As far as the **Learning Styles Questionnaire** is concerned, we identify this student with a clear tendency towards the following cognitive and learning profiles: *thoughtful, active, synthetic, inductive, dependent* and *positive attitude toward ICT*. This is the only student (from these 6 subjects under study) who believes that before using the



language it is necessary to carry out activities and sufficient learning related to its use. In addition, she likes planning and reflecting before communicating in the language she is learning. Apart from this preference towards planning, she also thinks about the possible ways to solve a task and is characterised by calm ideas before making decisions. Furthermore, her first condition to learn a foreign language is practising it and not planning or thinking about all the theoretical details that concern that language. In addition, as a 100% synthetic student, she prefers paying attention to general ideas rather than to specific information and managing different information resources at the same time. Concerning her inductive learning profile, she loves discovering language rules by herself through the observation of different examples. Additionally, she needs support from her teacher and colleagues; she wants them to take responsibility on her. Finally, this student manages the web skilfully, as she states that she does not have any difficulties in reading and interpreting the information she finds in Internet resources and furthermore, she is also able to decide on what information is relevant for the task at hand.

Concerning the **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** results, the following was observed:

I- Task Process:

This student dominates the network quite well, as expressed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire (100%), because she states that she can use search tools such as Google. However, she also clarifies that she would like to know more search tools that facilitate her language learning and help her find resources on the Internet.

As for the selection of information on the net, this student considers that key words and the importance of contents are two important features worth considering when facing a new web site. Furthermore, she thinks that the degree of credibility of the Web is a factor to bear in mind; since she looks for quality in the contents and in the information. Thus, she states that this is a crucial criterion for her.

Regarding information management, this is a student who states having been able to deal with three texts; as well as establishing relationships among images, text documents, and audiovisual documents.

In relation to the selection of http:// addresses, although the student did not specify the name of any particular web page, she declares that she found one of the web pages offered interesting, because on that page she had the feeling that the information was better organised for

her comprehension. She also says that on this page, the fact of having to access the information through links enabled her to do a quicker and clearer search. Apart from the web pages offered, this student has carried out her own navigation selecting different http:// addresses such as [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_writing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_writing).

## II- Task Result:

An analysis of her task results reveals a high degree of satisfaction about the use of the Internet with the purpose of obtaining new information, and relating it to her background knowledge.

Furthermore, she declares an average degree of satisfaction with her individual work, and a very high degree of satisfaction on the use of the English language to access new information and improve her foreign language knowledge. Following from this, she believes that new technologies are really helpful when it comes to learning a new language and highly motivating for students.

We are faced with a student that knew the topic of 'writing' quite well. In addition, she shows both weak and strong points in relation to the task: (i) her weak point was that she did not feel 100 % content, therefore she is not satisfied with her result; and (ii) her strong point

was that this has been a different task, which helped her be more selective and learn new concepts.

Regarding <sup>20</sup>**Teacher's Assessment**; this student obtained a total of 38 points out of 60 in the Cybertask. We could associate this result obtained with the student's learning profile and mode of navigation. We find worth mentioning that her thoughtful traits have favoured thinking about her navigation before starting with the navigation process. Furthermore, her synthetic and inductive features have been determinant in building new information from previous knowledge, as well as her positive attitude toward ICT and her teacher-dependence traits; she was influenced we believe, by the constant guidance and support on behalf of the teacher. Therefore, these learning features together with her 'Reading' mode of navigation have had a strong influence in her 'Successful Task Completion'. We will contrast all this information with her partner (student al18216).

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<sup>20</sup> See Annex XI (Teacher's Assessment)

9.5.6. STUDENT al118191

<b>Student al118191</b>
English Proficiency Level: <b>B1</b>
Reading Mode: <b>Navigating</b>
Learning Style: <b>Active (75%) /Thoughtful (33.33%), Synthetic (100%) / Analytic (40%), Inductive (50%) / Deductive (25%), Dependent (33.33%) / Autonomous (66.67%)</b>
Self-Assessment Questionnaire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Task Process:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>key words</b></li><li>- <b>importance of contents / credibility of the site</b></li><li>- <b>excellent reading ability (English mastery)</b></li><li>- <b>information management (3 texts)</b></li><li>- <b>links visit at random and selection</b></li></ul></li><li>● Task Result:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>high degree of satisfaction</b></li></ul></li></ul>
Teacher's Assessment: <b>44/60 points</b>

The **language level** of this student corresponds to an independent user (B1). She can manage different situations, understanding simple texts, describing experiences, as well as giving explanations about her opinions and plans.

According to the **types of navigation**, this student presents a ‘*Navigating*’ method profile. She devoted very little time to read the resources proposed in the Cybertask. An example of this navigating method is observed in the following link, where she devotes “1.68” seconds: <http://www1.aucegypt.edu/academic/writers/>.

As a ‘*Navigating*’ student, we have seen that her skills are geared towards moving through the hypertext by creating her own text without following the same proposed order of the Web pages as they appear in the presentation of the Cybertask. Regarding this ability, this behaviour is also confirmed in the observation notes taken during the experiment, for this reason she performs a disorderly progression of the Web pages offered in the Cybertask. In addition, she seems lost, and moves back and forth through the hypertext. Additionally, and concerning the classification (see chapter 5, section 5.7) proposed by Anderson-Inman & Horney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless & Kulikowich (1996); this student could be classified as an ‘*Apathetic hypertext user*’, characterised by displaying no logical browsing strategy through the hypertext.

As far as the **Learning Styles Questionnaire** is concerned, we identify this student with a clear tendency towards the following cognitive and learning profiles: *Active, Synthetic, Inductive, (+) ICT*,

(-) *ICT*. This student shows differences and similarities with her partner (student “al074451”). The differences between both students in terms of learning styles are the following: Student “al074451” showed a thoughtful learning profile, whereas the present student “al118191” shows an active learning style; student “al074451” presented a dependent profile, on the other hand, our present student “al118191” shows autonomous features, and finally, whereas student “al074451” showed a 100% positive attitude toward ICT, this student “al118191” presents not only a 100% positive attitude toward ICT, but also a high percentage (66.67%) in her negative attitude toward ICT. Concerning all the comments above, we are talking about a student who thinks that language use is more important than thinking about language itself. Furthermore, regarding the synthetic variant, this student feels more comfortable paying attention to general ideas rather than small details. Along this line, we can confirm that she is able to manage different information resources at the same time, because she only takes into account general ideas to accomplish a certain objective. Concerning her inductive learning profile, she loves designing her own rules through language observation. In addition, as an autonomous student, she prefers working alone and independently, because she thinks that group work is a waste of time. Finally, on the

one hand, this student enjoys surfing the net and she does not show any problem for reading and interpreting any site. As a result, she considers that she has the ability to decide on what information to select as relevant for the task. But on the other hand, she also shows a high percentage (66.67%) of a negative attitude toward ICT, because she states that there is too much information on the web and this fact makes her feel overwhelmed. Finally, she sometimes prefers reading or looking for information in a book rather than using her computer.

Concerning the **Self-Assessment Questionnaire** results, the following was observed:

I- Task Process:

This student reveals a great proficiency in the new technologies. This management is reflected in her positive attitude toward ICT in the Learning Styles Questionnaire (100%), although she also shows a rather high percentage (66.67%) of negative attitude toward this variant.

Regarding the selection of information on the net: key words, credibility of the site and quality in the contents and in the information are three fundamental factors to carry out a particular selection of web pages. In addition, she considers as a paramount requirement the



ability of mastering the English language. However, regarding information management, this student, in comparison to the previous case, also takes into consideration visual elements from three different sources.

Considering the http:// addresses, although she does not select any site as the most relevant to attain her goals, she states that all the pages proposed in the Cybertask were very useful in achieving her objectives. In this sense, we find it pertinent to emphasise her ability to visit all the links at random and subsequently perform a coherent selection of them.

Her language comprehension ability confirms that using the English language has not entailed any difficulty to perform the task and she concludes declaring that she already had some previous knowledge about the topic proposed in this Cybertask, 'The Writing Process'.

## II- Task Result:

An analysis of her task results reveals a high degree of satisfaction about the use of the Internet with the purpose of solving the present Cybertask. The process of obtaining new information and relating it to her background knowledge to build new knowledge also contributed to her satisfaction.

She declares a high degree of satisfaction on the use of the Internet and the satisfaction about the task of looking up information to improve her foreign language knowledge. This feature is confirmed in the Learning Styles Questionnaire, as she reveals a positive attitude toward the use of ICT.

Regarding <sup>21</sup>**Teacher's Assessment**; this student obtained a total of 44 points out of 60 in the Cybertask. In contrast to the previous student (al074451) and to the other case studies analysed, this student has obtained the best result in the Cybertask. Therefore, we could confirm her 'Successful Task Completion' with regards to her learning traits and her mode of navigation. In relation to her learning style, her active, synthetic, inductive, and autonomous features have favoured the realization of our Cybertask. In particular, we note that her active and autonomous traits have resulted in her success in setting about finding the appropriate information on the Web in order to complete the proposed activities. Furthermore, her 'Navigating' mode of navigation has also influenced her 'Successful Task Completion'.

Finally, we could argue that **Student al074451** shows a 'Reading' mode, which in relation to her thoughtful profile, makes us suspect that this student plans her navigation very carefully before carrying

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<sup>21</sup> See Annex XI (Teacher's Assessment)

out her navigation process. Furthermore, there is a connection between her 'Reading' mode and her inductive traits to build new knowledge from the information she finds in the web pages suggested. Finally, we can also appreciate a clear relationship between her field-dependence and self-demanding traits in terms of striving for a successful task outcome. It may follow that her teacher-dependent prior training has, by way of praise, boosted her expectations to achieve better results, and attitude commensurate with her thorough and perfectionist behaviour.

In contrast to our previous student (a1074451), **student a118191** shows clearly opposing traits. It is worth highlighting the relationship between her active and autonomous learning styles and her 'Navigating' mode. Perhaps, her capacity to make quick decisions on her own explains her success in finding the information she needs on the Internet in just a few seconds. In addition, her language level (B1) has been a very important factor in explaining her reading mode ('Navigating'). Regarding her synthetic learning style, this trait has influenced her eagerness to manage different sources of information in different formats (books, the Internet...). Finally, we could establish a relationship between her autonomous profile and her critical attitude toward the use of the new technologies. It is quite remarkable the fact

that this student shows a very high degree of negative attitude toward ICTs, since we find it more appropriate to attribute this profile to a student who prefers reflecting on information.

To conclude the last pair of case studies (**al074451** and **al118191**) we could highlight that the expectations to achieve better results in the Cybertask together with her perfectionist behaviour are typical features of a teacher-dependent profile. This is the attitude of our first student, who needs constant feedback and guidance on behalf of the teacher because she does not feel completely sure of the navigation she has to carry out to complete our Cybertask successfully. Furthermore, this fear in her navigation may be due to her thoughtful traits, since she plans her navigation in advance before the navigation process. Finally, her inductive profile may be determinant to successfully complete the Cybertask proposed because she has built new knowledge from the information she found on the Web. Thus, as a result, she has successfully completed the Cybertask (38/60 in the Teacher's Assessment).

On the other hand, our second student is characterised by both active and autonomous profiles, which have resulted in her success in finding the information she needed. Furthermore, her 'Navigating'

mode has influenced that success. Finally, she has obtained very good results in the Cybertask (44/60 in the Teacher's Assessment).

#### 9.5.7. CASE STUDIES CONCLUSIONS

After all the information commented in the case studies, we can draw the following conclusions:

Firstly, the 'Browsing' mode of navigation is related to the active profile ('compulsive clicker'). Being a compulsive clicker with a high degree in the active profile does not allow students to find the necessary information on the Web.

Secondly, the 'Navigating' mode is related to several learning profiles:

- (a) The synthetic style influences the management of different sources on information in different formats.
- (b) The active style produces the ability of making quick decisions due to the lack of fear of risk-taking; this behaviour leads to success in finding information on the Web.
- (c) The autonomous style allows students to draw conclusions on their own (critical thinking).

(d) And the dependent style influences the management of a limited amount of sources (more than 2 sources) and fear of error.

Thirdly, the 'Reading' mode relates to thoughtful and inductive profiles. The thoughtful profile implies that the student plans his/her navigation process in advance. And the inductive profile allows the student to build new knowledge from the information found on the Web.

Bearing all these features in mind, we draw the conclusion that in fact we cannot establish limits among learning styles and reading modes in order to achieve successful task completion. In other words, as we have already explained in section 4.2, there are neither good nor bad learning styles. In this sense, the same happens with reading modes.

Finally, as we have seen, every learning style and/or reading mode affects successful task completion. Furthermore, they are complementary.

## 9.6. CONCLUSIONS

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The present chapter has been focused at presenting the results obtained from our study. These results have revealed the students' English proficiency level, their learning style and their mode of navigation.

As we have explained at the beginning of this chapter, due to the features that some students presented we have just commented 6 case studies out of a total of 23 students who participated in our experiment with the Cybertask: 'The Writing Process'.

Hereunder, we present the results of the six students of our case studies in four different tables. Table 20 presents a schema of the results obtained by the six students or our case studies in relation to: (a) the Cybertask activities, (b) the teacher's assessment, (c) the skills involved in each of the activities of the Cybertask, and (d) students' learning styles.

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	LEARNING STYLES
al205270	Activity 2.1.		5/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Active: 100% Thoughtful: 0% Synthetic: 100% Analytic: 0% Inductive: 100% Deductive: 0% Dependent: 66.67% Autonomous: 33.33% (+) ICT: 100% (-) ICT: 0%
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		4/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		5/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		5/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		4/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		4/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	3/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
Essay		0/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge		



9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	LEARNING STYLES
al227924	Activity 2.1.		4/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Active: 75% Thoughtful: 0% Synthetic: 66.67% Analytic: 20% Inductive: 50% Deductive: 0% Dependent: 66.67% Autonomous: 33.33% (+) ICT: 100% (-) ICT: 0%
	Activity 2.2.		3/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		3/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		2/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		3/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		3/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		5/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	3/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
Essay		0/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge		

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	LEARNING STYLES
al118216	Activity 2.1.		3/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Active: 75% Thoughtful: 0% Synthetic: 33.33% Analytic: 20% Inductive: 0% Deductive: 25% Dependent: 0% Autonomous: 100% (+) ICT: 100% (-) ICT: 0%
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		3/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		0/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		2/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		2/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		2/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	4/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
		Essay	15/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge	

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	LEARNING STYLES
al121323	Activity 2.1.		3/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Active: 50% Thoughtful: 0% Synthetic: 66.67% Analytic: 40% Inductive: 25% Deductive: 25% Dependent: 0% Autonomous: 100% (+) ICT: 33.33% (-) ICT: 0%
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		5/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		2/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		4/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		2/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		4/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	0/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
Essay		13/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge		

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	LEARNING STYLES
al074451	Activity 2.1.		3/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Active: 25% Thoughtful: 66.67% Synthetic: 66.67% Analytic: 20% Inductive: 100% Deductive: 0% Dependent: 100% Autonomous: 0% (+) ICT: 100% (-) ICT: 0%
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		5/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		4/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		4/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		2/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		5/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	5/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
Essay		0/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge		

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	LEARNING STYLES
al118191	Activity 2.1.		5/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Active: 75% Thoughtful: 33.33% Synthetic: 100% Analytic: 40% Inductive: 50% Deductive: 25% Dependent: 33.33% Autonomous: 66.67% (+) ICT: 100% (-) ICT: 66.67%
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		3/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		2/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		5/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		3/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		3/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	0/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
		Essay	14/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge	

(Table 20: Learning Styles in relation to Successful Task Completion)

In Table 21 below we present (a) the six students of our case studies, (b) the Cybertask activities, (c) the teacher's assessment, (d) the skills involved in each of the activities of the Cybertask, and (e) students' reading modes.

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	READING MODE
al205270	Activity 2.1.		5/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Browsing
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		4/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		5/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		5/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		4/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		4/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	3/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
		Essay	0/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge	

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	READING MODE
al227924	Activity 2.1.		4/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Navigating
	Activity 2.2.		3/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		3/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		2/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		3/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		3/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		5/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	3/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
		Essay	0/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge	

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	READING MODE
al118216	Activity 2.1.		3/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Navigating
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		3/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		0/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		2/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		2/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		2/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	4/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
Essay		15/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge		



9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	READING MODE
al121323	Activity 2.1.		3/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Reading
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		5/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		2/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		4/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		2/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		4/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	0/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
		Essay	13/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge	

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	READING MODE
al074451	Activity 2.1.		3/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Reading
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		5/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		4/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		4/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		2/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		5/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	5/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
Essay		0/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge		

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SKILLS INVOLVED IN EACH OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CYBERTASK	READING MODE
al118191	Activity 2.1.		5/5	- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)	Navigating
	Activity 2.2.		5/5	- Learning awareness - Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful	
	Activity 3.1.		3/5	- Metalinguistic competence - Synthetic (skimming and scanning)	
	Activity 3.2.		2/5	- Synthetic (scanning) - Thoughtful	
	Activity 4		5/5	- Autonomous, thoughtful and synthetic	
	Activity 5.1.		3/5	- Analytic - Metalinguistic abilities	
	Activity 5.2.		3/5	- Active or thoughtful - Autonomous - Metalinguistic competence	
	Activity 6	Graphic Organizer	0/5	- Analytic - Thoughtful - Coherence (Graphic Organizer and Essay)	
Essay		14/15	- General text coherence and cohesion - Semantic-pragmatic competence - New knowledge		

(Table 21: Reading Modes in relation to Successful Task Completion)

Table 22 presents (a) the six students of our case studies, (b) students' reading mode, and (c) students' Cybertask result.

STUDENT	READING MODE	CYBERTASK RESULT
al205270	Browsing	40/60
al227924	Navigating	31/60
al118216	Navigating	41/60
al121323	Reading	42/60
al074451	Reading	38/60
al118191	Navigating	44/60

(Table 22: Reading Mode and Cybertask Result)

In Table 23 below we present (a) the six students of our case studies, (b) the Cybertask activities, (c) the teacher's assessment, (d) students' learning styles, and (e) students' reading modes.

## 9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES	TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	LEARNING STYLES	READING MODE
al205270	Activity 2.1.	5/5	Active: 100%	<b>Browsing</b>
	Activity 2.2.	5/5	Thoughtful: 0%	
	Activity 3.1.	4/5	Synthetic: 100%	
	Activity 3.2.	5/5	Analytic: 0%	
	Activity 4	5/5	Inductive: 100%	
	Activity 5.1.	4/5	Deductive: 0%	
	Activity 5.2.	4/5	Dependent: 66.67%	
	Activity 6	3/20	Autonomous: 33.33%	
al227924	Activity 2.1.	4/5	(+) ICT: 100%	<b>Navigating</b>
	Activity 2.2.	3/5	(-) ICT: 0%	
	Activity 3.1.	3/5	Active: 75%	
	Activity 3.2.	2/5	Thoughtful: 0%	
	Activity 4	3/5	Synthetic: 66.67%	
	Activity 5.1.	3/5	Analytic: 20%	
	Activity 5.2.	5/5	Inductive: 50%	
	Activity 6	3/20	Deductive: 0%	
al118216	Activity 2.1.	3/5	Dependent: 66.67%	<b>Navigating</b>
	Activity 2.2.	5/5	Autonomous: 33.33%	
	Activity 3.1.	3/5	(+) ICT: 100%	
	Activity 3.2.	0/5	(-) ICT: 0%	
	Activity 4	2/5	Active: 75%	
	Activity 5.1.	2/5	Thoughtful: 0%	
	Activity 5.2.	2/5	Synthetic: 33.33%	
		Analytic: 20%		
		Inductive: 0%		
		Deductive: 25%		
		Dependent: 0%		
		Autonomous: 100%		
		(+) ICT: 100%		
		(-) ICT: 0%		

9- Results

STUDENTS	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES	TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	LEARNING STYLES	READING MODE
al121323	Activity 2.1.	3/5	Active: 50%	Reading
	Activity 2.2.	5/5	Thoughtful: 0%	
	Activity 3.1.	5/5	Synthetic: 66.67%	
	Activity 3.2.	2/5	Analytic: 40%	
	Activity 4	4/5	Inductive: 25%	
	Activity 5.1.	2/5	Deductive: 25%	
	Activity 5.2.	4/5	Dependent: 0%	
	Activity 6	15/20	Autonomous: 100%	
al074451	Activity 2.1.	3/5	Active: 25%	Reading
	Activity 2.2.	5/5	Thoughtful: 66.67%	
	Activity 3.1.	5/5	Synthetic: 66.67%	
	Activity 3.2.	4/5	Analytic: 20%	
	Activity 4	4/5	Inductive: 100%	
	Activity 5.1.	2/5	Deductive: 0%	
	Activity 5.2.	5/5	Dependent: 100%	
	Activity 6	5/20	Autonomous: 0%	
al118191	Activity 2.1.	5/5	Active: 75%	Navigating
	Activity 2.2.	5/5	Thoughtful: 33.33%	
	Activity 3.1.	3/5	Synthetic: 100%	
	Activity 3.2.	2/5	Analytic: 40%	
	Activity 4	5/5	Inductive: 50%	
	Activity 5.1.	3/5	Deductive: 25%	
	Activity 5.2.	3/5	Dependent: 33.33%	
	Activity 6	14/20	Autonomous: 66.67%	

(Table 23: Learning Styles and Reading Modes in relation to Successful Task Completion

In the next chapter we will analyse and discuss the results obtained in attempting to answer three Research Questions intrinsic to the relevance of our study.





## **10. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

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## **10. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

10.1. TO WHAT EXTENT DO LEARNING STYLES AFFECT  
SUCCESSFUL TASK COMPLETION?

10.2. TO WHAT EXTENT DO READING MODES AFFECT  
SUCCESSFUL TASK COMPLETION?

10.3. IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STUDENTS'  
LEARNING STYLES AND THEIR READING MODES?

10.4. CONCLUSIONS

In the light of all the results shown in the previous chapter in relation to the Cybertask: 'The Writing Process', further discussion is presented in this chapter taking the following Research Questions as starting points:

- *(RQ1) To what extent do learning styles affect successful task completion?*
- *(RQ2) To what extent do reading modes affect successful task completion?*
- *(RQ3) Is there a relationship between the students' learning styles and their reading modes?*

## 10.1- TO WHAT EXTENT DO LEARNING STYLES AFFECT SUCCESSFUL TASK COMPLETION?

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The analysis of the data of the external evaluation may lead us to suggest that the concept ‘Successful Task Completion’ could present a certain degree of ambiguity if we take into consideration the variability of assessment criteria. Let us recall that this evaluation was carried out by a Teacher not involved in this study. Therefore, we need to define this term from both the Researcher and the Teacher’s point of view. For the Researcher, ‘Successful Task Completion’ is:

- (1) Students’ ability to deal with learning processes by means of managing different sources of information and selecting information,
- (2) Students’ ability to synthesise and take decisions about the use of that information and their ability to build new knowledge in the process of answering the different activities,
- (3) Students’ ability to reflect through a coherent discourse, which implies bearing in mind the process and not only the result of the task.

(4) Students' use of cognitive strategies that are related to each one of the activities and the strategies that we expected to be applied or used.

(5) Students' ability for discussion.

(6) Students' use of Reading Modes.

In view of the Teacher's Assessment in our study we observed that the criteria followed by this Teacher were the following:

(7) The correlation between the students' answer content and the expected content of the correct answers.

(8) The correct use of language with regards to grammar and lexicon.

In spite of the diverse perspectives some aspects are shared by these two points of view. Thus, for both the Researcher and the Teacher, 'Successful Task Completion' encompasses the following aspects:

(9) Students' writing skills both in the activities and essay proposed (activity 6 in the Cybertask),

(10) Students' ability to understand texts and answer the activities proposed.

These two points of view (Researcher's and Teacher's) do not contradict each other, but they are complementary, and allow us draw more precise conclusions.

For example, some activities that students did not answer correctly, from the Teacher's point of view, were envisaged as thoughtful, taking discursive mechanisms into account. Some activities required, a priori, a particular learning strategy in order to be answered in an adequate way from the Researcher's perspective. However, when observing the students' answers, we found out that they have met the teacher's expectations in one way or another by using their personal learning style. It is important to specify then that the strategies that were expected to be related to each of the tasks have acquired only a relative value in the light of the results. For this reason, we may suggest that sometimes the different ways to solve a task must be related to different learners' profiles and not in all cases do they result in significant learning. It may seem surprising that some students with inductive and generalising profiles, and not only those students with deductive traits, solve some of the activities that require deductive strategies successfully. On the other hand, some of the activities that demand inductive criteria are solved successfully by students with deductive features. This fact, which may seem surprising, is not so if

we consider that students with different profiles look for their own paths to solve the activities in order to achieve the task result. This result is evaluated as satisfactory by the Teacher's Assessment. However, from the Researcher's point of view and taking into account the process, some nuances have appeared regarding learning significance. Therefore, different ways to tackle an activity from the Researcher's point of view show that learning is not qualitatively of the same nature for each particular subject.

If we take as a reference the Learning Styles Questionnaire in relation to the activities of the Cybertask, we claim that it is necessary to establish a relationship between the skills in each of the activities of the Cybertask, their cognitive demands (assumed by the Teacher), and the several ways in which the students answer the activities. Therefore, regarding these ideas, we cannot equate both Researcher and Teacher's point of view.

As a consequence of all of the above, we should highlight the importance of understanding 'Successful Task Completion' bearing in mind qualitative and procedural cognitive strategies: (a) students' cognitive strategies to solve the Cybertask (main instrument in our study), (b) reflexion and argumentation on behalf of the students, (c) students' personal synthesis of new knowledge, and (d) their inductive

cognitive strategy that leads to generalization. As the Teacher's criteria did not always coincide with the Researcher's view, we should reflect on these ideas taking into account differences regarding the students' grades.

The language level is a necessary condition to achieve Successful Task Completion but not sufficient. As we have seen in section 9.1, both students with B1 and B2 English proficiency levels have been able to succeed in task completion. For this reason, we should pay attention to other features as well, such as the different learning profiles.

Let us recall that the Learning Styles Questionnaire enables us to define a student's profile as a compendium of combinations of traits and gradual criteria, depending on the options that s/he selects in each of the columns that, in theory, correspond to different learning styles. Moreover, the students' choices are the result of an introspection process. Following from this, in relation to the Learning Styles Questionnaire and the results obtained (see Chapter 9) we find it worthwhile to reflect upon the Learning Styles Questionnaire and the results obtained in the case studies (Chapter 9).



Bearing in mind both the Learning Styles Questionnaire results and the task results, we have found that some traits such as inductive, thoughtful, or synthetic traits, theoretically linked to self-learning competence have been shown to be compatible with teacher-dependent attitudes. Therefore, our study shows that autonomy not only depends on cognitive factors, but also on emotional attitudes towards learning, and on cultural features. Consequently, in the light of the results obtained in Chapter 9, we may suggest that autonomy is not only related to inductive, thoughtful, or synthetic traits. In particular, we have found that induction can strongly influence success in information management tasks when students set about building or creating new knowledge. In addition, we should consider a group of learning style traits, whose interrelationship plays a crucial role in the successful achievement of the task. We thought that cognitive traits, such as induction, are necessary in the autonomous learning field. Nevertheless, it is significant the fact that some students with autonomous abilities, have a teacher-dependent profile in some of their responses in the Learning Styles Questionnaire. For this reason, we need to distinguish between cognitive styles, which theoretically could facilitate self-directed learning, and teaching-learning models as sociocultural and personal options. Thus, a student who shows autonomous capacities may choose teacher dependent

procedures because s/he is adapted to a teaching model where dependency is encouraged.

As a conclusion, in order to achieve a long-term autonomous learning, the learning model should incorporate, in our view, the following features:

- (a) The planning of activities that stimulate induction.
- (b) The design of activities in which students have to establish comparisons, analogies, contrasts, and generalizations among Web pages that allow them to create/build new information to solve the task.
- (c) The fostering of activities that brings forth personal points of view.

In order to find relationships between the Learning Styles Questionnaire and Successful Task Completion, we will translate into qualitative terms the result of the Teacher's Assessment, adopting the following point scale and taking as a reference the maximum of 60 points in the Cybertask:

- Successful: 40-60 points.
- Medium: 20-40 points.
- Failure: 0-20 points.

If we apply this scale to our case studies, we get that students **al121323** (42/60), **al205270** (40/60), **al118216** (41/60) and **al118191** (44/60) achieved a successful result in Cybertask completion. On the other hand, students **al074451** (38/60), and **al227924** (31/60), achieved a medium result in the Cybertask. In addition, we have used the following grading scale (Section 9.1): (a) Breadth (Poor), (b) Depth (Good), and (c) Re-use (Very Good).

Accordingly, we present a discussion of the six students of our case studies (see Table 20 in section 9.6) that will allow us to compare them in order to find relations between learning style traits and successful task completion.

Due to their higher relevance for the activities discussed, the learning styles' pairs that we will consider are (1) Thoughtful vs. Active, (2) Synthetic vs. Analytic, and (3) Inductive vs. Deductive; leaving the other traits for further research.

(1) *Thoughtful vs. Active:*

Regarding Activity 3.1, students were expected to have metalinguistic competence and synthetic abilities, since they were expected to explain and define the importance of the writing process. Students with active traits were able to answer this activity correctly from the Teacher's point of view: **al205270** (4/5), **al227924** (3/5), **al118216** (3/5), **al121323** (5/5), and **al118191** (3/5). All these five students are active with different percentage points in the synthetic style, which means that they prefer active language use, rather than activities that make them think about the use of language. Since they have shown active profiles and are able to solve the task successfully, this fact shows that the pre-conception that synthetic and thoughtful profiles must always appear in association may be at least partially rejected. On the other hand, student **al074451** has thoughtful traits (66.67%) and was successful in this activity (5/5) regarding the Teacher's Assessment. We see in this example how thoughtful and synthetic traits are combined, with the presence of a higher generalization capacity. In fact, this thoughtful student has answered this question introducing generalisations in his/her discourse, interpreting the information. This behaviour is related to the capacity of building significant knowledge.

Indeed, it is generally assumed that synthetic and thoughtful profiles tend to occur together; nevertheless some active students also solve the task successfully. Thus, according to our data we may suggest that the relationship between the synthetic style and the pair “thoughtful-active” should be understood as a matter of degree. A synthetic student can be more or less active and more or less thoughtful, and synthetic strategies are not necessarily linked to having obtained higher percentage points in the thoughtful trait. In fact, we have observed that students with active traits were able to answer satisfactorily an activity that required a synthesis capacity, given that these students with active traits had also obtained relatively significant percentage points regarding the synthetic trait in the Learning Styles Questionnaire.

Activity 3.2. demanded synthetic and thoughtful traits given that students were expected to contrast different pieces of information about the origin of writing. We could say that students with active traits were not able to respond this activity correctly from the Teacher’s view: **al227924** (2/5), **al118216** (0/5), **al121323** (2/5), and **al118191** (2/5). We can say that these students prioritize action over reflection, because their main focus is on key words. Their impulsivity seems to indicate some difficulty in their reflection process in order to

answer this question correctly. An adequate response would have demanded reading more carefully the explanations/information from several Web pages regarding the geographical origins of writing. According to these considerations, it seems astonishingly surprising that student **al205270** who is 100% active profile got 5/5 in the Teacher's Assessment. Why is this so? If we analyse the whole profile of this student, we see that together with the active traits s/he also shows highly inductive, synthetic, and autonomous profiles. This fact may indicate that this combination of strategies offers an alternative to a purely reflective process. On the other hand, student **al074451** meets our expectations regarding thoughtful profiles, because she answered the activity adequately following the thoughtful path. Furthermore, her high synthetic percentage points are manifested in the way she has synthesised the answer. Nevertheless, her response was very short, what might explain her result (4/5) from the Teacher's point of view.

With regards to Activity 5.2, students had to respond whether they would use or modify the writing process steps proposed, or even add new ones, and justify their answer. The skills that were necessary to answer correctly were active, thoughtful, and autonomous features, as well as metalinguistic competence (see Annex VIII). Therefore, according to these criteria, most students responded correctly. Student

**al227924**, who shows an active profile (75%), and student **al074451**, with thoughtful traits (66.67%), both, in spite of their opposed learning style traits, were successful in task completion with the highest result in the Teacher's Assessment (5/5). We have observed that these students show opposed learning style traits. However, from the Researcher's point of view, the analysis of their answers enables us to observe how active and thoughtful traits are manifested in each one of the aspects of the activity. Active students have a more personal discourse and state literally the different steps they have found on some Web pages. They prioritize action over the steps proposed they have gathered. Regarding thoughtful students, we have observed that they have tried to generalize the different proposals found on the many different Web pages in some of the fundamental steps. They tried to establish analogies and contrasts, and generalise a joint proposal.

Finally, Activity 6 demanded the realization of a Graphic Organizer and an Essay. For the Graphic Organizer, students were expected to display analytic, thoughtful and coherence abilities that allow them to make the Graphic Organizer and the Essay coherent with each other (see Annex VIII). On the other hand, the Essay required semantic-pragmatic coherence and cohesion, and the building of new

knowledge (see Annex VIII) regarding that students had to build a written text about “recycling” using all the writing steps found on the net (from the proposed Web pages). Regarding these criteria we observed that some students produced their own schema (instead of any of the graphics from the Web). This is the case of students **al205270** and **al227924** both students with active and synthetic traits. Student **al118216** shows active (75%) and synthetic (33.33%) traits, and has also used her own schema (not any of the graphics from the Web), but she has written the essay. As a result, she obtained 4/5 in the Graphic Organizer and 15/15 in the Essay with regards to the Teacher’s Assessment. The schemas these students have employed are structured with titles and subtitles referring to the main topic, in this case “recycling”. This view implies a simple, school-like presentation as a table of contents or outline, instead of a Graphic Organizer in the strict sense, as the ones proposed on the Web pages; furthermore, this suggests the elaboration of cognitive maps around in relation to the topic “recycling”. Student **al121323** did not complete the Graphic Organizer (0/5). From the Researcher’s point of view there is a lack of strategic planning (knowing how to manage information), lack of analysis that determines his inability to design a graphic, and finally, active participation in the realization of the activity. On the other hand, he writes the Essay obtaining a good result in the Teacher’s



Assessment (13/15). In contrast to student **al074451**, she was very successful in the Graphic Organizer (5/5) because of her thoughtful traits (66.67%), elaborating a very good outline using a table of contents. But we could hypothesize why she did not write the Essay, taking into account her detailed planning. The example below shows her learning traits concerning planning:

*Title: Recycling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

*I. Have you ever thought about the millions of bottles*

*1. Advantages of recycling*

*A. Renewable energies*

*B. Good for the environment*

*2. Disadvantages of recycling*

*A. Expensive*

*B. Bad education*

*C. cultural*

*II although recycling have positive aspects, it also have some drawbacks.*

*Have you ever thought about the millions of bottles”*

It seems that the active profile avoids planning and tackles tasks by taking risks in improvisation. As a consequence, this type of students obtains quick and pragmatic results; on the other hand, a kind of student who combines thoughtful and teacher-dependent features may fail in some tasks that demand action and risk-taking. As a conclusion, an excess of thoughtfulness combined with an excess of teacher

dependency may lead a blockage of action. Perhaps, this could explain why she did not write the Essay. We might suppose that this student has spent a lot of time in planning and managed time unsuccessfully. Thus, we have observed how two students with different learning profiles have solved the task differently.

Student **al118191** displays active (75%) and synthetic (100%) traits, but she did not complete the Graphic Organizer (0/5), maybe because she lacks analytic capacities. On the other hand, she completed the essay successfully with a very good result (14/15) in the Teacher's Assessment. We have observed that students with active traits solved the Essay without elaborating the Graphic Organizer, whereas thoughtful students elaborated the Graphic but not the Essay. As expected, analytic students elaborated the Graphic Organizer.

(2) *Synthetic vs. Analytic:*

In Activity 3.1, students were expected to define and explain the importance of the writing process. All the students in our case studies were successful in this task from the Teacher's point of view. Nevertheless, students **al227924**, **al118216**, and **al118191** obtained 3/5 in the Teacher's Assessment. From the Researcher's point of view a detailed study of their answers and strategies employed allow us to

state that they are quite different students, because **al118216** uses the “cut and paste” technique that corresponds to the active, impulsive, and is lowly motivated in activities that demand introspection, whereas the other two students try to give personal answers to the activity re-using pieces of information obtained from the Web pages and showing their capability of applying synthetic and inductive strategies in their discourse. We refer to synthetic strategies when the students have established analogies and contrasts among the different pieces of information found. We detect that inductive strategies have been made when the students have been able to draw general statements from particular data. On the other hand, the rest of the students in the case studies attained better results: **al205270** (4/5), **al121323** (5/5), and **al074451** (5/5), because the Teacher took into account the qualitative discourse in their responses as they used a coherent and linked discourse, and a good use of metalanguage. They are students who have answered the Learning Styles Questionnaire with a highly motivated attitude and whose results allow us establish more precise traits than the other students. From these ideas, we could establish a relationship between metalinguistic capacity and a positive attitude towards introspection. Likewise, and drawing from all of the above, we could establish a relationship between the synthetic and inductive styles.

In Activity 4, students were asked to say how many drafts they thought were necessary before giving a final copy and justify their answer. We have observed that the strategies displayed in activity 3.1 are reproduced in this activity. Thus, student **al118216** repeats her “cut and paste” technique (2/5) and student **al227924** builds a cohesive text, although she obtains a result of 3/5 from the Teacher’s point of view because she uses colloquialisms. We have observed that active and inductive strategies facilitate good solutions in this activity.

From activities 3.1 and 4 we can conclude that the combination of the active, inductive and synthetic profiles provides a good background for efficiency in these activities. In addition, this *style-blending* facilitates the expression of their personal opinion.

In Activity 5.2, students had to respond whether they would use or modify the writing process steps proposed, or even add new ones, and justify their answer. Most students with synthetic features responded correctly: **al205270** (4/5), **al227924** (5/5), **al121323** (4/5), and **al074451** (5/5). On the other hand, students **al118216** (2/5) and **al118191** (3/5) were not successful in their responses according to the Teacher’s Assessment. It is interesting that **al227924**, with active traits (75%) and **al074451**, with thoughtful traits (66.67%) both obtained the best result in the Teacher’s Assessment (5/5). Thus, we

have observed that the presence of a synthetic profile may appear associated either with an active tendency or with a thoughtful tendency, as we said above. Finally, we could conclude that students with active traits are not able to switch into thoughtful strategies for activities that demand thoughtful skills, and students with a thoughtful profile are not able to display active traits for activities that require active strategies when students need to adjust in a flexible way different strategies in order to solve complex tasks. Hence, we could talk about the notion of *style-switching*.

Finally, in Activity 6 there were two parts: the first one that demanded analytic strategies (Graphic Organizer), and a second part in which the active trait was important (Essay). Unlike activity 5.2, these two aspects were clearly defined in the two tasks involving in this activity. We have observed that students in our case studies obtained low analytic results, which are necessary for the Graphic Organizer. Furthermore, students who completed the Graphic Organizer did not write the Essay, whereas students who wrote the Essay, did not complete the Graphic Organizer.

(3) *Inductive vs. Deductive:*

Concerning Activity 3.1, from the Teacher's point of view, students with inductive traits performed better than students who showed deductive features. The students who achieved success in this activity were **al205270** (4/5), **al227924** (3/5), **al074451** (5/5), **al118191** (3/5) and **al118216** (3/5). The first four students are inductive, while the last one has a dominance of deductive procedures, which are combined with synthetic, active and impulsive traits that make up her own *blend-style*. In any case, we have observed that the inductive learning style trait positively affects the 'Successful Task Completion' for the purpose of this activity, because students perform better when they have to express generalizations from the information found on the Web. Furthermore, students had to give an adequate definition of the writing process with their own words, according to the information gathered on the Web pages proposed, and explain what this process actually is and describe the steps involved.

In Activity 3.2, students had to explain what the first civilizations to use writing were, and we found that the students in our case studies for the most did not answer correctly. We have observed that students **al205270** (5/5) and **al074451** (4/5), with absolute traits in the inductive profile (100%), were able to answer the task successfully

from the Teacher's point of view. Student **al205270**, who displays active, synthetic, inductive, and dependent traits, has been able to synthesise the information well by means of connectors ("the first", "however", "also"). On the other hand, student **al074451** has synthesised her answer better than the previous student, though the excessive brevity in her response has affected her result in the Teacher's Assessment. We have observed that active, synthetic, inductive, and autonomous learning style traits affect 'Successful Task Completion' positively. Students with inductive traits are able to draw generalizations bearing in mind key words, contrasting pieces of information, which are extracted from the information on the Web pages proposed. On the other hand, deductive students tend to read the texts in detail, managing limited pieces of information, and reproducing literally statements extracted from those texts to answer the activity. We could deduce from all these data that inductive students have been able to solve this activity better than deductive ones.

In Activity 5.1, inductive procedures were our initial expectation to answer a task that consists in developing an item listing in relation to the steps of the writing process. In fact, we have observed that student **al205270** (inductive-100%) was successful in task completion with

regards to Teacher's Assessment (4/5). Therefore, we may confirm the hypothesis that inductive students solve the task better than students with deductive traits. We find a contrast with regards to student **al074451**, who did not answer correctly this activity because she simplifies the information too much, mentioning only the writing steps without providing any further explanation about them. This activity required the identification and writing the steps that should be used in the writing process, and in this case, this student just identifies the steps. Therefore, the difference in these students' responses is that **al205270** gives a full account of explanations regarding the steps taken in the writing process, and **al074451** only states the steps without giving any further information about them. Probably she is excessively worried by interpreting the Teacher's demands (teacher-dependent) and she interprets that she is asked to write a list of steps. Therefore, we could conclude that inductive traits are necessary to answer the activity correctly, but we have observed that the teacher-dependent tendency has played an important role in the way each one of the students have interpreted the sense of the instruction of the activity. Student **al205270** with active traits and less teacher dependence has displayed risk-taking strategies and gives further explanations, interpreting the instruction in a broader sense.



Finally, regarding the demands for Activity 6, the student who obtained the best results in both the Graphic Organizer and the Essay was **al118216**: Graphic Organizer (4/5) and Essay (15/15) from the Teacher's point of view. We can conclude that all these students have shown different ways in solving the task. Regarding learning styles, they all share common features because they have displayed active and synthetic strategies. This is not the case of student **al074451**, who displayed thoughtful and synthetic traits. Thus, we have observed that the synthetic strategies can be blended with active traits and not necessarily with thoughtful style traits. Thus, synthetic strategies can combine with active profiles in order to solve tasks that demand the management of diverse information sources as well as drawing conclusions. Conversely, when these synthetic strategies occur with reflective profiles, there is a tendency to build generalizations by means of the implementation of inductive strategies.

To finish this section, let us recall that our aim was to answer the Research Question: "*To what extent do learning styles affect successful task completion?*" Therefore, in the light of the results obtained and after the discussion of the data analysed, we conclude:

- (1) Some activities demanded *style-switching*, but our students have, by and large, not been able to carry out this switch. This

means that students with active traits did not switch their style into thoughtful for activities that required thoughtful strategies. The same occurred with students with thoughtful traits, who did not switch their style into active for activities that demanded active features.

- (2) We have observed that students keep faithful to their learning profiles and this is reflected in the way they have solved the different activities in order to obtain a good result. For example, active and thoughtful students, which are opposites, have respected their cognitive learning style to solve the activities proposed. Furthermore, we have found out that synthetic students have also displayed active and thoughtful features. We could say that the blending of synthetic, thoughtful and inductive traits constitutes a good strategy base to achieve self-directed learning. This phenomenon in which several styles act simultaneously may be defined as *style-blending*. This does not mean that the autonomous tendency must occur in any case, because the autonomous choice is not a cognitive capacity, but rather a cultural and ideological representation. Thoughtful learning is concerned with a strong need for logical consistency, thinking through reasoning and discovery of information. Thoughtful learners work on tasks understanding what they are

doing, and therefore they feel more motivated to continue learning. Moreover, they have a desire for efficiency and perfectionism. This behaviour makes them question what they are learning and not simply accept or take for granted what they have gathered on the net. Therefore, we may feel that these students will achieve long-time learning. Furthermore, the relationship between synthetic and inductive features is manifested in the way students display generalising techniques in their responses. These generalizations are likely to be reflected in their better retention analogies, contrasts and common structures among the pieces of information, rather than remembering specific details.

- (3) *Teacher-dependence* not only has an influence on students' interpretation of activities' statements, but also on their risk-taking capacity towards a given activity. Dependent students tend to avoid risk-taking when they have to think about their own interpretation of the activity they are presented, whereas autonomous students have no fear of risk-taking and show their own interpretations.
- (4) Significant learning refers to a specific way in which students relate their background knowledge to the conscious acquisition of new knowledge. The inductive trait is relevant for significant

learning. It can be associated either with the thoughtful profile or with the active.

## 10.2- TO WHAT EXTENT DO READING MODES AFFECT SUCCESSFUL TASK COMPLETION?

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For the present Research Question we will take into account the ‘Successful Task Completion’ in relation to the three different Reading Modes: ‘Navigating’, ‘Browsing’, and ‘Reading’.

(1) ‘*Navigating*’ mode of navigation: students with this navigation mode remain in the same Web page less than 5 seconds. Students with this type of navigation have been shown to have the ability to create their own navigation path and choose the Web pages offered in the order they preferred when they had to track for online information. This behaviour, in which students choose a different order of the Web pages than the one proposed as they appeared in the Cybertask presentation, has been displayed in their non-lineal reading of these Web pages and their field independence learning traits. According to Anderson-Inman & Horney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless & Kulikowich (1996), students with a ‘Navigating’ mode are called ‘Apathetic hypertext users’, which is justified because it is

assumed that students display “illogical browsing strategies” through the hypertext. Their consideration of illogical strategies are based on an evaluation of students’ navigation paths in terms of the strict order of navigation proposed by the teaching model, which students are supposed to follow in a linear way. It seems difficult to talk about illogical navigation if the students have carried out navigation paths that are efficient to solve the Cybertask, even though they have carried out and created their own paths. On the other hand, the denomination “apathetic” is rather vague and gives too little information in relation to our study expectations. In fact, our group of ‘Navigating’ students did not seem to behave apathetically at all – except one: **al118191**. This apathetic behaviour is manifested by the fact that she picks up the first information that she found on the Web and related to the key word of the question, as is exemplified in Activity 3.2: “*The earliest writings recorded were from Mesopotamia*”.

Our study goes beyond the classification made by Anderson-Inman & Horney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless & Kulikowich (1996). It is true that the ‘Navigating’ reading mode entails a superficial navigation on the Web. ‘Navigating’ students tend to carry out a general overview of the information because they want to be quick in finding out about the contents of a Web page. Once students

have ordered the ideas in their minds, they select the information they are more interested in, mainly by means of key words. Therefore, in our case, the characterization of this group of students as ‘Apathetic hypertext users’ seems rather inconsistent.

(2) *‘Browsing’* mode of navigation: the ‘Browsing’ mode is defined as the rate between 5 and 50 seconds visiting the same page. Students with this navigation mode “pecked at” information doing a quick sweep of the information that they thought worth considering in order to achieve their Cybertask objective. Furthermore, following Anderson-Inman & Horney et al. (1993), we also called these students ‘Knowledge seekers’ because they sought knowledge related to the contents of the hypertext. These students showed an initial predisposition to gather and consult several Web pages quickly in order to answer the activities in the Cybertask.

‘Browsing’ students examine the relevance of a number of Web pages or its contents quickly, which may or may not lead to their interests in relation to the information they need for the activities they have to answer. Therefore, this type of student carries out an orientation strategy that may or may not fulfil their expectations.

We have observed that only one student, from our case studies shows the 'Browsing' profile **al205270** (Table 21, Section 9.6). Although this student has carried out the task successfully (40/60 points) in the Teacher's Assessment, 'Navigating' students from our case studies performed better. From the Researcher's point of view, this student's browsing strategy was not entirely satisfactory, although she has obtained 40 points in the Teacher's Assessment. Perhaps, we could think on the different ways that the 'Browsing' strategy could be displayed. Thus, bearing in mind her active, synthetic, and inductive traits, we could say that planning her navigation in advance, thinking about all the general information that the navigation entails for her is of paramount importance for her. Therefore, taking into account all these features, we could conclude that these factors have affected the way she has set about solving the task.

(3) '*Reading*' mode of navigation: the 'Reading' mode is defined as the rate of more than 50 seconds employed in the same page. 'Reading' students are willing to cover all the information found on the page very carefully, paying attention to written texts, images, and visual elements that appeared in the Web pages offered. They felt that these elements could help them in quickly finding contents of the page that were most relevant to complete the Cybertask. When these

students started surfing the net, they immediately got an overview of the Web pages offered in the Cybertask by means of a quick first look, and then they continued their navigation again respecting the order of Web pages as they appeared in the Cybertask presentation for each of the activities.

As a consequence, according to our study, the classification made by Anderson-Inman & Horney (1993), Bowdish et al. (1994), and Lawless & Kulikowich (1996) does not correspond with alternative traits but with complementary strategies when the goal is to perform a particular task. 'Reading' students are not only 'Knowledge seekers', but also 'Feature explorers', since they (a) looked for information related to the content of the hypertext ('Knowledge seekers'), and (b) took graphic and design elements into account in a Web page in addition to written language ('Feature explorers').

Finally, we should not forget that students' interaction with online texts (interactive texts and multiple-media texts) was different from interaction with texts in print formats. In other words, students' perception of reading information on the Web is different from reading printed texts. Therefore, according to our study, students created their own navigation path deriving into non-linear hypertext. In fact, given that hypertext is non-linear, then in our study students



have been able to build their personal hypertext understanding it as the result of their reading process and regarding their navigation options. Thus, there is a difference between “hypertextual space” and “built hypertext” on behalf of the reader who has to relate certain information chunks, as Lemke’s (2003) semiotic model suggests. Following this model, while students carry out their navigation process they may create new knowledge from that background information (i.e. information gathered in the Web pages proposed). Likewise, students’ non-linear navigation allows them to associate their own knowledge with the new information (Villanueva, Luzón, Ruiz, 2008). Therefore, with regards to the meaning construction process, hypertextual reading opens up a new reading dimension in which reader and writer do not necessarily take up opposing roles. Although hypertext stimulates non-linear reading, this fact does not imply that students spontaneously develop the necessary abilities in order to perform such as complex reading satisfactorily. Perhaps that is why some of the students had the feeling of frustration in their search of information, as they have stated in the Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

Establishing a relationship between the times employed and the task results, we could deduce that only 'Reading' students (2) took into account strategies that imply:

- (a) Awareness of Web pages' features,
- (b) Anxiety control,
- (c) Ability to project previous knowledge in texts, and
- (d) Awareness of task objectives.

As a result of the combination of these four factors, these two 'Reading' students (**al074451** and **al121323**) were more successful in task completion than 'Browsing' or 'Navigating' students. This success is due to the fact that they re-used the information from the Web in order to answer the questions in the Cybertask. Furthermore, these 'Reading' students expressed very detailed and justified information in their answers for each of the activities proposed, where in the case of **al074451** we may observe her thoughtful capacities. In addition, synthetic abilities are a key aspect to take into account because these strategies helped them in displaying well-structured responses, whether they used key words or answered the activities briefly but accurately.

### 10.3- IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLES AND THEIR READING MODES?

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Let us now discuss the results derived from the present study considering Reading Mode in relation to the learning styles' pairs considered in section 10.1 (*Thoughtful vs. Active, Synthetic vs. Analytic, and Inductive vs. Deductive*):

In the light of the results obtained, we observed that the 'Reading' mode of navigation occurs in association with the thoughtful, synthetic, and inductive learning styles. Students with these traits were able to perform better the activities proposed in the Cybertask with regards to the Teacher's Assessment. For example, this is the case of students **al121323** (42/60) and **al074451** (38/60). From the Researcher's point of view, **al121323** is a 'Reading' student who takes active participation and synthesizes easily the information during the navigation process and from an autonomous perspective. Therefore, all these traits have favoured the good result in activities that demand synthetic, active, and autonomous strategies (activities 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4, and 5.2). Student **al074451** has also displayed a 'Reading' navigation mode, which together with her learning profiles have had an impact in the way she has solved the different activities proposed. Regarding her thoughtful profile, she has answered the activities

following a thoughtful path. Furthermore, her synthetic profile has been manifested in the way she has synthesized the answers, as we can observe in her response for activity 3.2, which demanded thoughtful and synthetic traits.

As for the 'Browsing' mode of navigation, this type of navigation co-occurs with the active, synthetic, and inductive learning styles. This is the case of student **al205270**, who obtained 40/60 in the Teacher's Assessment. According to the Researcher's view, this student performed better at activities that demanded active, synthetic, and inductive features (2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4, and 5.2) because she employs risk-taking strategies and gives detailed explanations as an answer to the activities proposed, interpreting in their own way the instructions given in each of them.

Finally, concerning the 'Navigating' mode of navigation, we point out that, in fact, there is a relationship between this navigation mode and the active and autonomous traits. These features are observed in students **al118191** (44/60) and **al118216** (41/60); and according to the Teacher's Assessment, they achieved 'Successful Task Completion'. From the Researcher's perspective, these students show similar learning traits (active and autonomous), which are evidenced in how 'Navigating' students solve the activities proposed. It makes sense that

action and autonomy are in relation to ‘Navigating’ because this navigation mode demands motivation, risk-taking, and active participation in the navigation process. Furthermore, these ‘Navigating’ students tend to “cut and paste” information in order to respond the activities, maybe due to their superficial and partial comprehension of information and lowly motivated behaviour in response to the task proposed and the navigation process.

In the light of these observations, we might suggest that there is a relationship between learning styles and reading modes, and both factors may have consequences in how students perceive texts, either as an interlinked whole or as an addition of segments. Along this line, we might conclude that:

(1) Active and inductive traits appear in relation to the ‘Navigating’ and ‘Browsing’ navigation modes.

(2) Thoughtful, synthetic, and inductive features in relation to the ‘Reading’ mode are manifested in a type of students that we could characterise as ‘Globalisers’, in other words, these students show a tendency towards elaboration of information. Furthermore, they have a global/general perspective of the text, creating new and meaningful knowledge and elaborating

hypothetical navigation paths that acquire relevance for them depending on the task they have to solve.

(3) Active traits in relation to the 'Browsing' navigation mode are manifested in 'Serialist' students, who tend to follow a linear navigation path focusing on small details such as syntactical and lexical difficulties. These students also have a tendency towards adopting the literal meaning and literal interpretation of the information they read (text-dependence). Finally, this type of students does not like taking risks, interpreting information by themselves, or giving their point of view.

#### 10.4- CONCLUSIONS

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The aim of the present chapter has been to examine, firstly, the different paths that different learning styles and reading modes can offer for 'Successful Task Completion' from an autonomous perspective, and secondly, to discuss the ways they interact, in other words, to what extent the diverse combinations of learning styles and reading modes exert an influence on the task process.

The first Research Question addresses the extent to which learning styles affect successful task completion. The results concerning students' learning styles in relation to their success in task completion revealed that we do not have to interpret learning styles as fixed behavioural schemes that predetermine their behaviour. In other words, a single subject may manifest some learning traits belonging, theoretically, to different learning styles. Our Cybertask has shown that students with different learning profiles may complete a Cybertask successfully following different paths. The literature on the topic (see section 4.2) assumes that we should not attach a particular learning style label to each student, since learning styles are characterised according to the more or less frequent use of a set of cognitive and pragmatic strategies related to different aspects of learning. In fact, and according to our research, it is the blending of some learning style traits (active and synthetic; thoughtful, synthetic, and inductive; active and analytic; inductive, motivated, and dependent) that explains the personal approach to learning and depending on the demands of a particular activity.

The second Research Question pointed out to what extent reading modes affect successful task completion. In relation to the literature

on reading modes, our results agree with previous research (see Section 5.7) in the sense that students did:

- (a) Put into practise their reading skills on the Web, as well as their ability to understand what they read,
- (b) Interact with texts resulting from an Internet search (considering the Web pages proposed),
- (c) Perceive Web text reading as different from print text reading,
- (d) Navigate creating their own paths through the information in a non-linear way (in accordance with non-linear structure and rhetoric patterns of hypertext).

The combination of these aspects has favoured students' 'Successful Task Completion' from the Researcher's point of view. Nevertheless, this combination of factors in task realization has sometimes resulted in frustration due to the unsuccessful search of information. For example, **al121323** stated: "*...algunas preguntas me ha costado encontrarlas y me ha costado más tiempo*". Or **al205270**: "*...ha sido un poco frustrante no encontrar lo que realmente deseaba – pocas veces*".

This students' self-assessment is probably related to their representation of the task that might have influenced in their search expectations. In fact, on many occasions, the answer was not found



literally in a particular Web page but they had to interrelate several pieces of information in order to build the answer in a personal way.

Indeed, given that there is no single learning style that determines successful task realization, by the same token, we have proved that there is no particular reading mode in association with success in task completion. Some students argued that searching for information on the Web was sometimes difficult, in that it took very long to find the answer to the activities and it was frustrating as they stated in the Self-Assessment Questionnaire. Therefore, we could argue that the fact that a particular task performance is successful or not depends on several factors: (a) students' search expectations, (b) their learning habits, and (3) their information management on the Internet.

Since we have not established any precise criteria that determine what reading mode is associated with a given type of activity, then we are not in a position that allows us to establish precise relationships between each one of the reading modes and each one of the activity types. Nevertheless, our results suggest that there is likely to be a certain association with a given type of reading mode and each one of the activity types. This could be a good object of study for future research.

The last Research Question addresses the relationship between the students' learning styles and their reading modes. In the light of the results obtained, we have confirmed that there is a relationship between learning styles and reading modes, which both have influenced in the way students perceive written online texts. But we should take into account: first, what students expected to find on the Web pages proposed; second, the influence of their learning strategies; and third their perception of the online text. These factors affect how students manage information on the Web, and thus, determine their navigation mode: 'Navigating', 'Browsing', and 'Reading'.

To conclude this chapter, we may point out the following suggestions in relation to our Research Questions:

- 1- There exists a relationship between certain **blended strategies** related to learning traits and 'Successful Task Completion' from the Researcher and Teacher's points of view.
- 2- There is a relationship between Reading Modes and 'Successful Task Completion'. This relationship depends on students' learning strategies and the task-type they face. Therefore, a relationship between Learning Styles and Reading Modes is possible, because the **student's learning profile**, probably in

**association with the type of activity, determines his/her type of navigation.**

- 3- Both Learning Styles and Reading Modes may have consequences in how students perceive a text, either as an interlinked whole or as an addition of segments. The perception of the text as an interlinked whole would be related to the **'Reading' mode of navigation and to the inductive and synthetic learning style traits**. We believe this is so, because 'Reading' students have proved to devote a great amount of time reading online texts and making generalizations among the pieces of information found on different Web pages. Furthermore, we think that this global pattern of texts understanding is, on the one hand, in association with the **inductive learning style** trait, because students are capable of making generalizations from specific ideas; and on the other hand, it is related to the **synthetic learning style** trait, because students with this trait pay more attention to global information rather than to concrete details. Regarding the perception of texts as an addition of segments, we think that the **'Browsing'** and **'Navigating'** modes of navigation would be in association with this idea, because students with these navigation modes do not devote much time to read the contents of each of the Web pages

proposed. In fact, these students only carry out a selection of the information that they find more appropriate in relation to their personal needs, thus, they only focus on specific segments. In addition, we think that there is a relationship between addition of segments and the **deductive and analytic learning style traits**, because, on the one hand, deductive students are capable of taking into account specific information from general contents; and on the other hand, analytic students have the ability to grasp the information gathered on the Web pages.

This ability has proven to be useful in partially and satisfactorily answering some questions of a specific nature, but it has nonetheless revealed a lack of depth in the treatment of information: the notion of relating details to broader concepts. Maybe the risk would be that these strategies can lead to rather superficial learning, to the detriment of depth. The notions of **deep and superficial learning** derive from the seminal work of Marton and Säljö (1976). Superficial learning is information-reproducing, students tend to reproduce information rather than apply understanding. Superficial learning tends to be encouraged by lack of independence in studying and lack of

interest in, and background knowledge of, the subject matter (Cohen, 2004).

Following from this, we do not discard that other learning style traits could also be determinant in this respect, thus, we leave an open door to future investigations.

The analysis of our Research Questions in which our study has been based on will allow us to advance some general conclusions and consider future lines of research.



**11. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND  
SUGGESTED FURTHER  
RESEARCH**

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## **11- GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTED FURTHER RESEARCH**

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The aim of the present work focuses on studying the possible relationship between students' learning styles and reading modes in relation to the degree of success in task completion in order to promote autonomous language learning in the field of language education. In our context we used a Cybertask (Annex VI) as a research instrument. We have seen that our study is based on the importance of students becoming long-life autonomous learners, bearing in mind learning styles and reading modes, with the implementation of online task-based activities (Cybertasks), taking into account Dodge's WebQuest (1995) as an example. After the implementation of our Cybertask, first, we have established different skills associated to each one of the activities in the Cybertask; second, we have collected data (results); and finally, we have discussed the results obtained from which some conclusions are drawn.

Along these lines, we stress the importance of helping students to become more autonomous by means of improving self-confidence and sense of responsibility in their learning; furthermore, they need to be aware of the importance of building skills and knowledge in a life-long learning context as they learn a foreign language. Among other

things, they need to understand the teacher's role as one of authority or the one who carries out all the work in the classroom. As a consequence, students need to experiment with the foreign language and consider the teacher as a helper, an ally who gives them advice.

At this point, in this Dissertation we have observed how cybergenres are a key issue in the new media age that can help to develop different reading modes in a digital format, i.e. how people read and share their experience in the Internet (*'wreading* competence'). Villanueva, Luzón and Ruiz (2008) state that ICTs have become an integral part of our lives and have an immense impact on how we access information and interact with each other. These aspects have been manifested in task completion. New digital genres and new forms of discourse are constantly emerging and spawn new discourse practices and norms. Similarly, there are new types of communicative processes, new ways of participating in the information flow and in knowledge construction, as well as new forms of identity construction and new ways of learning. Accordingly, the present work has focused on the need to integrate research on digital genres, digital literacies and autonomous language learning, in order to come up with a sound framework for the design of an online language learning task that promotes autonomy (Villanueva, Luzón & Ruiz, 2008).

In our research we have verified that teaching and learning skills related to information literacy are a key issue in contemporary society. The subjects of my study have shown that in relation to Cybergenres and the Web 2.0, technological skills like knowing how to select, organize, and use information in order to solve problems and handle new situations, will facilitate the life-long learning; in short, they are the basic competencies needed for continuous and autonomous learning.

According to our study, complex technological skills have the following implications:

(1) We have seen that students have identified different types of screens and different ways of searching information in Web pages (i.e. the way in which they handle information). As a researcher, I have seen that some students encountered difficulties in finding and selecting the appropriate information (technological management).

(2) Students show personal interpretation and decision-making about information selection (Information seeking strategies to determine all possible sources and select the best ones for one's purposes).

(3) Students learn how to use interactive tools: Selection of links, webs, forums, blogs, etc. bearing in mind the need to answer the questions proposed in the 'Cybertask'.

The combination of all these implications leads to students' development of autonomous strategies for effective Cybertask completion. From the above technological skills, skills related to autonomy development are derived. We conclude that it is necessary that:

(1) Students know how to identify search objectives and modify them according to the information they have found on the Web.

(2) They know how to apply the search on the Web to task objectives.

(3) To select information on the Web pages bearing in mind the activities proposed.

(4) Re-use information. It is of paramount importance to re-use the information found on the Web, in order to adapt that information to personal needs in relation to the tasks and in relation to the students' background knowledge. In this sense it is important to propose tasks and exercises that imply strategies

of induction, synthesis and generalization to construct meaningful knowledge.

(5) Self-assessment of the results obtained is necessary in order to foster metacognitive awareness among students. In our experimental design students had to complete a Self-Assessment Questionnaire, where they were allowed to express their feelings about the task process, as well as their results.

We can draw some conclusions related to the relationship between learning styles, reading modes, and task completion:

(1) Some activities demanded **style-switching**. Given the fact that specific tasks require style-switching, we found out that students did not try to switch their learning styles into those ones that some of the tasks proposed demanded (see Section 10.1).

(2) After our study, we are aware that we could establish a distinction between **learning trait** and **learning style**, which may apparently refer to the same idea but are in fact different. We should take into account that the design of our Learning Styles Questionnaire is introspective, this means that a series of statements related to each one of the learning styles are offered

to the student. After completing this, the student was able to select those statements that s/he considers best fits in with his/her learning needs, but the fact that students were able to select options from, for example, active and thoughtful traits does not mean that they belong to a specific learning style in absolute terms. The questionnaire offers a gradual perspective of students' profiles. Therefore, in this case we are referring to a learning trait because the student has traits in the active or thoughtful learning style. For this reason, we cannot talk about learning style in absolute terms, but we should instead talk in terms of learning style traits, which in combination with other traits may constitute complex learning profiles or *style-blending*. In other words, this combination of strategies is what we call *blended learning profile*, which has an influence on how students solve a given task. Style-blending can be defined as a combination, mixture or synthesis of strategies that characterise a particular student learning profile.

- (3) We have verified that the Teacher's Assessment is a traditional teaching model that focuses on the result; on the other hand, as a researcher, I have paid attention to the task realization process when this procedure demands certain strategies (induction, synthesis, risk-tasking...) from the meaningful knowledge and

meaningful action points of view. Thus, we can prove that there exists a result's assessment and a process' assessment, which do not share a unique point of view but they are complementary. Therefore, regarding assessment, we should point out that the evaluation in each of the activities of the Cybertask consists of: (a) task process and (b) task result. The Researcher plays a crucial role in the task process, as s/he has to reflect on how to evaluate this procedure. On the other hand, the Teacher also plays an important role since it is his/her responsibility to grade the students' results, although the lack of a qualitative analysis of student's strategies and discourse might lead to a partial assessment. Our research has shown how **differences in task representation** change both the performance and underlying cognitive processes of students engaged in searching information and solving tasks. Our study has also provided evidence of the strong **interaction between cognitive processes, socio-emotional orientation and teaching-learning representation**, and these complex attitudes influence the way that students interpret and internalise teacher expectations and the way they understand learning proposals and perform the task. All these aspects are related to the long-term development of learning activity and are of paramount importance.

- (4) While the present study has attempted to examine to what extent an approach to online task-based activities (Cybertasks) can effectively establish a relationship between students' learning styles and the different reading modes, its results and further conclusions must be taken into consideration.
- (5) We have observed that each one of the Reading Modes influences the realization of a given task and the perception of online texts, as an interlinked whole or as an addition of segments. As we have mentioned in section 10.4, the 'Reading' mode of navigation would be related to an interlinked whole, and the 'Browsing' and 'Navigating' navigation modes would be in association with an addition of segments. In this line, previous classifications of Internet reading modes (see Section 5.7) did not clarify students' behaviour in many aspects. We have seen that the three modes ('Reading', 'Browsing', 'Navigating') are richly explanatory if we consider them to be associated with learning profiles and learning style blending.
- (6) Finally, we should think about the new literacies in order to find differences between the traditional reading mode (printed texts) and the current reading mode (digital/online texts).



Accordingly, the following suggestions are derived from my study:

With the aim of improving the general skills explained above through teaching plans, we need to bear in mind that it could be useful to design future exercises focusing on specific skills:

(1) Exercises that focus the task on the selection of information, in order to answer a learning need: gathering different contents on the Web with the purpose of answering the questions proposed in the Cybertask.

(2) Exercises that involve interaction on the Web: blogs, forums, e-mail. It would be interesting to give some training to students for selecting blogs and forums, in order to stimulate their personal expression, their interaction capacity and their practise in collaborative learning.

(3) Exercises fostering strategies related to certain cognitive and learning styles. In fact, after this study, we can suggest that the following learning styles lead to the attainment of better results:

(a) inductive, thoughtful, (b) inductive and active, (c) synthetic, thoughtful, and inductive, and (d) autonomous, as we have explained in Chapter 10 (Analysis and Discussion).

(4) And finally, we call for exercises that demand inductive, thoughtful and autonomous capacities so as to foster an autonomous learning and develop a set of working hypotheses from a critical point of view.

While the present study has attempted to examine to what extent an approach to online task-based activities (Cybertasks) can effectively establish a relationship between students' learning styles and the different reading modes, its results and further conclusions must be taken into consideration always bearing in mind the limitations of the specific study undertaken.

Firstly, we concede that the number of subjects has been a limitation in our study. Bigger groups of students were not available at the time, and with more students we could have found more nuances.

Secondly, the questionnaires used are a product of previous research carried out by the GIAPEL Group. The Learning Styles Questionnaire has been fruit of an exhaustive work. Nevertheless, it turns out to be introspective. We are aware that other types of questionnaires might be complementary when it comes to determining learning styles with more precision.

Thirdly, we were limited to a sole session to implement the experiment. We find obvious that more ambitious studies would have required a major amount of sessions. Therefore, the data obtained are just a sample and in this sense, we invite future research to explore these questions.

Concerning the conclusions drawn and the suggestions made above we propose the following ideas for further research:

- (1) It is necessary then to investigate on (a) technological skills that transcend basic technical proficiency and (b) skills linked to autonomy development.
- (2) The ‘Teacher's Assessment’ is an object of the investigation. From the point of view of the Researcher, there are some specific criteria; and from the point of view of the Teacher who has corrected the activities, other traits have been valued. For this reason, there are sometimes different grades attributed regarding both the Teacher and Researcher’s point of view.
- (3) Take control: time management and anxiety regulation. Planning, monitoring, evaluating, reflecting, decision-making, accessing and organising information, as well as the amount of information in hypertext, can increase

anxiety. In our experimental design, students had two hours to carry out the task, including the Self-assessment Questionnaire. They had to control the amount of information they were exposed to, so that they could carry out the task in due time. Thus, we think that it is necessary to carry out other investigations related to anxiety management.

- (4) It may happen that some cultures rely on strong norms about how to deal with emotions more than other cultures. Autonomous traits are closely related to risk-taking in conducting one's own learning, as well as expressing critical points of view and creativity. In addition, the personal attitude towards autonomous learning is associated with the learning culture context and the biographical experience. On the other hand, other cultures may express their disagreement toward strict norms and therefore these cultures openly admit emotional attitudes and criticism in academic institutions.
- (5) Considering the results obtained, we may come to the conclusion that in the future, teachers might approach cybergenres in order to design language learning tasks which include instruction and exercise in the new

multiliteracies. Some of the objectives of the research concerning Cybertasks could be:

- (6) Analyse and describe Web pages in order to identify the echoes of recognisable genres, which may become a meeting point for writers and readers as a common/shared frame for constructing meaning.
- (7) Define mediation strategies concerning new literacies and foreign language acquisition from a socioconstructivist point of view.
- (8) Integrate results from different objectives, within a pedagogical framework aiming at a long-life learning process, which should imply both fostering learning autonomy and developing new literacy competences. Receiving training in the new literacy goes hand in hand with autonomy, that is, the ability to adopt one's own decisions to carry out a task. On the other hand, the design of Cybertasks within an autonomising perspective must take into consideration the need to familiarise students with intertextuality and intergenericity as Web pages traits.
- (9) Explore new designs of Cybertasks that combine both the training in the new literacies and autonomy.

- (10) Investigate the possible existence of a relationship between field independence (ability to project previous knowledge obtained in different contexts) and degree of autonomy.
- (11) Investigate students' metalanguage concerning: (a) learning conception, (b) tasks conception, and (c) digital texts perception.
- (12) Establish a more defined student profile with the creation of a questionnaire that takes into account the different roles displayed by the teacher, the student, and the university community.
- (13) Carry out a study that helps us to find out specific behavioural profiles among university students. For example, active students are inclined to self-directed learning, whereas thoughtful and inductive students reject taking risks.
- (14) Improve the Learning Styles Questionnaire (which is introspective) in order to be more accurate; in this sense, we could set up a series of task-types and establish a correlation between introspection, metalinguistic competence, and task-types. As we have seen some

limitations, we consider that an improvement should be carried out.

This project has only been a first step towards the design of more complex future studies with bigger quantities of students as subjects. In the light of the results of our study, we view a quite open field to further explore the degree of correlation between *Learning Styles*, *Reading Modes*, and *Autonomy* in foreign language learning.





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## **ANNEXES**

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## ANNEX I: Learning Styles Questionnaire

**Para ser un buen aprendiz de lenguas es importante conocerse.**

¿Quieres descubrir cuál es tu manera de aprender las lenguas? Quizá nunca antes te lo hayas planteado. Te animo a que lo hagas ahora realizando la actividad siguiente:

- a) Lee las descripciones y las afirmaciones de cada uno de los cuadros. Marca con una cruz aquellas con las que más te identificas. Pueden pertenecer a cuadros distintos y puedes marcar más de una. No se trata de responder pensando en qué será o no correcto sino en la manera en que tú piensas o actúas frente al aprendizaje de lenguas. Todas las respuestas son igual de válidas, porque todas las maneras de aprender también lo son.
- b) Propón ejemplos personales en las líneas de puntos que ilustren las descripciones con las que te has identificado. Estos ejemplos pueden pertenecer al campo de las lenguas (aprendizaje y uso) o a otros campos.

	
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Según tu opinión, para aprender una lengua es necesario utilizarla.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefieres lanzarte a la práctica y a la comunicación sin que sea para ti prioritario haber planificado y reflexionado sobre todos los detalles.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Piensas que "se hace camino al andar".</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> La reflexión puede venir después. Crees que la práctica hace maestros.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Crees que antes de usar la lengua es necesario realizar actividades de aprendizaje suficientes y relacionadas con el uso que vaya a hacerse.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Te gusta planificar y reflexionar antes de iniciar la comunicación.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Te gusta pensar en los posibles caminos para resolver una tarea y enfocar con una cierta calma tus ideas antes de tomar decisiones. Crees que vale más pensar las cosas dos veces.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>



- Es frecuente que asocies tus recuerdos a imágenes.*
- Comprendes y retienes mejor las informaciones nuevas cuando te las presentan de forma gráfica, visual, con imágenes, cuadros, gráficos...*
- Crees que una imagen vale más que mil palabras.*
- Prefieres que los textos, si son largos, vayan acompañados de imágenes.*

.....  
 .....



- Es frecuente que asocies tus recuerdos con palabras o frases.*
- Prefieres tener las informaciones por escrito, en forma de texto, incluso cuando se trata de indicaciones orales.*
- Escribir te ayuda a pensar. Para ti las palabras evocan y generan ideas.*
- Crees que las palabras pueden expresar más que las imágenes.*
- Te gusta aprender palabras nuevas, incluso en tu lengua materna.*

.....  
 .....



- Cuando abor das un trabajo, te haces una idea general del problema y del final a donde quieres llegar, aunque no tengas claros los detalles del recorrido. Avanzas entonces por tanteo, barajando distintas posibilidades hasta que las cosas parecen irse organizando.*
- Retienes mejor las ideas generales que los pequeños detalles. Puedes llegar a manejar distintas fuentes de información a la vez porque tomas de ellas aspectos generales que te sirven para tus objetivos.*
- Puede suceder que cuando estás en la fase de tanteo y de elaboración, te moleste (o incluso te crispe) que te hagan observaciones de detalle que suelen parecerte secundarias.*

.....  
 .....



- Te gusta avanzar paso a paso, sin pasar adelante si lo anterior no está claro, aun en el caso de que no tengas una representación de la estructura global.*
- Prefierías no tener que manejar distintas fuentes o informaciones.*
- Piensas que manejar informaciones sin conocer los detalles es como "picotear" y te crea inseguridad.*
- No te gusta tener que hacer resúmenes pero tienes buena concentración para los detalles y los retienes bien.*
- Piensas que con los esquemas se pierden detalles o información importante.*

.....  
 .....



Cuando aprendes te gusta descubrir las reglas por ti mismo, a partir de la observación y del análisis de distintos ejemplos.

Crees que tienes capacidad de generalización, es decir, de llegar a lo general desde lo particular.

.....  
 .....



Cuando aprendes te gusta tener primero la regla para aplicarla después a casos concretos.

Tienes la impresión de que hacer lo contrario, es decir, inferir la regla general a partir de los casos particulares, es perder el tiempo.

.....  
 .....



Te gusta trabajar en equipo o con otra persona. Te parece que el intercambio de ideas y el debate es provechoso.

Comunicar ayuda a clarificar las ideas. Tomar en cuenta otros puntos de vista y argumentar enriquece los resultados del trabajo.

.....  
 .....



Prefieres trabajar solo(-a), de manera independiente.

La organización del trabajo en grupo te parece una pérdida de tiempo.

Cuando tienes que trabajar con más personas tienes la impresión de avanzar más despacio porque, ponerse de acuerdo lleva mucho tiempo.

.....  
 .....



Cuando trabajas te gusta que alguien te controle un poco o asuma la responsabilidad de las decisiones.

Te gusta recibir una evaluación externa de tu trabajo. Que se te apruebe o se te critique.

En general, crees que se obtienen mejores resultados en situaciones en las que se da una competencia.

.....  
 .....



No sientes necesidad de que se te controle para organizar tu trabajo.

Te gusta evaluar tu mismo tu trabajo y sopesar tus dificultades y tus avances. Te importa sobre todo tu auto-evaluación.

Tu mejor estímulo es tu propio avance.

.....  
 .....



*Aprendes mejor cuando el clima de aprendizaje es cálido y estableces relaciones de confianza y de empatía.*

*Te interesan los aspectos culturales de la lengua y todo lo relacionado con las costumbres sociales.*

*Te gustaría poder discutir algunas representaciones negativas o positivas sobre los nativos de la lengua que vas a estudiar porque te das cuenta que esos "estereotipos" pueden influirte.*

*No te basta con aprender un código. Comunicar con un extranjero es compartir e intercambiar, aunque no se domine su lengua.*

.....  
.....



*El problema que para ti tienen las lenguas es que no son siempre "lógicas". Prefieres los textos informativos a los textos de ficción.*

*Los malentendidos podrían evitarse si las lenguas se utilizaran con lógica.*

*En cuestión de conocimiento, quizás tienes la impresión de que las metáforas son recursos aproximativos que buscan compensar la insuficiencia de conocimientos científicos precisos, o bien revelan la incapacidad de expresarse de manera precisa.*

*Te molesta encontrarte con excepciones cuando aprendes una regla.*

.....  
.....



*No podría vivir sin mi ordenador.*

*Internet es una herramienta importante para obtener información.*

*Internet me ofrece muchos recursos para aprender lenguas.*

.....  
.....



*En Internet hay demasiada información, me pierdo entre todo lo que puedo encontrar.*

*Prefiero consultar un libro a consultar una pantalla.*

*Los ordenadores y yo no nos llevamos bien*

.....  
.....

¡Enhorabuena por la reflexión que acabas de hacer!

Tenla presente en tu aventura por el aprendizaje de las lenguas.

Te será de gran ayuda.



## ANNEX II: Level Questionnaire

### Tests de nivel para experimentación CIBERTAAAL (HUM2005-05548FILO)

#### INFORMACIÓN PERSONAL

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¿Cuánto tiempo llevas estudiando inglés? (especifica detalladamente en que condiciones: colegios, institutos, academias, Escuelas Oficiales, extranjero, etc.)

¿Tienes algún título o certificado de inglés?:

No

Sí

#### MÁS INFORMACIÓN

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Especifica **con sinceridad** el nivel de inglés que crees que tienes:

1. Cuando escucho el inglés hablado:

- Reconozco palabras y expresiones muy básicas que se usan habitualmente, relativas a mí mismo, a mi familia y a mi entorno inmediato cuando se habla despacio y con claridad.
- Comprendo frases y el vocabulario más habitual sobre temas de interés personal (información personal y familiar muy básica, compras, lugar de residencia, empleo).

- Soy capaz de captar la idea principal de avisos y mensajes breves, claros y sencillos.
- Comprendo las ideas principales cuando el discurso es claro y normal y se tratan asuntos cotidianos que tienen lugar en el trabajo, en la escuela, durante el tiempo.
- Comprendo casi todas las noticias de la televisión y los programas sobre temas actuales de ocio, etc.
- Comprendo la idea principal de muchos programas de radio o televisión que tratan temas actuales o asuntos de interés personal o profesional, cuando la articulación es relativamente lenta y clara.
- Comprendo discursos y conferencias extensos e incluso sigo líneas argumentales complejas siempre que el tema sea relativamente conocido.
- Comprendo la mayoría de las películas en las que se habla en un nivel de lengua estándar.
- Comprendo casi todas las noticias de la televisión y los programas sobre temas actuales.
- Comprendo discursos extensos incluso cuando no están estructurados con claridad y cuando las relaciones están sólo implícitas y no se señalan explícitamente.
- Comprendo sin mucho esfuerzo los programas de televisión y las películas.
- No tengo ninguna dificultad para comprender cualquier tipo de lengua hablada, tanto en conversaciones en vivo como en discursos retransmitidos, aunque se produzcan a una velocidad de hablante nativo, siempre que tenga tiempo para familiarizarme con el acento.

2. Cuando leo textos en inglés:

- Comprendo palabras y nombres conocidos y frases muy sencillas, por ejemplo las que hay en letreros, carteles y catálogos.



- Soy capaz de leer textos muy breves y sencillos. Sé encontrar información específica y predecible en escritos sencillos y cotidianos como anuncios publicitarios, prospectos, menús y horarios y comprendo cartas personales breves y sencillas.
- Comprendo textos redactados en una lengua de uso habitual y cotidiano o relacionada con el trabajo.
- Comprendo la descripción de acontecimientos, sentimientos y deseos en cartas personales.
- Soy capaz de leer artículos e informes relativos a problemas contemporáneos en los que los autores adoptan posturas o puntos de vista concretos.
- Comprendo la prosa literaria contemporánea.
- Comprendo textos largos y complejos de carácter literario o basados en hechos, apreciando distinciones de estilo.
- Comprendo artículos especializados e instrucciones técnicas largas, aunque no se relacionen con mi especialidad.
- Soy capaz de leer con facilidad prácticamente todas las formas de lengua escrita, incluyendo textos abstractos estructural o lingüísticamente complejos como, por ejemplo, manuales, artículos especializados y obras literarias.

3. Cuando participo en conversaciones en inglés:

- Puedo participar en una conversación de forma sencilla siempre que la otra persona esté dispuesta a repetir lo que ha dicho o a decirlo con otras palabras y a una velocidad más lenta y me ayude a formular lo que intento decir.
- Planteo y contesto preguntas sencillas sobre temas de necesidad inmediata o asuntos muy habituales.
- Puedo comunicarme en tareas sencillas y habituales que requieren un intercambio simple y directo de información sobre actividades y asuntos cotidianos.

- Soy capaz de realizar intercambios sociales muy breves, aunque, por lo general, no puedo comprender lo suficiente como para mantener la conversación por mí mismo.
- Sé desenvolverme en casi todas las situaciones que se me presentan cuando viajo donde se habla esa lengua.
- Puedo participar espontáneamente en una conversación que trate temas cotidianos de interés personal o que sean pertinentes para la vida diaria (por ejemplo, familia, aficiones, trabajo, viajes y acontecimientos actuales).
- Puedo participar en una conversación con cierta fluidez y espontaneidad, lo que posibilita la comunicación normal con hablantes nativos.
- Puedo tomar parte activa en debates desarrollados en situaciones cotidianas explicando y defendiendo mis puntos de vista.
- Me expreso con fluidez y espontaneidad sin tener que buscar de forma muy evidente las expresiones adecuadas.
- Utilizo el lenguaje con flexibilidad y eficacia para fines sociales y profesionales.
- Formulo ideas y opiniones con precisión y relaciono mis intervenciones hábilmente con las de otros hablantes.
- Tomo parte sin esfuerzo en cualquier conversación o debate y conozco bien modismos, frases hechas y expresiones coloquiales.
- Me expreso con fluidez y transmito matices sutiles de sentido con precisión. Si tengo un problema, sorteo la dificultad con tanta discreción que los demás apenas se dan cuenta.

4. Cuando me expreso en inglés:

- Utilizo expresiones y frases sencillas para describir el lugar donde vivo y las personas que conozco.

- Utilizo una serie de expresiones y frases para describir con términos sencillos a mi familia y otras personas, mis condiciones de vida, mi origen educativo y mi trabajo actual o el último que tuve.
- Sé enlazar frases de forma sencilla con el fin de describir experiencias y hechos, mis sueños, esperanzas y ambiciones.
- Puedo explicar y justificar brevemente mis opiniones y proyectos.
- Sé narrar una historia o relato, la trama de un libro o película y puedo describir mis reacciones.
- Presento descripciones claras y detalladas de una amplia serie de temas relacionados con mi especialidad.
- Sé explicar un punto de vista sobre un tema exponiendo las ventajas y los inconvenientes de varias opciones.
- Presento descripciones claras y detalladas sobre temas complejos que incluyen otros temas, desarrollando ideas concretas y terminando con una conclusión apropiada.
- Presento descripciones o argumentos de forma clara y fluida y con un estilo que es adecuado al contexto y con una estructura lógica y eficaz que ayuda al oyente a fijarse en las ideas importantes y a recordarlas.

5. Cuando escribo textos en inglés:

- Soy capaz de escribir postales cortas y sencillas, por ejemplo para enviar felicitaciones.
- Sé rellenar formularios con datos personales, por ejemplo mi nombre, mi nacionalidad y mi dirección en el formulario del registro de un hotel.
- Soy capaz de escribir notas y mensajes breves y sencillos relativos a mis necesidades inmediatas.
- Puedo escribir cartas personales muy sencillas, por ejemplo agradeciendo algo a alguien.

- Soy capaz de escribir textos sencillos y bien enlazados sobre temas que me son conocidos o de interés personal.
- Puedo escribir cartas personales que describen experiencias e impresiones.
- Soy capaz de escribir textos claros y detallados sobre una amplia serie de temas relacionados con mis intereses.
- Puedo escribir redacciones o informes transmitiendo información o proponiendo motivos que apoyen o refuten un punto de vista concreto.
- Sé escribir cartas que destacan la importancia que le doy a determinados hechos y experiencias.
- Soy capaz de expresarme en textos claros y bien estructurados exponiendo puntos de vista con cierta extensión.
- Puedo escribir sobre temas complejos en cartas, redacciones o informes resaltando lo que considero que son aspectos importantes.
- Selecciono el estilo apropiado para los lectores a los que van dirigidos mis escritos.
- Soy capaz de escribir textos claros y fluidos en un estilo apropiado.
- Puedo escribir cartas, informes o artículos complejos que presentan argumentos con una estructura lógica y eficaz que ayuda al oyente a fijarse en las ideas importantes y a recordarlas.
- Escribo resúmenes y reseñas de obras profesionales o literarias.

Enviar test

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/testnivel/testNivel.php?idioma=en>

## ANNEX IV: Self-Assessment Questionnaire [ 1 ]

### AUTOEVALUACIÓN

Se trata ahora de que realices una autoevaluación de tu experiencia de navegación y lectura. Responderás a preguntas relacionadas con el proceso y resultados de la tarea.

#### I) El proceso de realización de la tarea

1) Destrezas técnicas de uso de la informática

a) ¿Qué aspectos dominas mejor?

b) ¿Cuáles te gustaría mejorar?

2) ¿Qué criterios sueles utilizar cuando navegas para seleccionar información? Señala la importancia que los distintos criterios tienen para ti según la siguiente escala (puedes incluir algún comentario si lo consideras conveniente):

	No lo tengo en cuenta	Es importante pero no determinante en mis decisiones	Es un criterio que tengo muy en cuenta	Es el criterio fundamental para mí	Comentarios
a) Palabras clave según los objetivos					
b) Atractivo del sitio: colores, diseño gráfico					

c) Credibilidad del sitio (Indica algún criterio que utilizas para establecer la credibilidad del sitio)					
d) Importancia de los contenidos y de la información					
e) Facilidad de lectura porque domino la lengua					
f) Brevedad del texto					

3) Eficacia en los distintos aspectos implicados en la gestión de informaciones.

Señala las afirmaciones con las que te sientes identificado:

- a) He podido manejar informaciones de 2 textos.
- b) He podido manejar informaciones de 3 textos.
- c) He podido manejar informaciones de 4 o más textos.
- d) He podido establecer relaciones entre imágenes, documentos de texto, documentos audio y vídeo, y complementar las informaciones de unos con las de los otros.
- e) He podido manejar informaciones provenientes de documentos en distintas lenguas.
- f) He utilizado diccionarios on-line.

- g) He sido capaz de hacer mis propias búsquedas, además de las direcciones http:// propuestas, y hacerlo de manera relevante para la tarea.
- h) He utilizado al azar los enlaces de los documentos.
- i) He utilizado de manera selectiva los enlaces de los documentos.
- j) He entrado al azar en los enlaces y luego efectúo una selección.
- k) He entrado en todos los enlaces que me propone un documento.
- l) Los enlaces han dispersado mi búsqueda.
- m) Los enlaces me han ayudado a comprender.

4) Estrategias de la interactividad y la cooperación. Señala tu uso y tu valoración de la interactividad según la siguiente escala.

	Raramente o nunca	Alguna vez	A menudo	Casi siempre
a) Los sitios Web ofrecían recursos de la interactividad como blogs, foros, e-mail, y/o chats				
b) En el caso de que lo ofrecieran, los he usado				
c) He utilizado por mi cuenta otros recursos interactivos (mi correo personal, el aula virtual, etc.) para resolver dudas o intercambiar información				

5) ¿Cuáles de las direcciones http:// utilizadas te han parecido más interesantes y por qué?

- 1- <http://www1.aucegypt.edu/academic/writers/>
- 2- <http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/writing/writingprocess/menu.html>
- 3- <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>
- 4- <http://www.suelebeau.com/writingprocess.htm>
- 5- <http://wire.rutgers.edu/process.html>

- 6- <http://foro.univision.com/t5/Idioma-Inglés/The-Writing-Process/m-p/212040564>
- 7- <http://42explore.com/writing.htm>
- 8- <http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writingprocess/writingprocess.htm>
- 9- <http://its.leesummit.k12.mo.us/writing.htm>
- 10- <http://www.planet.eon.net/~bplaroach/index.html>
- 11- <http://thewritingsite.org/>

6) La comprensión de la lengua me ha dificultado la realización de las tareas:

Sí

No

7) Señala una de las tres opciones siguientes para caracterizar tus conocimientos previos sobre el tema de la Cibertarea:

- a) No tenía ningún conocimiento previo del tema
- b) Tenía algunas nociones previas
- c) Conocía bastante el tema

## II) El Resultado de la tarea

1) Valora los resultados de esta tarea utilizando la siguiente escala.

	Bajo	Regular	Alto	Muy alto
a) Grado de satisfacción sobre tu uso de Internet para resolver las tareas propuestas.				
b) Grado de satisfacción sobre tu uso de Internet para obtener nuevas informaciones.				
c) Grado de satisfacción sobre tu uso de Internet para construir nuevos conocimientos, relacionando lo que ya sabías con las nuevas informaciones.				
d) En relación con el resultado, grado de satisfacción sobre el trabajo individual.				



e) Grado de satisfacción sobre tu uso de la lengua extranjera para acceder a nuevas informaciones.				
f) Grado de satisfacción sobre la influencia del uso de Internet y de las tareas de búsqueda de información para la mejora de tu conocimiento de la lengua extranjera.				

2) Otras observaciones valoraciones y/o comentarios sobre las mejoras, los problemas u otros aspectos relacionados con la realización de tareas y el uso de recursos de Internet en lengua extranjera.

3) Puntos fuertes y débiles con respecto a la realización de tu propia tarea.

4) Puntos fuertes y débiles con respecto a la tarea propuesta.

**Enviar cuestionario**

**[1]** La orientación de esta Cibertarea y el presente cuestionario de autoevaluación son producto de la reflexión del GIAPEL en el marco del proyecto CIBERTAAAL.

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/autoevaluacion/avaluacioLogin.php>



## ANNEX V: European Portfolio of Languages

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



## **ANNEX VII: Observation Clues throughout the Cybertask Session**

### **Pistas para la OBSERVACIÓN GLOBAL en las SESIONES de realización de las cibertareas (CT)**

1. **Ante un nuevo sitio...**
  - El estudiante se queda un rato en la página y acaba por actuar. Lento y productivo.
  - El estudiante se queda un rato en la página pero está bloqueado en su actuación. Lento y no productivo.
  - El estudiante se entera rápidamente del contenido de la página y comienza una actividad. Rápido y productivo.
  - El estudiante se entera rápidamente del contenido de la página pero se queda bloqueado en su actuación. Rápido y no productivo.
2. **Navegación**  
**Progresión en las páginas Web**
  - El estudiante respeta el orden en el que aparecen las páginas Web en la presentación de la tarea.
  - El estudiante empieza navegando, para obtener una visión de conjunto del programa, después enlaza con una navegación respetando el orden de las páginas Web en la presentación de la tarea.
  - El estudiante realiza una progresión desordenada de las páginas Web. Parece perdido, no para de avanzar y de retroceder.
3. **Actitud general del estudiante durante la realización de las actividades:**
  - Poco interesado o nada, parece aburrirse. Da la impresión de que responde al azar a las actividades.
  - Parece interrogativo, sorprendido por lo que se le pide hacer. Parece perdido, busca ayuda en el programa o a su alrededor. Parece nervioso, descontento, insatisfecho.
  - Parece implicarse personalmente en las actividades, reflexionar sobre las preguntas formuladas y las respuestas que él da. Parece disfrutar con la actividad.
4. **Preguntas o comentarios que se formulen o surjan a lo largo de la sesión dirigidas al profesor o a otros compañeros sobre:**
  - **El planteamiento de la actividad, de la sesión, objetivos de la misma**
  - **La navegación**
  - **Los sitios encontrados, lo que tienen que hacer...**
  - **Otros**
5. **Interacción entre la pareja:** ¿Qué lengua utilizan cuando hablan? ¿Se intercambian el manejo del ratón? ¿Juega alguno de los dos un papel dominante? Posibles explicaciones del papel dominante (¿por conocimiento de la lengua, de la herramienta, por carácter? )  
¿Hay debate sobre el funcionamiento de la tarea? hay consenso fácil? ¿hay discrepancias?
6. **Realización de la tarea:** ¿Responden a las actividades en soporte electrónico? ¿En papel? (tendrán la opción de hacerlo de las dos maneras); ¿Toman apuntes personales? ¿En el ordenador? ¿En la libreta?; ¿Contestan al cuestionario de autoevaluación al mismo tiempo que hacen la tarea? (les podemos sugerir que lo hagan); ¿Utilizan otros materiales disponibles: diccionarios en papel, alguna gramática, los apuntes de clase, otros textos? (habría que llevar gramáticas, diccionarios y recordarles que los pueden utilizar y que ellos pueden llevarse su propio material)

	<b>Estudiante:</b>
Ante un nuevo sitio...	
Navegación	
Actitud general del estudiante durante la realización de las actividades	
Preguntas o comentarios que se formulen o surjan a lo largo de la sesión	
Interacción en la pareja	_____
Realización de la tarea	
+Aspectos particulares de la tarea y/o lengua	
Otros	

## **ANNEX VIII: Skills involved in each of the Activities of the Cybertask**

**Activity 1: In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view (5 points).**

- Metalanguage (metalinguistic and cognitive awareness)
- Previous knowledge

**Activity 2 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**2.1. In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating? (5 points)**

- Cognitive strategies (inference, induction and synthesis)

**2.2. Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice. (5 points)**

- Learning awareness (cognitive and metacognitive awareness)
- Autonomous, analytic and thoughtful learning abilities

**Activity 3 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**3.1. Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process. (5 points)**

- Metalinguistic competence
- Synthetic capacity ('skimming' and 'scanning' techniques)

**3.2. What civilizations were the first to use writing? (5 points)**

- Synthetic capacity ('scanning')
- Thoughtful profile

**Activity 4 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer. (5 points)**

- Autonomous capacity
- Thoughtful capacity
- Synthetic capacity

**Activity 5 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**5.1. Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report... (5 points)**

- Analytic capacity through several consulted resources
- Metalinguistic abilities



**5.2. Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer. (5 points)**

- Active or Thoughtful attitude
- Autonomous capacity
- Metalinguistic competence

**ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK (20 points)**

**Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.**

**GRAPHIC ORGANIZER: (5 points)**

- Analytic profile
- Thoughtful attitude
- Coherence between the Graphic Organizer and the Essay

**ESSAY: (15 points)**

- General text coherence and cohesion (5 points)
- Semantic-pragmatic competence (5 points)
- New knowledge (5 points)

**TOTAL: 60 POINTS**



## **ANNEX IX: Cybertask Answers**

**STUDENT a1236946**

### **Activity 1:**

In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect to learn some useful information about writing an essay in English.

### **Activity 2 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Because you have to do researches, to organise your ideas. It's a long process and it can be difficult.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

Cause and effect organizer, character and story organizer. I think they are the clearest ones.

### **Activity 3 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is all the activities you do in order to produce an essay: the researches, the pre-writing, the brainstorming, the outlining, and the writing. It's important in order to write a well structured essay.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

### **Activity 4 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

Two drafts are necessary in order to write a good essay. The first draft should be revised, corrected; some sentences may be restated for more clarity etc.

### **Activity 5 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

Research, Analysis, Brainstorming, Thesis, Outline, First draft, Revising, Final Draft.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I have never used all the steps proposed. It'd require too much time and, in my opinion, some steps –like the brainstorming- are useless.

### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

I'd choose a cluster graphic organizer. Showing why we have to recycle: Recycling is now necessary in our society of consumption where we produce lots of rubbish. Therefore, it's our duty to recycle all the garbage we produce in order to protect the environment and reduce the pollution.

how we have to recycle: We have to recycle all the toxic substances like batteries and electronic devices that may pollute the earth. We also should make our best to recycle paper and plastic in order to reuse them.

Improvements: To achieve that goal the authorities have to improve the services of the recollection of garbage; awareness campaign to encourage the population to recycle.

## **STUDENT al229578**

### **Activity 1:**

In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

-We are supposed to learn a little more amount of knowledge by gathering some information from a provided sources in order for us to improve our future essays.

### **Activity 2 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

-Because the setps to follow are not clear to everybody.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

1°-Provide graphic organizers for your students to use as alternatives to book reports. Graphic organizers can be created for comparing characters, identifying the setting, mapping out the plot, etc

I feel comfortable with this graphic organaizer because it allows the student to focus on other alternatives instead the book, something that awakes the searching side of the student.

2°-Provide graphic organizers that your students can use to create the rough draft of a writing assignment.

-They appear to be the most effective and quickest.

### **Activity 3 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

-Writing is a necessary thing for humans, so it goes further than "paste" idealistic ideas in a paper. Writing is the material way to express our ideas and compare them with other. It is the way by which we learn, and learning is completely necessary in order for us to develop as a critic people. Writing is the first step that turns us into an intelligent beings.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

### **Activity 4 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

-As the first draft done might not be perfect, we should write about three or four drafts to get a right one.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

-Firstly, there is needed to make a research to get some knowledge about what we are going to write.

-Secondly, we have to deal with the analysis in order to analyze our arguments, we have to sure which are going to be our claims.

-Thirdly, It is necessary to make a brainstorming and so exploiting our own ideas, feeling and memories about the topic.

-Then, we go with the thesis statement, which is the side we are going to defend

-Now we deal with the outline in order to establish the structure our essay will have.

-The following steps are: Introduction, paragraphs and conclusion, MLA Style and Language

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

-I wouldn't get rid of anyone if I want to write a perfect essay, but if the writing is a part of a class project I'd remove MLA style because we haven't dealt with it in class and that means it is not so important for that purpose.

**ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about "recycling" (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

**INTRODUCTION:** Background info + opinion

PR1: Recycling is not a true everywhere

PR2: Recycling promotes unemployment

**CONCLUSION:** Summarize + Restate opinion

It would be a great essay, trust me.

## **STUDENT a1227819**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

It is supposed that we are going to learn how to search information in websites, and to realise if that we have found is pertinent, according to the question, or the topic.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

-It could be frustrating because the writer doesn't know the steps (research, analysis, brainstorming, thesis...), or doesn't understand what he/she has to do.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

-In my opinion, the most interesting graphic organizers that I have found are: ----Outline, good for big topics with lots of main ideas and details. Outlines are also good for persuasive writing.

-Timelines, good for telling the order of how things happen in time.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

- Writing is discovery, thanks to that, a community can interact, and obviously communicate.

-There are several stages during the writing process, and all of them are important. Each one offers you something. For example, prewriting helps you to generate some ideas.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

It is necessary to write at least, three or four drafts before getting the final draft, because this way, you will be publishing it.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

- Research, analysis, brainstorming, thesis, outline, introduction, paragraphs, conclusion.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

-Yes, I follow the steps mentioned before.

## **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

I would use an outline, it organizes my better my ideas:

Title: recycling

1<sup>st</sup> idea, Introduction:how many types of material you can recycle? Why is important recycling?

2<sup>nd</sup> idea, Explanation of types: paper, plastic, batteries...

3<sup>rd</sup> idea: recycling disadvantages.

4<sup>th</sup>: recycling advantages.

5<sup>th</sup>: Conclusion, my opinion. And summarize of ideas.

## **RECYCLING**

Knowing how many types of materias we can recycle is very important. Do you know how many? And is it really important to recycle as well? I think so:

There are several materials everybody can recycle easily: batteries, paper, plastic, etc. But before of recycle them, we have to know why is important to recycle.

Some of the disadvantages are.... (I don't know)...

However, there are lots of advantages to recycle. For example, you help the nature, avoiding that plastic remains everywhere polluting the Earth. It takes 1.000.000. of years in disappear! Batteries are very wrong as well, they take out a dangerous smoke.

In my opinion, recycling is very important for several reasons, metioned before...



**STUDENT al227844**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today’s class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

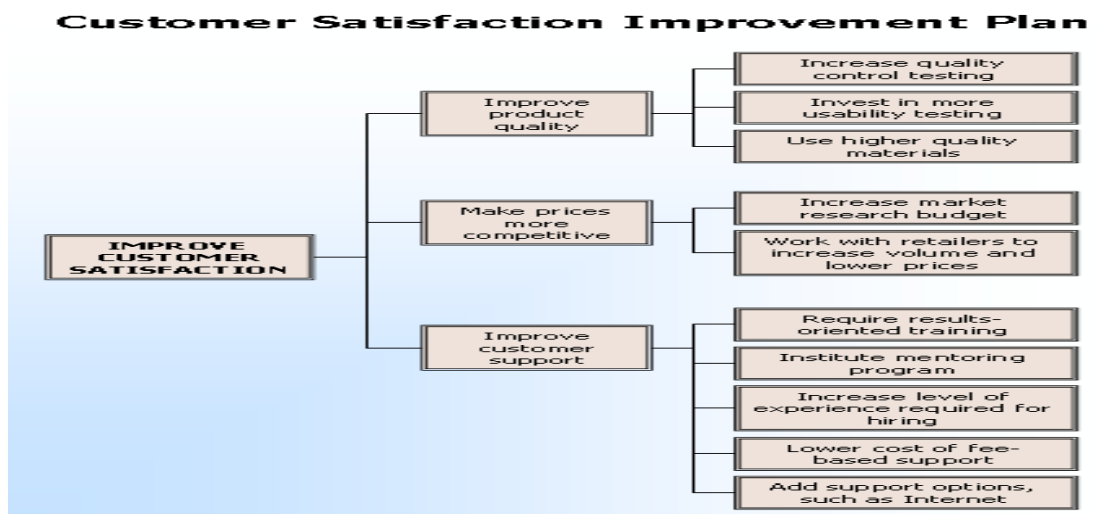
I expect to learn from today’s class how improve my writings using the information which is on the net.

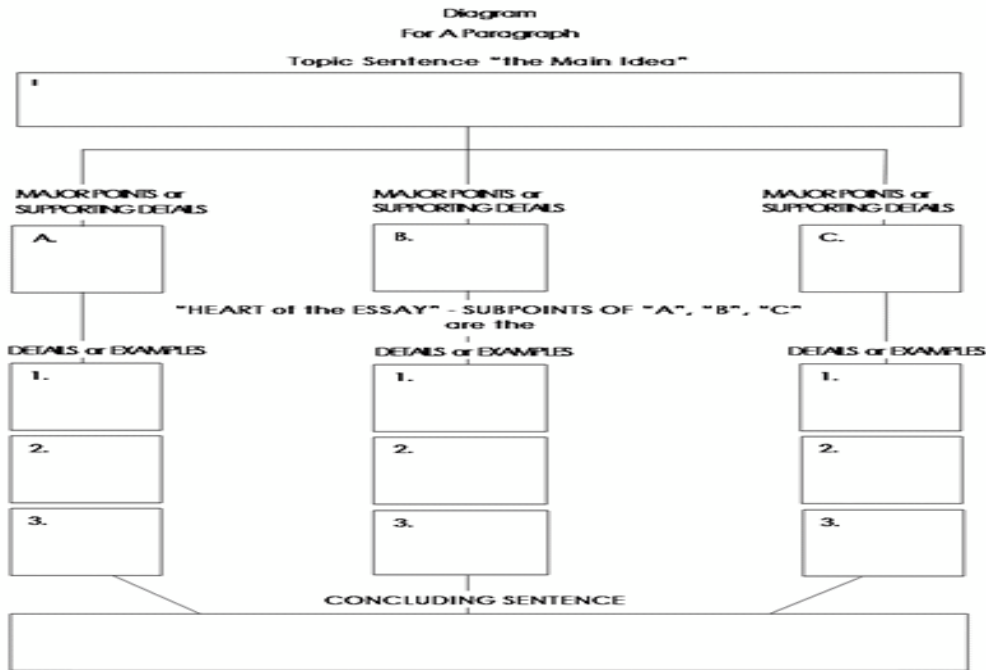
**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Writing an essay is so frustating because students do not know the writing process, or find difficult this process. On the other hand, students sometimes do not have clear their topic, so they do not use the “prewriting”, which is the process when you decide what are going to be your topic.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.





I think that these two graphic organizers can help students when they are writing an essay. The structure of the writing will be more clear, and then people will understand better the content and the goal of the essay.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is actually a fluid and changing experience. Each step of the writing process can move you forward to completing a piece of writing. The more you know about each formal step of the writing process, the greater your ability to make decisions about the way you approach writing and revision.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

“The Sumerians developed a form of *pictographic* writing that used word pictures like bird, fish, ox or grain etc., around 4000 - 3500 BC. In 3000 BC, it developed into a cursive form of *cuneiform* style of writing which was a wedge shaped linear impression on clay tablets”.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

There is not a concrete number of drafts, you have to do all the drafts that you consider necessary to obtain a great essay at the end. However the first draft is the most important.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

Research, analysis, brainstorming, thesis, outline, introduction, paragraphs, conclusion, MLA style, and language. It is also important: listing ideas (prewriting), listing thesis statements, questioning (who?, what?, when?, where?, why?, how?).

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

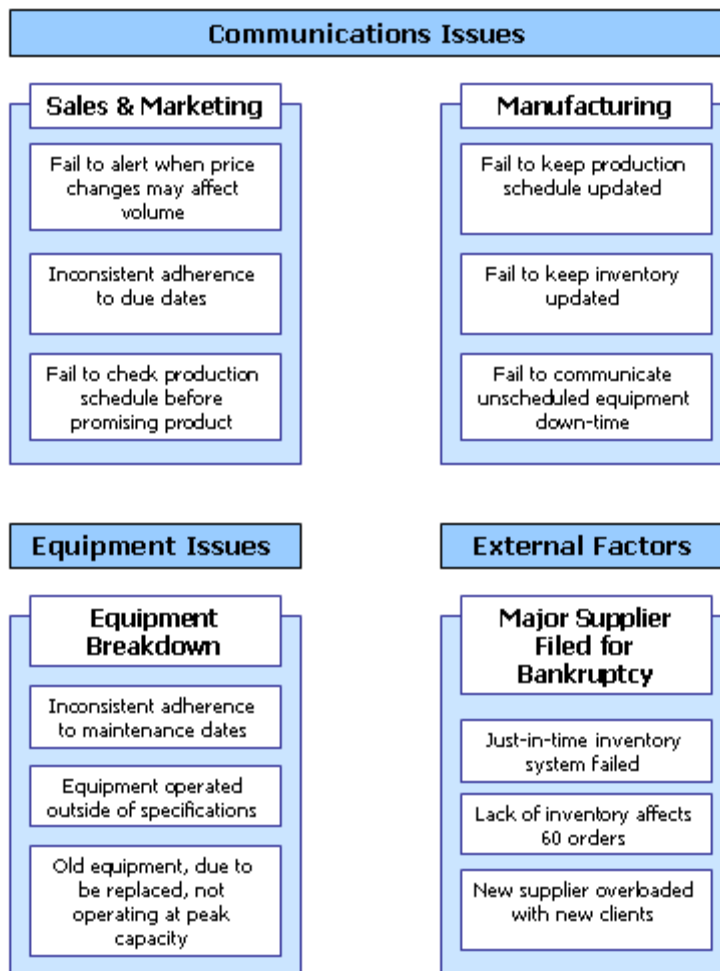
I use some of these steps, but not all steps. For example, the steps that I use are: Brainstorming, thesis, outline, paragraphs, and conclusion. I consider important listing thesis statements.

### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

I would try this graphic organizer:

## Orders Consistently Late Last Quarter



Then I would think about the structure of my article, and what will be the title. In each section, I would write a different topic: introduction, 1<sup>st</sup> opinion, 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion, and conclusion (thesis). Finally, I would search on the net all the necessary vocabulary to do the article.

ARTICLE:

**“Recycling paper, our friend in the University”**

Students are not aware of the environmental problem that we are suffering. If they were aware of this, they would recycle materials. The paper is one of the most useful materials that we have, but in the future paper will not exist. To solve this problem is necessary obtain information about the environmental impact which exist.

On the one hand, there are people who do not recycle. But, why? Is not difficult, it is easy! You only have to separate the materials, and then through these materials in their concrete container.

However, fortunately, there are people who recycle. But there is not a big number of people who do this. They would speak with people who do not recycle, because maybe they do not have more information.

The students are the only people who can change this. They are the future, and they have the future in their hands. Why we do not recycle paper? One example is USA, where 71 million tons are used each year. So... it is true, people do not know how many paper is used in the world. Our friend, the paper, will die quickly.



## STUDENT a1227888

**ACTIVITY 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I think this today's class it is for improving my writing, my process writing.

### **ACTIVITY 2:**

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating

I think it is so frustrating because there are some steps to follow, and maybe, people can feel "blocked". You must write down your ideas.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

### **ACTIVITY 3**

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process are the steps that you have to follow to do your writing, these steps are: prewriting, composing, revising, editing and publishing.

It is very important to follow some ideas and write them, because they help you to build, concrete and finalize your essay.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

Mesopotamia and Egypt

**ACTIVITY 4:** According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer

I think they are necessary until you finally write your essay as a whole.

### **ACTIVITY 5**

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

There is a prewriting, composing, revising, editing and publishing.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I usually follow these steps, but sometimes I change the order or I eliminate some steps, but only when I have so clear my ideas.

**ACTIVITY 6:** Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about "recycling" (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

First, I look for some information about this topic and after that, I will begin to write my first draft. While I am writing, I continue to look for information or vocabulary. When I have the main ideas, I begin to write my essay.

### ESSAY ABOUT RECYCLING

Recycling is a process of turning use products into raw materials that can be used again to make new products. So we can conserve our natural resources and reduce pollution.

People recycle things like papers, batteries, plastic...but nowadays, the most important is our environmental movement. The climate change affects people.





## STUDENT a1228860

### **Activity 1:**

In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I think we will learn how to research information on the internet and making an essay or text with that information.

### **Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Because the students don't know the steps for writing an essay or don't know what to do with the information they have.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

**Problem/Solution Outline and Fishbone Map. I think these are the ones I can use because they are easier to understand.**

### **Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is the process you use to write a text. It is important to know it because in that way it is easier for you to write a text.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

The cave man used the pictures to write things. Also the Egyptians hieroglyphics is a type of early writing.

### **Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

It is necessary to write at least one draft, to make sure you write it well, but sometimes it's necessary to write more drafts, it depends on you.

### **Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

Listing ideas: you first have to look for ideas for your writing.

Freewriting: write focusing on ideas, not grammar or punctuation.

Organizing main points.

Write the introduction: it is very important to grab the readers attention.

Write the body paragraph

Write the conclusion

Read it aloud, to make sure it sounds well.

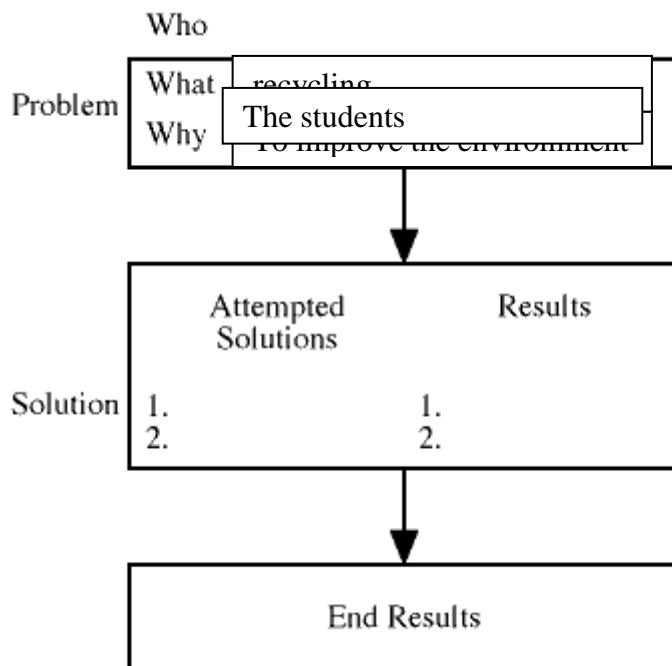
Correct the mistakes and the punctuation.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I think I will use all the steps, although depending on the text I have to write I will change them.

### ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.



Nowadays all you listen is “You have to recycle” or “It is better if you recycle”, but why we have to recycle? What things can be recycle? How can we do it right? It is very simple, but you have to be constant.

It is well-known that recycling is very important for the environment. If you recycle you can save natural resources, save energy, save clean air and water, and also, you can save money and create jobs.

But what things can be recycled? You can recycle anything but food scraps, but you can turn those into compost! All aluminum, glass, paper, and plastic can be recycled, and also computers, cellphones, nintendo games, ink cartridges, movies, compact cd's that is called the e-waste (electronic waste).

And how can I do it right? It is easy if you are constant. You have to separate all the paper, aluminium, etc. into different containers. Use different containers



## STUDENT a1205270

### Activity 1:

In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

From today's class, I expect to learn different skills to write properly in English, as well as learn to build accurate structures for my future writing process.

### Activity 2 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

In brief, writing can be such a frustrating issue due to the different steps that must be done before the whole piece is finished. That means you have to follow several patterns to build a proper text, which must be understood and it must show different meanings, along with the knowledge you owe about the topic, and of course, it has to be structured in an academic way, that can prove you're actually into the writing task. However, this is quite complicated because it can be a way of testing yourself, and that will be a cause for putting yourself in a difficult situation, where you must decide if you can really take the stress of the task, or if you prefer to let it go. There are many reasons to explain why stress can influence the way of writing an essay, but the writer must be ready to overcome every single step, and to let the mind free of worries, to just concentrate on the writing process.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

The first one is the **OUTLINE** [http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl\\_go\\_outline.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl_go_outline.htm), which I personally think is the one I like the most, because it's a very helpful way to organise the different ideas you can use in the writing process to create an accurate text.

The second one is **CAUSE AND EFFECT** [http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl\\_go\\_cause.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl_go_cause.htm), which in my opinion, is also a good graphic organiser that allows you to decide which causes can be the more effective ones in the topic.

### Activity 3 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The importance of the writing process, is based in the challenging experience the writing process is itself. It requires different steps that must be followed, and also the fluency a writer can use to actually show

the knowledge in the same text the writer will create. It is really important to know how to write properly, because each step of the writing process can make you jump forward to another idea to include in the text, or also, it can make you jump backwards to decide which idea is the best one to mention in each part of the writing process. Basically, the writing process is a way to approach what you want to express, gaining more abilities and using them as tools.

### 3.2. What civilizations were the first to use writing?

The first piece of writing, only contained numbers, but the first piece of true writing of language, was invented in Mesopotamia and Mesoamerica. However, there is a cultural confusion, due to the facts that Egypt and China could also have been the inventors of the writing of language. Also, there is a similar debate about the Indian writing of language during the Bronze Age. It is said that writing was transmitted from one culture to another, so we can't really know what culture was the first one to use writing.

Link: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_writing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_writing)

#### Activity 4 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

There isn't a proper answer to the question of how many drafts are needed before the final text, but it is true pre-writing it's the main thing. Following this, the first writing starts to gain importance, when this is finished, re-writing the whole piece is a very important step you must follow, to check out if there is anything you want to change, and finally, editing the text is the last thing to do before writing the final piece. So, I believe you must write at least 4 drafts before giving the final copy. However, it would be possible you'd need to write as many drafts as you consider.

#### Activity 5 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

First, research about the topic you are about to write must be done, therefore you'll gain a few ideas that you can add to the knowledge you already owe. Second, the analysis of the subject it's a very important process, in which you must decide how to use the different ideas in the text. Then, brainstorming is a good way to add different and possibly new ideas to the equation, in which you can decide which comes first, and which one is useless. After this, you must pick up the thesis, which will be your best idea and the whole text will be defined around it. However, the outline is also very important, because is where we decide how to start writing the text, what comes first and why. Then, Introduction, different

paragraphs and conclusion, will allow you to write a proper masterpiece in your writing essay.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I'd use them all, as I already used them before, because they truly helped to gain the knowledge I needed to structure my ideas and share them in a writing piece, as I believe you need to follow different patterns to express just what you really mean, and not many ideas that owe lack of importance.

### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about "recycling" (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

#### **GRAPHIC ORGANISER: OUTLINE**

##### **TITLE: RECYCLING FOR LIFE**

1. Recycling is the best way to maintain the process of life in our world.
  - A) Recycling allows us to use the waste we cause.
  - B) School or television campaigns keep trying to indulge us the knowledge.
  - C) There are many different tools to recycle.
  
2. However, we are not used to recycle, and there are many people that can't see why we should.
  - A) At home, some families don't recycle.
  - B) Schools or television campaigns don't really persuade enough.
  - C) Some of the tools available to recycle, are removed due to different reasons: economical, useless.
  
3. As a conclusion, we should decide what to do with what we produce, because it is our world, and our own life.
  - A. We should think and speak for ourselves.
  - B.





## STUDENT al227924

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I hope I learn how to write properly any kind of text. With the help of internet, and using the sources correctly in order to make a new text with my own ideas, but using strong statements that I find in the source.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

It is frustrating because you have to pay attention to grammar, vocabulary, and also you have to structure your ideas. And that's the biggest problem, if you have a vague idea about what you want to say, structuring them is the most frustrating part of writing an essay.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

**Five W's chart:** This one is perfect when you want to explain something that has happened, it is usually used by journalists; and it can also be used to write a story.

**Persuasion map:** This is the perfect one for essays, because you make a statement and you have to give reasons to show that what you have said is right.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process, helps you to clear your mind and structure your ideas. However, you don't have to follow an order, because you can go back and forth the steps as many times as you like. This is the way, you can improve your text and your writing; you have to think about what you are going to say and who is going to read it. Depending on that you have to be more precise with your vocabulary, or you have to use common words. Without this process, your text can be a group of sentences telling something with no order, and no structures. With the consequence that the people who reads it, will not understand what you wanted to say.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

The ones settled between the rivers: Nile and Tigris. That were Egyptian and Sumerian.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

Before you make the final copy, you need to make at least two drafts. This is because, the first draft you make, the ideas won't be concise and also they won't be organized. The second one you will have everything in order, more precise and you will give examples for your statements. In the second draft, you will edit what you don't like, and change some words, and the final copy will be ready. In some cases you will need three drafts, but in my opinion that's not necessary.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

First of all you have to brainstorm and make a list with all the ideas you have. After that you have to structure them, making the outline. Then you look for some examples, or quotes for your statements. When you have all this done, you have to make the first draft, it doesn't have to be perfect. Depending on what you have and if you are so demanding with yourself when you write, you will need another draft, or just to edit the first one and then the final copy is perfectly done.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

Since I'm not an organized person, I prefer to write down everything I want to say, with no order. The steps, of brainstorming and making an outline, doesn't fit me. So I first, make the draft. Then I organize what I have written making the outline, so my text will be structured. And if I can I look for examples and quotes. Then I write it again, and if I see that it is clear, and all my ideas are structured that's the final copy.

## **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about "recycling" (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

**GOAL:** Nowadays, recycling is important because without it we would live in a world surrounded by garbage. Do you recycle?

Reason 1: Politicians should make new laws about recycling

Reason 2: Consequences of not recycling

Conclusion: Recycling is the only way to make this planet a better place to live.

## **STUDENT al074451**

**Activity 1: In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.**

I expect to learn how to find accurate information in different web pages according to my needs, and as a result to improve my writing.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1. In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?**

Writing an essay can be a hard and frustrating process. But this can be solved if you know the different steps and you understand them. Knowing that writing an essay can even be fun!

**2.2. Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.**

- **Mind42:** I really like this graphic organizer because apart from elaborating maps, it allows others to collaborate, so team work can be developed here. Besides, after this collaborative work, maps can be published on the web.

- **Lovely Charts:** the reason why I have chosen this graphic organizer is because it can create 3D graphics.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is not just to write a composition. It contains different steps that have to be fulfilled in order to achieve a good result.

It is important not to avoid or change the order of any of these steps because each step of the writing process will make you think and rethink in order to move forward or backward to change any piece of information given. Imagine you are in the final version of your essay but you have forgotten to include a very important idea of your previous brainstorming. If that happens, you can move backwards and change your draft and template, in order to achieve your good result.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

The first civilizations to use writing appeared in the different cultures of Bronze age.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

Once you have written your first draft, it is important to write two or three more drafts in order to revise the information. There are writers who need more than three drafts. This step is very important because once you have revised all the information, the final step comes easily.

Another piece of advice frequently given is to wait some days between the revision of one draft and the revision of the following one.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report..

Some steps have to be followed in order to get a good composition.

- Research
- Analysis
- Brainstorming
- Thesis
- Outline
- Introduction
- Paragraphs
- Conclusion
- MLA Style
- Language

We will need to spend more time in some steps than in others.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I will use some of the steps proposed above, but personally I will avoid some of them.

I personally would use the research, the brainstorming, the thesis, the outline, a template, 2 or 3 drafts, the final composition and then I would revise the MLA Style.

### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

## OUTLINE

Name: XXXXXX

Title: Recycling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Title: Recycling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

I. Have you ever thought about the millions of bottles

1. Advantages of recycling

A. Renewable energies

B. Good for the environment

C.

2. Disadvantages of recycling

A. Expensive

B. Bad education

C. cultural

II although recycling have positive aspects, it also have some drawbacks.

Have you ever thought about the millions of bottles



## STUDENT al228747

### **Activity 1:**

In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect to learn how to find the information in order to being able to write an essay.

### **Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

In most of the cases, people do not know that there are certain steps that you should follow in order to make a good essay. Because of this, those who do not know these steps found writing a frustrating work. They do not know how to begin, how to organize their ideas and whether what they are writing is correct or not.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

The first graphic organizer that i like is the outline technique. It is a clear way of organizing your ideas. First title, second general idea and the specific details, no way you get confused.

The second one i like the most is the cause and effect technique. It is so simple, every action as a consequence. It is the best way for you to understand and to link your ideas. Actually, this is the way i use to study for exams (in those cases we find a cause and effect event).

### **Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process consist of a serie of useful steps you can follow in order to write a good composition. It is important because it helps you to organize your ideas, keep moving while writing, rethinking about your choices and finding mistakes that, otherwise, you wouldn't notice.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

Cave men while painting things in their caves where doing writing. But if we have to mention the first civilization that started to write using symbols to represents things, we can talk about the Sumerian people. The kind of writing they used is called cuneiform (3500 BC to 2000 BC).

In second place we can mention to Egyptian hieroglyphics as another type of early writing. They wrote signs representing objects and sounds. They also had a sort of alphabet with 24 symbols.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

According to the information on the net, it might take you three or four drafts before the final copy.

Why so many? In the first draft you put your ideas into words, but you'll have to revise it. You will have to change things, words, phrases... it leads you to a second and third draft before the correct one. Not only grammatical mistakes will be corrected but also ways of saying things or ideas you don't want to appear.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

1. Research.
2. Brainstorming.
3. Graphic organizers.
4. Draft.
5. Revising.
6. Editing.
7. Final text.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

There are other steps in the writing process but I selected the most important ones. I personally use all the steps because that's the way my teacher has taught me and for the very first time my writings were clear and organized.



## ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

Title: Recycle to save us.

I. What sort of materials can be recycled?

1. Basic recyclable materials
  - a. Paper
  - b. Glass
  - c. Plastic
2. Other materials
  - a. Batteries
  - b. Bulbs
  - c. Organic material

Today’s world is changing in so many ways. One of the most important changes we are facing is focus on the environment. We are consuming all our natural resources and altering our world. One way to help to stop this destruction is recycling. By doing this we are collecting and treating rubbish in order to produce useful materials which can be used again. But what sort of materials can be recycled?



## STUDENT a1227821

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

What I expect from today's class is learning how to write an essay (academic or another type of text) in an appropriate way. Sometimes writing an essay can be a maddening process, so we have to learn how to avoid this sensation and how to feel comfortable when we do this type of tasks.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Sometimes, the person who is writing the essay don't know the steps or how to organise her/his ideas, so they become frustrated.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

I like the Outlines and the Timelines. I've chosen them because Outlines are good for big topics and main ideas and details, so you can organize the text first in a suitable way. I think that the Timelines are useful too because they organize how things happen in time, and it's also a way to organize the text.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is important because each step of it can move people forward to complete a piece of writing or backwards, for example, rethinking, reshaping or revising that piece of writing. It's important to know the steps before you write the draft and the essay.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

**Some of the oldest writing ever found has been cave writing, but that isn't a clear alphabet. The Sumerian people were the first using the**

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

Three or four drafts are necessary before giving a final copy, because it's impossible to get everything perfect on the first try.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

The first step is research, you have to look for ideas in the internet or in a book about your topic, and write the most suitable ones. The second step is the analysis, you have to analyze the arguments that you're going to choose for your essay, which ones are better and why. The third step is brainstorming, it will help you to think what are you going to write about, you have to ask yourself questions and answer them in order to find the ones are you going to use in the essay. The fourth is the Thesis, you have to find the main idea of the text and writing it as a thesis. The fifth is writing the essay. After that, you have to revise it three or four times, in order to modify the mistakes. Finally, you have to do the final draft and the final copy.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

Sometimes I use all the steps, but not always. Personally, I wouldn't write four drafts, I think that two are enough. When I write a draft I use this steps: Research, brainstorming, analysis, writing, revising and final copy.

**ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about "recycling" (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

## STUDENT a1106682

### **Activity 1:**

In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect to learn things that I don't know and I expect that is new for my.

### **Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Because people need all the steps to meake it. And it isn't always like that.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

[http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl\\_go\\_cluster.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl_go_cluster.htm)

Because, for me it is more easy to explain the things that I would like to explain. (to explain the other people)

[http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl\\_go\\_storymap.htm](http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/sl_go_storymap.htm)

Because, for me it is more easy to take notes about something that I would like to remain or study.

### **Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is an experience that you can discovered your imagine and it doesn't really important your level or your abilities, because the greater abilities to make decisisions about the way you approach writing and revision

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

I didn't found in yours web sites and I think is "Cuneiform" and i found it in the next page.

[http://www.encyclopediaofauthenticinduism.org/articles/12\\_early\\_civilizations.htm](http://www.encyclopediaofauthenticinduism.org/articles/12_early_civilizations.htm)

### **Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

All that you need. According to (<http://library.thinkquest.org/J001156/writing%20process/writingprocess.htm>) you should revised once and need to make corrections.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

- Research
- Analysis
- Brainstorming
- Thesis
- Outline
- Introduction
- Paragraphs
- MLA Style
- Language

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I used that thing and the graphic organaizer.

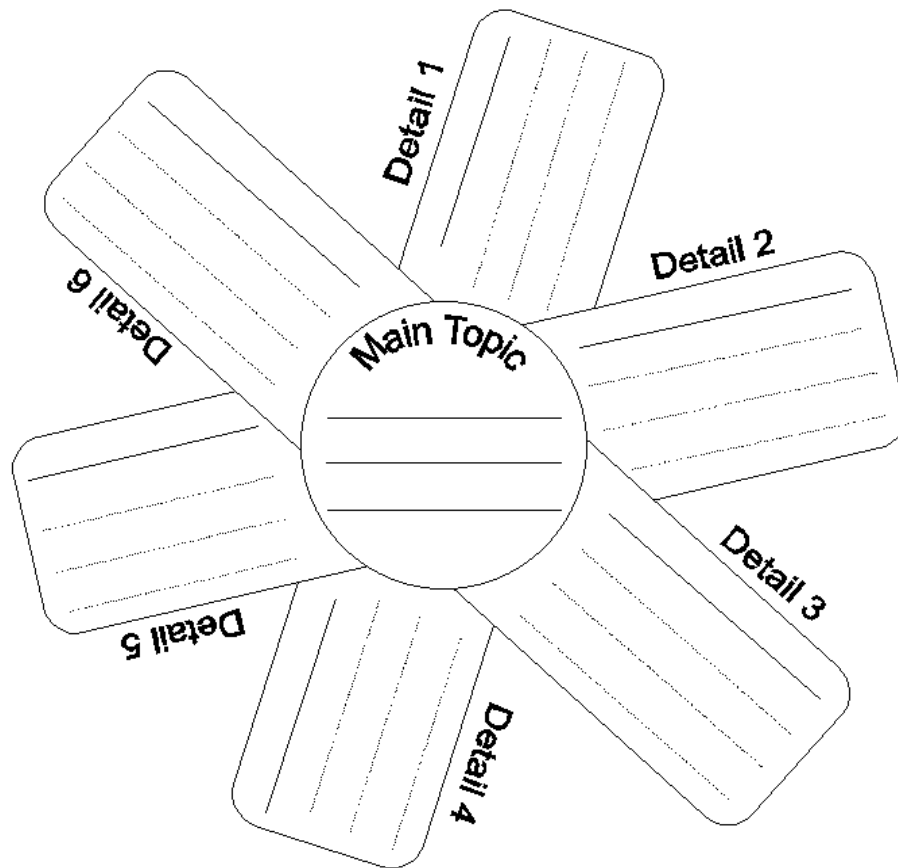
## **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

## Cluster Diagram

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_



Main topic: Recycling

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Main topic: Recycling (global)

Detail 1: Paper

Detail 2: Batteries

Detail 3: Plastic

Detail 4: Glass

Detail 5:





## STUDENT a1227842

**Activity 1: In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.**

What I expect from today's class is know different things about how I can improve my writing .

**Activity 2 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**2.1. In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?**

Writing could be frustrating if we don't know the steps that we have to follow. So, if you know them, you are able to do a better writing.

**2.2. Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.**

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm>

The outlines are very useful when you have to write a for & against essay; and I prefer this one because it shows the main ideas and details.

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm>

The cause and effect diagrams are another type of graphic organizers that I like so much. It consists on explain how the thing happen.

**Activity 3 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**3.1. Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.**

The writing process is the join of several steps that you have to follow in a writing. All these steps are important to have a good final writing. It is very important because it leps you to have the ideas more clear, and you can change the process if you need another view. So, the writing process is the process to expose the own ideas on an essay.

**3.2. What civilizations were the first to use writing?**

[http://www.encyclopediaofauthenticinduism.org/articles/12\\_early\\_civilizations.htm](http://www.encyclopediaofauthenticinduism.org/articles/12_early_civilizations.htm)

I have been searching on internet, and I've found that the first civilization that used writing was the "mesopotamic", because The cuneiform script appeared on Mesopotamia.

**Activity 4 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):**

**According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.**

You could do the drafts that you need, there isn't a number of necessary drafts.

## Activity 5 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

### 5.1. Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

These are the main steps:

- Research
- Analysis
- Brainstorming
- Thesis
- Outline
- Introduction
- Paragraphs
- Conclusion
- MLA Style
- Language

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm>

### 5.2. Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I use some of the steps that I have answered on 5.1. The steps are brainstorming, thesis, outline, introduction, paragraphs, conclusion and language.

I write and compose my writing in that way because my teacher taught me in that way. So I use these main steps.

## ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK

**Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.**

## Outline

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: _____
I. _____
1. _____
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
2. _____
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
3. _____
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____

Title: recycling



**STUDENT al185922**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

**I expect to find some new clues about how to start writing an essay.**

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

**Basically because you don't know where to begin, how to order the arguments and what to say.**

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

**The story map, the cause and effect diagram and the outline. I find them the most clear, they matched with my mental scheme.**

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

**It's obvious that through writing, and especially when trying to write an academic essay, we are improving our thinking and mental organizing process, our coherency, grammar, style, fluency and, of course, our writing skills.**

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

**The sumerians developed a form of pictographic writing that used word pictures like bird, fish, ox or grain etc., around 4000 - 3500 BC. In 3000 BC, it developed into a cursive form of cuneiform style of writing which was a wedge shaped linear impression on clay tablets.**

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

**Prewriting** – listing the first ideas about a topic.

**Outlining** – organizing these first ideas in arguments, adding new ones.

**Writing the body paragraphs.**

**After revising the last text, perhaps one or two more copies may be still necessary until the final copy get its shape.**

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

**Prewriting**

**Brainstorming/Research**

**Thesis**

**Outline drafting**

**Writing itself**

**Revising/Editing**

**Presenting**

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

**I always use these steps, except for the outlining which sometimes is in my mind, and don't need to put it on the paper.**

#### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

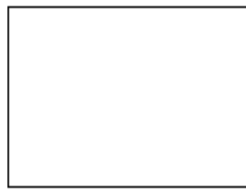
Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic

### Cause and Effect

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

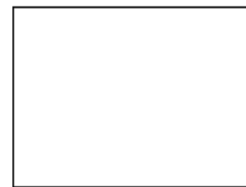
Cause 1



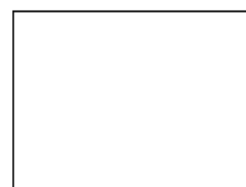
Cause 2



Cause 3



Cause 4



Effect







**STUDENT a1121277**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

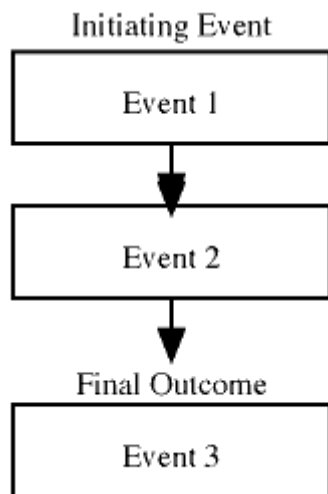
I don't really think I am going to learn something. It might be interesting but don't think I, personally, will put the attention it requires.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

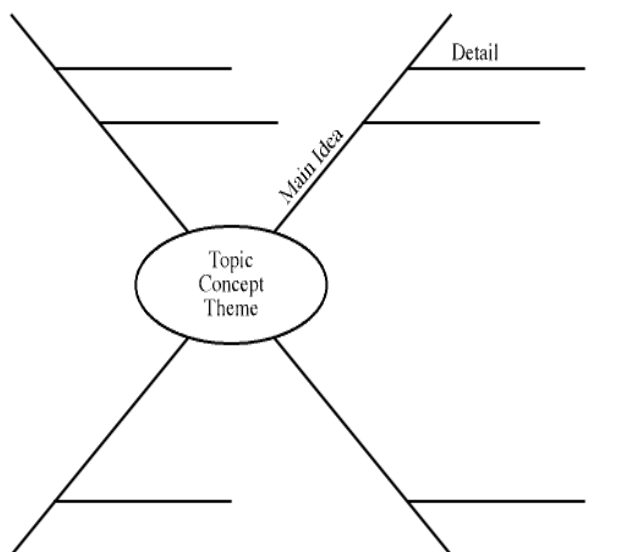
**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

I think it is mostly because people don't dedicate enough time to it. The simple word of "essay" creates panic in the student and they often don't know the exact steps to follow.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.



I personally think that this is a good organizer if you are required to write an essay about an experience. Event1 can be used to place the introduction, the Event2 to develop the action or experiences, and the third one can work as a conclusion.



I like this one for whenever you are required to write an essay about a general idea that is quite a wide concept and you don't know how to face it. It allows you to develop a main idea and its details, but also several sub ideas that you can develop within the essay.

**Activity 3** (Check the

Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

You need it in order to know which steps to follow.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

Mesopotamia

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

3-4 times. Because you won't get a perfect essay the first time and also because as you are reading it you can get new ideas that you might want to include.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

- Prewriting
- Writing
- Revising
- Editing and Proofreading
- Publishing

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I personally would just write the essay without previous research or organization of the points, although I have seen now that it is definitely not the right thing to do.

## **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

### **Recycling**

Nowadays the population is well aware of the destruction of the planet by the creation of factories, the use of fuels, and the excessive use of electricity. Us, as individuals cannot do much to revolve this situations, but we definitely should do as much as we can to help with this cause. By recycling in our houses, we can make a great change.

Everyday more and more electronic devices are used and invented, which is good in terms of the use of those highly polluting batteries. But what can we do with them now that they are in disuse? There are specific disposal places for batteries where you can throw them away when they no longer work so you don't contaminate the rest of your garbage.

Another solution, which is not as laborious as many people think, is the division of the garbage at home. You basically only need three different bags and three different trash cans: one for plastic, one for paper, and one for organic residues. Only by doing this, we contribute big time with the environment.

To sum up, I think that us, as a single human being, cannot do much by ourselves, but if all of us contribute just a little bit by doing as much as we can, we will make from this world a better place that we all will enjoy.



**STUDENT al118191**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I think that the task is about how to write in a right way, searching for information in the Internet and use the correct sources.

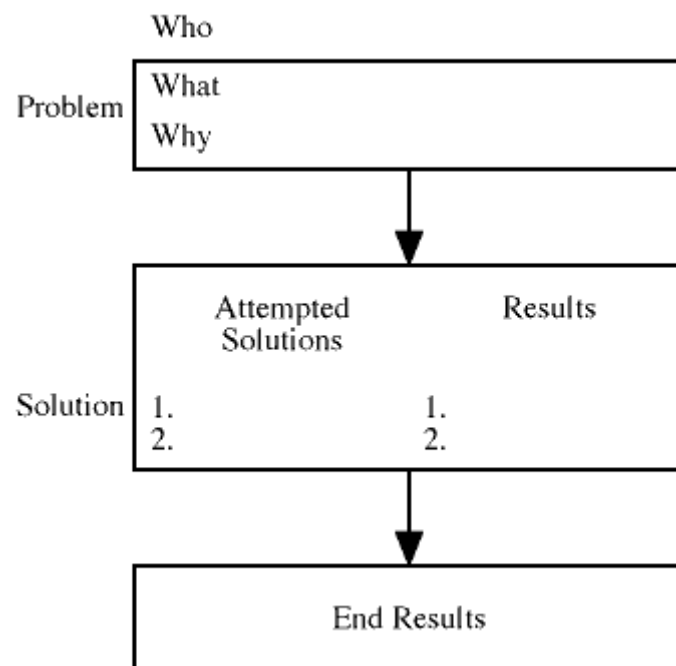
**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

I think that writing an essay can be very frustrating. There are many reasons. First, at least in my case, it is difficult to start, to find a right beginning. Then, when you are looking for information you can find websites with very few information, but you also can find too much and sometimes it is difficult to select the correct pieces. Also it is usual to find many websites which gave us the same information and many times we do not know which one is better.

For writing essays one also needs to have a good grammar and plenty of vocabulary .

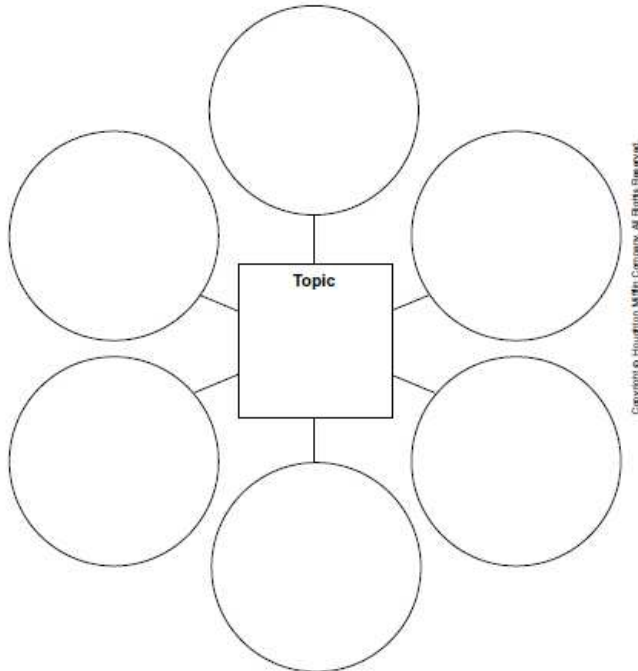
**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.



I think this graphic organizer is interesting because one can expose the problem and then the solution, and finally, there is a chart for the end results.

**Cluster/Word Web 3**

Write details about your topic in the circles.



This one is also interesting, because you can expose your topic and then fill in with related ideas. It can be used as a brainstorming of ideas.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is very important, because we need to write in order to communicate, and we need to write correctly. Writing is everywhere: in newspapers, in internet, books and so on and we need to follow a writing process to write coherently in order to communicate effectively.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

The earliest writings recorded were from Mesopotamia.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

In my opinion, we need three drafts. First we should make the brainstorming. Second, a draft with most of the information we find on the internet. And third, we should select the most relevant information. I think

that all of us should follow the steps, but very few of us do. I am one of those that didn't.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

The main steps for the writing process are: pre-writing, writing, revising, editing and proofreading and publishing.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I think that if we follow the five steps proposed, the result can be very good. I would not change any.

### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about "recycling" (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

## **RECYCLING**

Nowadays and ever, recycling is and was very important.

We should separate paper, plastic, organics, batteries or medicines to say some because if not it is harmful for the environment. A few years ago, when people started to get more aware about recycling, there appeared a slogan: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. At home, we all should have a different dust bin for the different containers. Plastics, for example, take very long to degradate, so we need to separate him. In order to be easier for us to separate and recycle, we have different colours: blue for paper, yellow for plastic and bricks, green for glass, and for the organic garbage we should use the normal containers, here in Spain they are dark green.

As a conclusion, it is to say that we must separate things that we are going to throw away, because it will take very few time and in this way we help the enviroment. REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE.





**STUDENT a121324**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today’s class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I’m not really sure what I’m going to learn from today’s class. Maybe this task will help me to find appropriate sources for doing different essays from different topics. It may be helpful to learn how to look for and select information, to use it later in my essays.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

From my point of view, writing an essay can be sometimes frustrating because some reasons. The first one could be that you do not know how to start it, or where look for the information needed to write it. Later, when you have found some information, maybe there is not so much, so you do not have enough. Or maybe there is too much, and the problem is: How do I select the appropriate information for my essay?

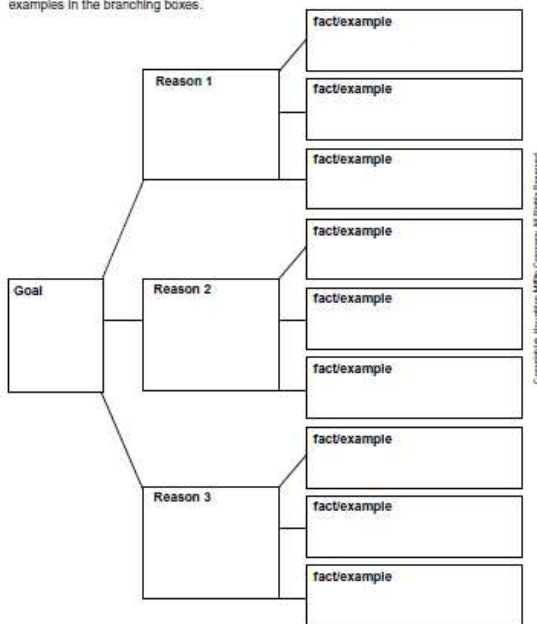
You also need a lot of vocabulary and a good level of English, to avoid the repetition of words or the massive use of certain verbal tenses. If you have a good level of English, this task is easier.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Persuasion Map**

Write your goal in the first box. Write three reasons in the next boxes. List facts and examples in the branching boxes.



Persuasion Map – I think this map is really recomendable when preparing

a writing because you can divide your ideas in the Goal (principal idea), your main reasons to support it and the examples you use. You can see all your information well organised very fastly.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Sandwich Chart

Write your topic at the top. Add details to the middle layers. Add a concluding sentence at the bottom.

The image shows a 'Sandwich Chart' template. It consists of five horizontal layers stacked vertically. The top layer is a rounded rectangle with a scalloped top edge, labeled 'Topic:'. The second layer is a rounded rectangle with a scalloped top edge, labeled 'Detail:'. The third layer is a rounded rectangle with a scalloped top edge, labeled 'Detail:'. The fourth layer is a rounded rectangle with a scalloped top edge, labeled 'Detail:'. The fifth layer is a rounded rectangle with a scalloped top edge, labeled 'Concluding Sentence:'. On the right side of the chart, there is a vertical copyright notice: 'Copyright © Laughlin Miller Company. All rights reserved.'

Sandwich chart – For me this chart is really useful when working with children. They have to use it as a normal chart or map, but if you adapt it in a funny way for children will be more eye-catching, and they will use.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

It is crucial to have a determined process when starting to write an essay or other thing. If you prepare your ideas (make a brainstorming) and organise them in the correct way, later, when starting to write the essay, the process is much easier. For me, for example, the worst part when doing an essay is looking for the information and preparing it to use for the essay. I have only use this kind of process when it has been required for some task (some teachers have ask us to do a brainstorming, later the first draft and later on the final essay). I really think this is a very useful way of working, but maybe because of lack of time or laziness, we do not normally use it.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

Mesopotamia.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

I think that maybe two drafts. First of all you need to do a brainstorming, to look for your ideas. Later you can complete a map and write a little writing about the information put in the map (1<sup>st</sup> draft) and the second one would be the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft, with all the information well connected and well-written. Later on, some days later, you can revise this 2<sup>nd</sup> draft and write the final copy, maybe with some new ideas or your own corrections.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

Pre-writing (Brainstorming, maps and charts, draft)

Writing

Revising

Editing

Proofreading and publishing

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

From my point of view, these are the steps all of us should use when writing an essay. But, as I have said before, I do not usually use this process, and sometimes I can find some problems when looking for information and mainly when organizing it and writing the essay. For example, if you are doing an essay in an exam, and you do not have time, you write the essay directly, and it can be a really bad idea because you do not organise well what you want to say.

**ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

Graphic organizer

Title : Rrecycling

Materials: paper, glass, plastic, batteries, etc

Places: house, industries, street bins

## **RECYCLING**

Recycling is to be born again. It is like the plants that sprout one and another time. This process is to give another use to the things we do not use anymore. Nowadays, people are starting to make aware of the actual problems of the environment. If we want to have this quality of life, and the earth as it is today, we have to take care of it.

There are a lot of things we can recycle, like paper, batteries, plastic, glass, etc. Here in Spain we have particularly bins for each one of this materials, to make people possible to cooperate in the action of recycling. Also in some houses, people have various dustbin, to separate at home the paper, the plastic and the glass. When you are going to take out the garbage, you take three different bags. It is a simple and easy action that can help the environment.

Also some industries and big companies which produce a lot of rubbish have their own bins and they take this to the special recycling factories.

To sum up, I have to say that people is starting to think in the real problems that we are going through, like contamination, the Green House effect, etc. and recycling is one of the small solutions, that can have big and really good consequences.

## STUDENT al118185

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect to learn what previous steps should I follow when writing a text (of any kind) and some useful Internet sources to do so.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Writing an essay can be frustrating if you do not follow a well structured process because your ideas will not be clear reflected in the final essay. It may be frustrating also because in order to get a good final product you have to follow many steps and revise what you have done many times. This means that, as you look for new information and revise the already done work, you may change your mind about things of which you were sure.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

I think it depends on the kind of essay you are writing. Nevertheless, I liked the "Venn Diagram" (<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm>) because I think it is very clear and schematic. I also like the "cause and effect" (<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm>) one because of the same reason. It is very useful to organize the information in a very visual way and this helps to be clear when writing the essay.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

The writing process is important because depending on how organized it is, the essay will be more clear or less.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

The Egyptians and the Sumerian (<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ab33>)

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

At least 3. The first draft is the one which will be the basis for the final version. After the first draft is written, it has to be revised (second draft); then, edited (third draft); and finally the final version.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

**1-** Research: look for information

**2-** Analysis: extract arguments and conclusions from the information gathered.

**3-** Brainstorming: write ideas that may be useful for your essay

**4-** Thesis: make yourself a question that you want to answer with your essay

**5-** Outline: sketch the essay

**6-** Introduction: write the introduction

**7-** Paragraphs: divide ideas in paragraphs

**8-** Conclusion: write your conclusions

**9-** MLA style: write your references correctly (using this or any other guide)

**10-** Language: polish the language used.

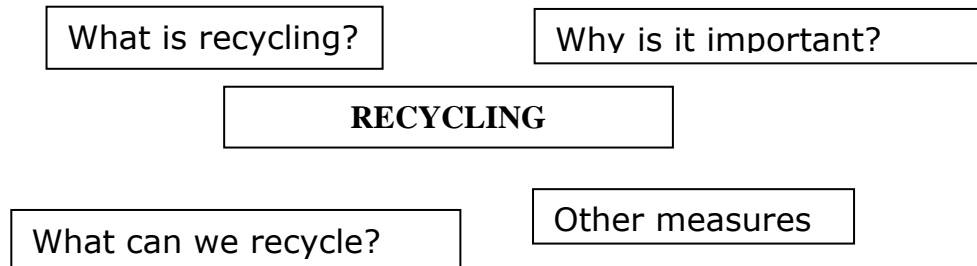
**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I would not. I would make the two first steps together, and I would write the introduction at the end.

## **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

I would use a cluster diagram:



## **RECYCLING**

This essay aims to give some clues to make profit of the resources that Nature offers us.

### **What is recycling?**

Recycling is a process by which some materials that would become waste can be transformed into useful resources.

### **Why is it important?**

We human beings are sometimes little thankful of what we have received by nature and tend to waste it. Recycling is important because it is a way of re-using the materials and resources that we find in our planet.

### **What can we recycle?**

There are many things that we can easily recycle. For example, there are many containers in the streets that are particularly addressed to help people to recycle. There is a yellow bin where we can throw cans and tins and many plastics (plastic bottles, plastic bags, etc.). In the blue one we can throw paper and cardboard (boxes of cereals, of shoes, newspapers, etc.) . Finally, in the green one we can throw glass (for example, glass bottles).

### **Other measures**

Can we do anything else to avoid wasting materials? Yes, we can also re-use things. For example, if you have a t-shirt that you are not going to use anymore, you can cut it and make dusters with it, or if you need a box to keep something, you may use an old box of shoes.

### **Conclusion**

It is very easy to use well the resources we have available. The only thing we have to do is to get used to these little things mentioned above and we can help the next generations.





## STUDENT al065111

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect to learn how to write an essay in a better way and how to use internet resources in an appropriate way. Although I already use internet in order to improve my works; it could be interesting do not frustrate oneself when writing.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

It can be the case that we do not follow the proper steps, and that is why we frustrate so much. But it is also because, in my opinion, we know what we want to say but we do not know how to say it and at that point, we start being confused and also nervous.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

I think the best way of doing an essay is by following these steps: Prewriting, planning, drafting, revising, and quick check. I think it is not too much trying to follow 5 steps (if there are more, it could be too difficult and it could seem to be a non-end work). I also think all of them are necessary in order to do it in an appropriate way. But I recognised I did not know the last step; the quick check; which I have seen it consists on asking oneself some questions in each part of the essay and I think they are very interesting.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

Writing is important because it helps us to have clear ideas in our mind, and it also can help us in order to speak better. If we learn to write and process our ideas (by following) some steps; we will write and we will speak better.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

Sumerian people were the first who used a writing system (with specific symbols) and this system is called cuneiform.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

You need four drafts before the final one. The first one is the one in which you write ideas, in the second one you start developing those ideas; in the third one you explain all those things with more information and clearly, and finally you should revise it. After that, you can give the final essay.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

I think the best ones are: Prewriting, planning, drafting, revising, and quick check.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I have already answered this in the question 2.2; but anyway, when I write an essay, I look for the information I need, then I write a pre-draft which I will improve later on, and finally I revise it before giving the final copy.

#### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

Nowadays, recycling is very important because we are in a world of cosmism and because of it, our planet is going worst. We should think in the following generations and we should do our best in order to have a ‘clean’ planet; and that would be through recycling.

We make a big amount of rubbish every day. It could be the best, to recycle all those things. We can recycle paper, plastic, batteries, glass, clothes... Everything can be recycled! And through it, we can obtain a better planet.

We have no excuse; we can find different containers in order to through up all those things. It is important to separate it at home, and also to put it in the appropriate container. The future depends on us, so just do it!

We are part of the process in which the planet is going to be destroyed, so it would be the best to be part of the recycling process.

## **STUDENT al118216**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect to improve my writing skills, to discover new online resources and to feel that my English is improving.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Because students do not know how to write an essay, which steps to follow

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

Sequence chart, helps to choose the steps and it is easy to follow.

Idea wheel: because it helps to organize the ideas very easily.

<http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/>

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

Writing is used to express and explain ideas. Writing is the primary basis upon which your work, your learning, and your intellect will be judged—in college, in the workplace, and in the community.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

The Sumerians developed a form of *pictographic* writing that used word pictures like bird, fish, ox or grain etc., around 4000 - 3500 BC. In 3000 BC, it developed into a cursive form of *cuneiform* style of writing which was a wedge shaped linear impression on clay tablets.

[http://www.encyclopediaofauthenticinduisim.org/articles/12\\_early\\_civilizations.htm](http://www.encyclopediaofauthenticinduisim.org/articles/12_early_civilizations.htm)

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

Only a first draft and then the final copy

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

There are 10 steps: research, analysis, brainstorming, thesis, outline, introduction, paragraphs, conclusion, MLA style and language

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

No, never. The research depends on the topic, sometimes I need to do it but sometimes not. Concerning the brainstorming, the thesis and the outline, I usually do it together and I do not follow this order

### **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

In the first place I would talk about what is recycling and its importance.

Then I would explain the different possibilities of recycling and which materials can be recycled.

Finally I would add my personal opinion and I will emphasize the importance of recycling.

#### Essay

Recycling is turning materials that are already used into new materials. Doing this we try not to produce so many waste and save raw materials. Recycling is not only important for our planet but also for our children, whose future could be better if we leave them a cleaner planet.

We can recycle paper in the blue containers, glass in the green ones and plastic and cans in the yellow one.

On the other hand, all the electrical appliances, such as televisions, DVDs, computers, fridges or washingmachines can be brought to a clean point, or ecopark where they separate the parts that can be reused. There is at least one in each city.

In my opinion, recycling helps the environment and helps ourselves. We should leave the best for our future generations and also show them how to keep their mother Earth clean and try not to waste natural resources.

## STUDENT a1099409

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

Answer: I expect to learn some techniques in order to improve the writing skill. Although I like writing, I make some mistakes moreover, I am not used to review my final essay. Maybe I would realize of my mistakes if I reviewed it.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Answer: in my opinion, the reason why the writing skill is so frustrating is because we do not follow the footsteps that this process has. Before handing an essay, we have to take into account what we really want to say and not write just by writing. If we do not know a lot about the topic in which we have to write about, nowadays technology allow us to get almost everything. Internet is full of pages we can obtain information. And before wrting our last paper, we must previously check aspects such as grammar mistakes, word spelling, vocabulary and we must also be sure that each paragraph we have written says what we really want to tell.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

Answer: [http://www.answerbag.com/q\\_view/2046873](http://www.answerbag.com/q_view/2046873) I have consulted this webpage because I did not know what was a graphic organizer. In my opinion one of the best graphic organizers is the tree, because is very schematic and you can reduce quite a lot your information.

Another graphic organizer which I consider quite interesting is the sketck. The reason is because through visual images you are able to understand better what you want to say or explain to others.

<http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm> In this page we can find all the information about graphic organizers.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

Answer: Writing is a process of communication. We can use writing to express ideas, thoughts, feelings and so on. Moreover there are many people who can express better wrting rather than speaking. For example I am one of these persons.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

Answer: <http://library.thinkquest.org/3950/> In this page I have found that the first to use writing were Mesopotamia and Egypt.

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

Answer: it might even take you 3 or 4 times to get your final essay right.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

Answer: prewriting, writing, revising, editing and proofreading and publishing.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

Answer: in my opinion I think that the steps proposed in these resources are enough to write an essay. I do not use all of them. If I have no idea about the topic I write the brainstorming while looking for information on internet. I also check my essay if it is important, i mean, a final project work or something similar.

**ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

Answer:

One of the most important problems in our World is that of pollution. Every day when we watch TV or read the newspaper we can see some news related with this topic. We have to be very conciouss about that big problem and if we want to save the world or at least try it, we must recycle.

Nowadays, in each of our cities, villages, we can find different containers to recycle everything we use, such as paper, batteries, plastic, bottles, and so on.

If we think about that, you are not going to spend many time doing it, and I am absolutely sure that afterwards you will feel better.

## STUDENT a1121323

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect improving my writing skills in specific proposes, like business, letters, reports. And to know more about webpages where I could look for information and if so, keep it for personal issues.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Writing an essay can be desperate if you are not inspire at all. But if you have a mental scheme and you know the steps to follow (research, analysis, brainstorming, thesis, outline, introduction, paragraphs, and conclusion), it's done.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

I found an interesting virtual graphical scheme in: <http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm>

I didn't need spendign so much time looking for a graphic. I chose that one because I think it has a good presentation of the steps you have to follow to write an essay. Its construction is based in a circle and arround are the steps you have to follow; then you click on each step and in the middle of the cicle it explains you the specific step. Then above (inside the circle) ther is a link for a downloading word file whic put. "brainstorm now" and automatically when you press it it appears a word file with ideas of brainstorming techniques.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

the writing process is actually a fluid and changing experience. In other words, each step of the writing process can move you forward to completing a piece of writing or backward in terms of rethinking, reshaping, and revising that piece of writing.

There are serveral ways for writing processes. According to the webpage <http://www.giapel.uji.es/cibertareas/TheWritingProcess/index.htm> they have focused in:

- Prewriting
- Writing
- Revising
- Editing and profreading

These stages are recursive; that is, they do not necessarily follow one another in order; you can go back and forth among steps, repeating those that you need to until you end up with the result you want.

Writing process is important because gives sense to the work you have done, a well structured, with paragraphs and the correct vocabulary you have used during the task. All this makes more easier whwn the reader gets into the writing. He or she will understand perfectly.

### 3.2. What civilizations were the first to use writing?

the Sumerian people who lived in the Middle East and the Egypts.

#### Activity 4 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

The ideal number of drafts would be three, the first onew for making questions and notes (that would be the skeleton) the second one would be a more expanded work with no taking care about spelling. And finaly the good one, Wwth right spelling, correct expalined points and well diferenciated paragraphs.

#### Activity 5 (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

5.1. Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

The main steps that should be used to write an essay are:

Brain storming, first draft and final copy.

5.2. Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I usually make a first draft making myself questions, then I try to answer them and conect each other.

Then I make a semi final draft with the possible final essay

And finally I revise the spelling and I rewrite the final copy.

I don not follow all steps I have read in the webpages because I personally thinks there are some stupid steps that for my level I don't need to do.



## ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

### **Recycling**

We all know that we have to recycle, but do we make it, or just we say we should do it?

When we are children we attend conferences, and go to recycling factories to make us believe that we have to keep the planet clean and not waste paper and try to reuse it.

Nowadays we have loads of facilities to recycle paper, glass or other products because of the different containers we have in our towns and cities. But many times there are inconveniences maybe because people is not conscient that we have to do it or maybe because we do not have close containers to drop separately those rubbish.

Another problem is that we had to have three or four different bins at home and many people don't want to.

It is a hard work recycling, but it is not necessary to recycle all, maybe if you focus in paper, for example you can contribute and you will do a good help for the planet.



## **STUDENT a1121300**

**Activity 1:** In view of the brief introduction given above, what do you expect to learn from today's class? Write a few lines giving your own point of view.

I expect learning how to do an essay to in the future I can't any problem when I have to do some task.

**Activity 2** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**2.1.** In the light of the information found in the different websites, why is writing an essay so frustrating?

Because sometimes in the essay you find a lot of words or phrases enough specifics, and you can't to understand the text.

**2.2.** Try to find two graphic organizers that you like the most and give reasons of your choice.

**Activity 3** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**3.1.** Try to define and explain the importance of the writing process.

**3.2.** What civilizations were the first to use writing?

Sumerian people

**Activity 4** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

According to the information gathered on the net, how many drafts are considered necessary before giving a final copy? Justify your answer.

Three or four drafts before the final copy.

**Activity 5** (Check the Web pages in the RESOURCES menu):

**5.1.** Identify and write the main steps that according to the resources should be used when writing an essay, report...

Prewriting, brainstorming, thesis, outline drafting, writing, revising, presenting.

**5.2.** Would you personally use all the steps proposed, or maybe modify them or add some others? Justify your answer.

I would use all of them.

## **ACTIVITY 6: FINAL TASK**

Imagine that you have to write an article to your university newspaper about “recycling” (paper, batteries, plastic...). How would you organize the information of your article in a graphic organizer? Then write an essay about this topic.

## ANNEX XI: Teacher's Assessment

<b>STUDENT al236946</b>	<b>CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT</b>
	Activity 1		4/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	3/5
		Activity 2.2.	4/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	0/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		15/20
<b>TOTAL: 45/60</b>			

<b>STUDENT al229578</b>	<b>CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT</b>
	Activity 1		2/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	3/5
		Activity 2.2.	4/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	0/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	5/5
	Activity 6		5/20
<b>TOTAL: 34/60</b>			

STUDENT al227819	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	0/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	3/5
	Activity 6		17/20
<b>TOTAL: 50/60</b>			

STUDENT al227844	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	3/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		11/20
<b>TOTAL: 48/60</b>			

STUDENT al227888	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		1/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	2/5
		Activity 2.2.	0/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	4/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		1/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	1/5
		Activity 5.2.	2/5
	Activity 6		5/20
<b>TOTAL: 21/60</b>			

STUDENT al228860	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		3/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	3/5
		Activity 2.2.	4/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	1/5
		Activity 3.2.	1/5
	Activity 4		4/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	3/5
	Activity 6		7/20
<b>TOTAL: 31/60</b>			

STUDENT al205270	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	4/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		3/20
<b>TOTAL: 40/60</b>			

STUDENT al227924	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	4/5
		Activity 2.2.	3/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	3/5
		Activity 3.2.	2/5
	Activity 4		3/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	3/5
		Activity 5.2.	5/5
	Activity 6		3/20
<b>TOTAL: 31/60</b>			



STUDENT al074451	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		4/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	4/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	4/5
	Activity 4		4/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	2/5
		Activity 5.2.	5/5
	Activity 6		5/20
<b>TOTAL: 38/60</b>			

STUDENT al228747	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		3/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	1/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		5/20
<b>TOTAL: 37/60</b>			

STUDENT al227821	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	2/5
		Activity 2.2.	3/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	4/5
		Activity 3.2.	1/5
	Activity 4		2/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		0/20
<b>TOTAL: 26/60</b>			

STUDENT al106682	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		0/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	1/5
		Activity 2.2.	1/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	1/5
		Activity 3.2.	0/5
	Activity 4		2/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	0/5
	Activity 6		5/20
<b>TOTAL: 14/60</b>			

STUDENT al227842	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		3/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	4/5
		Activity 2.2.	4/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	3/5
	Activity 4		2/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		1/20
<b>TOTAL: 30/60</b>			

STUDENT al185922	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		3/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	4/5
		Activity 2.2.	2/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	4/5
		Activity 3.2.	2/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	3/5
	Activity 6		6/20
<b>TOTAL: 33/60</b>			

<b>STUDENT al121277</b>	<b>CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT</b>
	Activity 1		1/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	3/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	2/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		3/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	3/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		12/20
			<b>TOTAL: 38/60</b>

<b>STUDENT al118191</b>	<b>CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT</b>
	Activity 1		4/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	3/5
		Activity 3.2.	2/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	3/5
		Activity 5.2.	3/5
	Activity 6		14/20
			<b>TOTAL: 44/60</b>

STUDENT al121324	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		2/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	3/5
	Activity 6		13/20
<b>TOTAL: 48/60</b>			

STUDENT al118185	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		4/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	3/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		4/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	5/5
		Activity 5.2.	3/5
	Activity 6		17/20
<b>TOTAL: 51/60</b>			

STUDENT al065111	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		4/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	4/5
		Activity 2.2.	4/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	4/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		5/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		10/20
<b>TOTAL: 44/60</b>			

STUDENT al118216	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	3/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	3/5
		Activity 3.2.	0/5
	Activity 4		2/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	2/5
		Activity 5.2.	2/5
	Activity 6		19/20
<b>TOTAL: 41/60</b>			

<b>STUDENT al099409</b>	<b>CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT</b>
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	5/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		3/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		9/20
<b>TOTAL: 45/60</b>			

<b>STUDENT al121323</b>	<b>CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT</b>
	Activity 1		5/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	3/5
		Activity 2.2.	5/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	5/5
		Activity 3.2.	2/5
	Activity 4		3/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	2/5
		Activity 5.2.	4/5
	Activity 6		13/20
<b>TOTAL: 42/60</b>			

STUDENT al121300	CYBERTASK ACTIVITIES		TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT
	Activity 1		1/5
	Activity 2	Activity 2.1.	1/5
		Activity 2.2.	0/5
	Activity 3	Activity 3.1.	0/5
		Activity 3.2.	5/5
	Activity 4		2/5
	Activity 5	Activity 5.1.	4/5
		Activity 5.2.	2/5
	Activity 6		0/20
			<b>TOTAL: 15/60</b>









NORMATIVA ACADÉMICA DE LA UNIVERSITAT  
JAUME I PARA LAS TESIS ESCRITAS EN UNA  
LENGUA DISTINTA A LAS OFICIALES

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**LOS ESTILOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y LOS  
MODOS DE LECTURA EN EL  
DESARROLLO DE LA AUTONOMÍA DEL  
APRENDIZAJE DE LENGUAS A TRAVÉS  
DE LAS  
“CIBERTAREAS”**

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**LOS ESTILOS DE APRENDIZAJE Y LOS MODOS DE  
LECTURA EN EL DESARROLLO DE LA AUTONOMÍA DEL  
APRENDIZAJE DE LENGUAS A TRAVÉS DE LAS  
“CIBERTAREAS”**

1. OBJETO Y OBJETIVOS DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN
2. PLANTEAMIENTO Y METODOLOGÍA UTILIZADOS
3. APORTACIONES ORIGINALES
4. CONCLUSIONES OBTENIDAS Y FUTURAS LÍNEAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

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## **1. OBJETO Y OBJETIVOS DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN**

Esta tesis tiene como principales objetivos estudiar (a) la posible relación entre los estilos de aprendizaje de estudiantes universitarios y los diferentes modos de navegación y lectura cuando se enfrentan a tareas que requieren un cierto manejo y tratamiento de la información en la Web; y (b) la relación entre los diferentes textos digitales y las diferentes maneras de implementar los modos “*browsing*”, “*reading*” y “*navigating*”. Los principales pilares sobre los que se ha asentado nuestra investigación son: la autonomía de aprendizaje de lenguas, los estilos cognitivos y de

aprendizaje, las Tecnologías de la Información y de la Comunicación, y los estudios de género en la era digital (cibergéneros).

## **2. PLANTEAMIENTO Y METODOLOGÍA UTILIZADOS**

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El instrumento fundamental con el que hemos llevado a cabo nuestra investigación es la Cibertarea “*The Writing Process*” (El proceso de escritura). Hemos partido de los estudios previos realizados por el GIAPEL en el diseño y elaboración de Cibertareas.

Las Cibertareas son el medio donde hemos investigado. Para ello, hemos tenido en cuenta los siguientes aspectos:

- Nuevas literacias
- Literacias espontáneas
- Estilos de aprendizaje de los aprendices (Villanueva y Navarro, 1997)

Con este género emergente (Cibertareas), hemos visto cómo los estilos de aprendizaje se correlacionan con la navegación que llevan a cabo los estudiantes.

El objetivo de la autonomía es favorecer la independencia de los estudiantes, de manera que cada uno pueda utilizar la Cibertarea del modo que más le convenga según su estilo de aprendizaje.

Con todo esto, hemos llevado a cabo el diseño de dicha Cibertarea, según los estilos de aprendizaje de los estudiantes. Además, se pretende favorecer sus modos de lectura ante un formato digital (Internet).

El interés de la presente tesis radica en la importancia que adquiere en la actualidad el uso de las nuevas tecnologías (TIC) en la enseñanza-aprendizaje de lenguas en un contexto en el que son todavía escasos los estudios sobre el aprendizaje autónomo de lenguas y el aprendizaje de lenguas a través de las Cibertareas.

### **3. APORTACIONES ORIGINALES**

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La principal aportación del presente estudio es el diseño de la Cibertarea ‘The Writing Process’ (El Proceso de Escritura).

Esta Cibertarea integra gran parte de los elementos que componen una WebQuest (Dodge, 1995; 1997) y una TalenQuest (March, 2003) para promover el aprendizaje de lenguas de forma autónoma. De este

modo, nuestra Cibertarea adquiere nuevos rasgos. Por tanto, esta Cibertarea se caracteriza por ser una WebQuest de tercera generación que busca enseñar nuevas literacias, teniendo en cuenta dos aspectos importantes: la multimodalidad y la hipertextualidad. Además, nuestra Cibertarea también busca desarrollar la autonomía y promover un interés en desarrollar capacidades de aprendizaje.

Esta Cibertarea consiste en una actividad diseñada y basada en las WebQuests para ser realizada y completada en una sesión de dos horas, y está diseñada con el objetivo de aprender a escribir a través de subtareas. Así, (1) esta actividad es un objetivo que los estudiantes tuvieron que llevar a cabo en las asignaturas “Pronunciación y Comprensión del Inglés Oral” (EA0910) y “Dialectología” (H61); (2) esta Cibertarea permite analizar en profundidad. (a) las representaciones de escritura de los estudiantes, (b) sus representaciones de escritura y la importancia de aprender a aprender; y (3) su habilidad para pensar sobre su propio aprendizaje utilizando el metalenguaje apropiado, es decir, su conciencia metacognitiva.

Los principales objetivos de las Cibertareas son promover las habilidades de las nuevas literacias y que se pueda obtener el máximo beneficio de ellas para el desarrollo de la autonomía en el aprendizaje de lenguas en contextos donde las nuevas tecnologías de la



información y la comunicación (TICs) están presentes. Aparte de estos objetivos, este diseño incluye otros propósitos:

- Enseñar de las nuevas literacias
  - Fortalecer el aprendizaje de la escritura
  - Evaluar el grado de autonomía y metacognición (evaluar el conocimiento adquirido con la realización de esta Cibertarea).
- La evaluación de esta Cibertarea es una herramienta que muestra el grado de autonomía de los estudiantes.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONES OBTENIDAS Y FUTURAS LÍNEAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN**

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El objetivo del presente trabajo se centra en el diseño de una tarea de aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera (ELE). La tarea "El proceso de escritura" se centra en el desarrollo de estrategias de comprensión de lectura en un formato digital para promover el aprendizaje autónomo de un idioma en el campo de enseñanza aprendizaje.

A lo largo de esta línea, pensamos que es necesario resaltar la importancia de ayudar a los estudiantes a adquirir mayor autonomía por medio de la mejora de la confianza y la responsabilidad en su

aprendizaje, debido a que los estudiantes deben ser conscientes de la importancia de desarrollar habilidades y conocimientos en un contexto de aprendizaje a largo plazo como al aprender un idioma extranjero, en lugar de considerar al profesor como autoridad que realiza todo el trabajo en el aula. Como consecuencia, los estudiantes necesitan experimentar con el idioma extranjero y considerar al profesor como un ayudante, que brinda asesoramiento a los estudiantes.

En este punto, los cibergéneros son un tema clave en la nueva era de los medios que pueden ayudar a desarrollar diferentes modos de lectura en un formato digital, es decir, cómo las personas leen y comparten sus experiencias en Internet ("competencia wreading"). Lo que sí es cierto es que las TIC se han convertido en una parte integral de nuestras vidas, que están produciendo un impacto enorme sobre cómo podemos acceder a la información y relacionarnos con los demás. Nuevos géneros digitales y nuevas formas de discurso están surgiendo constantemente, depositando nuevos discursos prácticos y normas, nuevos tipos de procesos comunicativos, nuevas formas de participación en el flujo de la información y de construcción de conocimientos, así como nuevas formas de construcción de la identidad y las nuevas formas de aprendizaje. El presente trabajo se ha centrado en la necesidad de integrar la investigación sobre géneros

digitales, alfabetizaciones digitales y aprendizaje de la lengua autónoma, con el fin de conseguir un buen marco para el diseño de un idioma en línea; tarea de aprendizaje que promueve la autonomía (Villanueva, Luzón y Ruiz, 2008).

La investigación acerca de cómo enseñar y aprender las habilidades de alfabetización en la era de la información y la comunicación es un tema clave en la sociedad contemporánea. En la época de los cibergéneros y de la Web 2.0 , las competencias tecnológicas como saber cómo seleccionar, organizar y utilizar información a fin de resolver los problemas, manejar situaciones nuevas, y seguir aprendiendo, sin duda las competencias básicas de los estudiantes para que se conviertan en aprendices a largo plazo. Por tanto, es necesario investigar sobre (a) **las competencias tecnológicas** que trascienden los conocimientos técnicos y (b) **habilidades relativas al desarrollo de la autonomía**. Los principales objetivos de las habilidades tecnológicas complejas son:

- (1) Identificar los distintos tipos de pantallas y estudiantes que buscan en ellas (es decir, la forma de gestionar información y modos de lectura).

(2) Interpretación personal y toma de decisiones sobre la selección de la información (estrategias de búsqueda de información para determinar todas las fuentes posibles y seleccionar las mejores para uno de los propósitos).

(3) Cómo utilizar herramientas interactivas: Selección de enlaces, webs, foros, blogs, etc. teniendo en cuenta la necesidad de responder a las preguntas propuestas en la Cibertarea.

Sobre las habilidades relacionadas con el desarrollo de la autonomía, consideramos necesario lo siguiente:

(1) Saber identificar objetivos de búsqueda y modificarlos según la información encontrada.

(2) Ajustar la búsqueda en la Web para nuestras necesidades personales.

(3) Seleccionar la información en las páginas Web de acuerdo con las tareas propuestas.

(4) Re-utilizar la información. Es de suma importancia re-utilizar la información que se encuentra en la Web, con el fin de adaptar la información a las necesidades personales en relación con las tareas y en relación con el conocimiento adquirido de

los estudiantes. En este sentido, es importante proponer tareas y ejercicios que implican las estrategias de inducción, la síntesis y la generalización de construir conocimientos importantes.

(5) Auto-evaluación de los resultados obtenidos, por lo que se fomenta una conciencia metacognitiva (en nuestro diseño experimental los estudiantes tenían que completar un cuestionario de autoevaluación, donde se les permitió expresar sus sentimientos sobre el proceso de la tarea, así como sus resultados).

(6) Tomar el control: administración del tiempo y la regulación de la ansiedad. Planificación, supervisión, evaluación, en el que se recogía la toma de decisiones, el acceso y la organización de la información, así como la cantidad de información en el hipertexto. Todo esto puede incrementar la ansiedad (en nuestro diseño experimental, los estudiantes tienen dos horas para llevar a cabo la tarea, incluyendo la prueba de autoevaluación. Había que controlar la cantidad de información a la que fueron expuestos para que pudiesen llevar a cabo la tarea a tiempo).

Con el fin de mejorar las cualidades generales, que se explican arriba, mediante planes de enseñanza tenemos que tener en cuenta que puede ser útil para diseñar ejercicios centrados en conocimientos específicos:

- Ejercicios que centran la tarea en la selección de la información, con el fin de responder a una necesidad: reunir diferentes contenidos en la web para responder a las preguntas propuestas en la Cibertarea.
  
- Ejercicios que involucran la interacción en la Web: blogs, foros, e-mail. Sería interesante proporcionar un entrenamiento en los criterios para seleccionar los blogs y foros.
  
- Ejercicios para fomentar estrategias cognitivas relacionadas con ciertos estilos de aprendizaje. De hecho, después de este estudio, podemos sugerir que los siguientes estilos de aprendizaje obtuvieron mejores resultados: visual, visual-verbal, sintéticas, inductivo; como hemos explicado en el capítulo 9 (análisis y discusión).

Por último, teniendo en cuenta los resultados obtenidos, podemos llegar a la conclusión de que los maestros podrían enfocar los cibergéneros en el lenguaje de diseño para las tareas de aprendizaje,

que incluyen instrucción y ejercicio en las nuevas multiliteracias.

Algunos de los objetivos de la investigación sobre Cibertareas son:

(1) Analizar y describir las páginas web con el fin de identificar los ecos de géneros reconocibles, lo cual puede convertirse en un punto de encuentro para escritores y lectores como una trama común/compartida para construir significado.

(2) Definir estrategias de mediación sobre nuevas alfabetizaciones y adquisición de lenguas extranjeras desde un punto de vista socioconstructivista.

(3) Integrar los resultados de los diferentes objetivos, dentro de un marco pedagógico destinado a un largo proceso de aprendizaje de la vida, que debe implicar tanto fomentando el aprendizaje autónomo y el desarrollo de nuevas competencias de alfabetización. Recibir un entrenamiento en la nueva alfabetización va de la mano con la autonomía, es decir, la capacidad para adoptar las propias decisiones para llevar a cabo una tarea.

(4) Realizar un estudio más amplio, teniendo en cuenta una mayor cantidad de estudiantes.

(5) Explorar nuevos diseños de Cibertarea que combinan la formación en las nuevas alfabetizaciones y la autonomía.

(6) Investigar la posible existencia de una relación entre ser independiente de campo (capacidad de proyectar conocimientos previos obtenidos en diferentes contextos) y el grado de autonomía.

(7) Diseñar un estudio donde podamos encontrar el grado de correlación entre: (a) los modos de lectura y estilos de aprendizaje, y (b) modos de lectura, estilos de aprendizaje, y la autonomía.

(8) La necesidad de investigar el metalenguaje de los estudiantes sobre: (a) la concepción del aprendizaje, (b) la concepción de las tareas, y (c) la percepción de los textos digitales

Este proyecto ha sido sólo el primer paso hacia el diseño de futuros estudios más complejos. A la luz de los resultados de nuestro estudio, hemos de tener en cuenta un campo abierto para explorar el grado de correlación entre estilos de aprendizaje, modos de lectura, y la autonomía de aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera.





