

Using Technology to Facilitate Process Writing and Interaction among Adult Students

Uso de la tecnología para facilitar el proceso de escritura e interacción entre estudiantes adultos

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This article deals with how through the innovative use of word processing software, process writing and interaction can be fostered among students. A description of the context where the technology is implemented is first laid out, followed by a review of the literature concerning process writing and technology based principally on Pennington's (1996) model. Pennington's (1996) model is then expanded on inasmuch as the way in which collaboration around the computer (group and pair work) and through the computer (e-mail, chat, blogs, and forums) can give rise to interaction among students and, therefore, language learning and more autonomous students. Finally, a lesson plan is presented where stages and examples are given showing how technology can be implemented in practice.

Key words: Technology, process writing, word processing, interaction, collaboration, autonomy, metacognitive control

Este artículo muestra cómo, a través del uso innovador del software para procesar textos, se puede fomentar la escritura por procesos y la interacción entre los estudiantes. En primer lugar se describe el contexto donde se implementará la tecnología, seguido por una revisión de la literatura relacionada con la escritura por procesos y la tecnología basada principalmente en el modelo de Pennington (1996). Luego se expande dicho modelo teniendo en cuenta la colaboración alrededor del computador (trabajo en grupo y en pareja) y cómo a través del computador (correo electrónico, chat, blogs, y foros) se puede generar interacción entre estudiantes, en el aprendizaje de un idioma extranjero y por ende, estudiantes más autónomos. Finalmente, se presenta un plan de clase donde se ilustran las etapas y los ejemplos para demostrar cómo se puede, en la práctica, implementar la tecnología.

Palabras clave: Tecnología, escritura por procesos, procesamiento de textos, interacción, colaboración, autonomía, control metacognitivo

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Introduction

Writing is a complex cognitive process made up of various stages leading the writer to his or her finished product (Hedge, 2000). It is also a skill that has, unfortunately, been perceived by students and teachers alike as one of a 'static' rather than 'interactive' nature, where students write without really having a purpose or a focus on the reader. Furthermore, in this model, the role of the teacher is explicitly to correct and to only give grades, hence, resulting in neither the student nor the teacher entering into what Zamel states as "a dynamic teaching/learning relationship between writers and their readers" (1983, p.165).

The teacher training programme offered by the University of Nariño, Colombia, consists of 10 semesters, within which the methodological tendency is one of communicative language teaching (CLT). Students' language levels range from beginner to advanced in accordance to national standards for teacher training programmes within classes that consist of between 25 to 30 highly motivated young adult students. Nevertheless, writing as a skill, although it has a considerable time allotment in the syllabus (4 hours a week), has been relegated to being watched from the sidelines while other skills are given more dedication (Hedge, 1988).

This relegation has been due to a lack of genuine purpose within writing tasks (Zamel, 1983; Raimes, 1985; Hedge, 1988), as well as the focus of students solely on the product of writing rather than on the process of composing, communicating,

improving and collaborating *through* writing (Hedge, 1988).

With regard to using technology i.e. word processing and computer mediated communication (CMC) for language learning and, more specifically, process writing and interaction, the outlook is equally bleak. The university does count on a computer lab solely dedicated to EFL teacher training students with 25 computers, but this lab is quickly becoming outdated both in terms of technology (Pentium II processors, 32MB RAM and Windows 98 operating system) and in pedagogical terms (drill and practice standalone multimedia software packages) leading to a very 'Behaviouristic CALL' (Warschauer & Healey, 1998) or a 'Restricted CALL' (Bax, 2003), where the computer is seen as a tutor or source of knowledge rather than a tool through which language learning can take place (Taylor, 1980).

An added difficulty concerning the use of technology within this context is the lack of access students have outside class time i.e. the majority of students do not own personal computers. As a result of this lack of computer familiarity, students normally need training regarding the use of basic software packages e.g. Word, Internet Explorer, etc. (Piper, 1987; Hyland, 1993; Susser, 1998).

In this paper it is proposed that through the use of technology i.e. word processing packages and CMC, writing will become a more socially interactive process into which the writer and the reader are able to enter. Furthermore, through collaboration and interaction around the computer (group and pair work) (Long & Porter, 1985;

Nunan, 1992) and through the computer (CMC) (Kern, 1995; Warschauer, 1997, Warschauer & Kern, 2000), negotiation of meaning and therefore language learning can take place (Chapelle, 1998, 2001). Through this negotiation of meaning among peers, awareness of the writing process will be raised; a situation that will thus allow for the monitoring or controlling of cognitive processes and, hence, the learning process itself as well as the planning, revising, drafting and editing of written material (Cresswell, 2000; Benson, 2001).

Word Processing and Writing

According to Pennington (1996), the word processor has four fundamental effects on the writer and his / her own writing: a) writing becomes easier; b) writing becomes more extensive; c) writing becomes different; and finally, d) writing becomes more effective. Nevertheless, for these changes to take place, students need to be versed in the use of word processing software; otherwise, writing does not become easier but more stressful in terms of anxiety. Bandura (1977), cited in Robinson (1991, p.159), states among other conditions that “learners must be exposed to multiple observations and trials with guided participation” as well as learners needing “to be exposed repeatedly to tasks which are graduated over time and last long enough to overcome initial anxiety about performing the task”. Pennington (1996, p.127) within her model separates the initial conditions, which she calls the “users starting state”, from the aforementioned four effects.

Therefore to be in condition to use the word processor for pedagogical ends, students must be familiar with the machine before they embark on word processing writing tasks. Bax (2003) talks of a ‘normalisation’ that needs to occur before technology can be fully integrated into the classroom, where the word processor as a tool must become almost invisible inasmuch as it does not create an obstacle for the writing process to take place (Susser, 1998). In this vein, Hyland (1993) suggests a preliminary course of keyboard and software familiarisation whereby users are encouraged to experiment with this new tool to such an extent that they feel ‘in control’ (Robinson, 1991; Benson, 2001).

Writing Easier

The first of the four effects on writing is related to both physical and psychological aspects. Physically, the word processor can make writing easier in a number of ways. Once the user has become familiar with operating the keyboard, editing, correcting, deleting and rewriting become much less demanding on the writer (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Pennington, 1996). Nevertheless, it is important to consider how these previously mentioned writing stages are carried out i.e. at a sentence level or at a content level. Obviously sentence level corrections will take place during the process of writing due to the tools on offer within the word processing packages i.e. spell and grammar checkers (Vernon, 2000; Gupta, 1998), but more importantly, students need to focus more on the revision or edition of content or meaning rather than on the forms of the

language (Long & Robinson, 1998; Schultz, 2000).

Psychologically, the word processor offers an abundance of opportunities for making writing easier. Motivation and, hence, a reduction in anxiety, it is argued (Pennington, 1996; Warschauer, 1996; Lam & Pennington, 1995), is greatly reduced when writing takes place within a word processing environment. Nevertheless, regarding motivation, Salaberry (2001) talks of the 'Hawthorne effect' of technology on students' production, whereby the novelty factor of using technology for language learning could have a temporary positive motivational effect on students' attitudes. It is the need to sustain this interest and forge a more interactive, process-focused writing attitude that we will be concerned with in this paper (Bangert-Drowns, 1993).

Writing More

This stage has a direct correlation with the previous stage of writing easier, inasmuch as Pennington (1996, p.127), in her article, shows the bidirectional nature of the two. It stands to reason that when something is easier then production is more. Nevertheless, this does not imply that quantity is better than quality (Bangert-Drowns, 1993; Pennington, 1996). In order to determine if more is better, we must first determine why there is more quantity when using the word processor.

The fact that the editing process, when using the computer for writing, is dramatically reduced in terms of time and energy spent i.e. sections can be deleted and changed without having to reproduce the whole document again, implies that there

is more time (Piper, 1987) to write and edit. This ultimately allows the student to pay more attention to his own process of learning; inasmuch as he has more control over the writing process (Pennington, 1996; Benson, 2001).

Also, as the familiarisation a student has regarding the use of word processing increases, so does his ability to begin to experiment or free write through the computer (Jacobs, 1986). Nevertheless, this free writing as Pennington (1996, p.131) states, "can cause an over-production or over-generalisation" where not all that a student produces is necessarily better. This over-generalisation from a product focused standpoint is not at all desirable; nonetheless, from a process orientated standpoint it is much more beneficial, due to the fact that the student through his over-production or over-generalisation has more opportunities to edit and revise his / her own writing or that of his / her peers.

Writing Differently

An interesting point laid out by Pennington (1996) refers to the effect the word processor has on the way students write. Mentioned briefly at the end of the previous section, writing becomes much more of an evolving process where students naturally use the computer to focus on the different stages of writing i.e. revising, editing, drafting, etc. (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Bangert-Drowns, 1993). Again, this is due to the ease the computer offers the student for correcting his / her writing; where an error or mistake is only a temporary blip on the screen. A situation that serves to motivate the student. As Piper (1987, p.124) states,

“error is thus ephemeral, with none of the permanence of a mistake written on a piece of paper.”

During face-to-face writing classes, in order to contextualise the task, there is normally a brainstorming session in order to generate content or vocabulary i.e. activate schema. The schemata that are activated are normally group activated, which is thus reflected in the similar structures and content of students’ traditional pen and paper writing. However, when students use the word processor and begin to write using a freer style, they are themselves activating schemata and begin to enter into a process of selecting and deselecting content according to varying factors i.e. context, setting, needs, task characteristics, etc. This metacognitive process is fundamental for students to realise their own learning styles and create their own identity as writers and editors (Oxford, 1990; Wenden, 1991; Pennington, 1996; Benson, 2001).

Writing Better

Bangert-Drowns (1993), during his meta-analysis of research in the area of writing and word-processing, found a correlation between the two when they occur over a sustained period of time. In his article he shows the difference between motivational aspects and skill development when he states “a motivational impact could result in roughly equal effects for short- and long-term interventions, whereas actual skill improvement would more likely show consistent improvement over time” (p.88). Pennington (1996), however, is not so cautious in her appraisal of the effect

of the word processor on writing quality. She claims that as a direct consequence of writing easier, writing more and writing differently, students will have more time to spend on creating a more complex product. She states that when using the word processor, students are able to enter into a spiral movement, constantly editing, revising and correcting their writing so as to be able to have a much more sophisticated and effective end product.

These constant processes of revision, etc., need that students be able to pilot their own writing process and therefore their own learning process. Robinson (1991, p.158) makes an interesting analogy between being put in charge and being in control where it is necessary to foster the belief among students that they have sufficient skills and competencies to be able to complete the task and thus be in control. Without this control or metacognitive knowledge base (Wenden, 1995), there is a distinct possibility that they will feel out of control and not learn effectively.

Metacognition, Autonomy and Student Empowerment

As we have seen, process writing and metacognition are very much interrelated, inasmuch as during the stages of writing there need to be moments of planning, editing, and revision; moments that are directly related to metacognitive learning strategies i.e. planning, directed attention, selective attention, self-management, self-monitoring, problem identification and self-evaluation (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990, p.138). This process allows learners to choose, reject and revise their own content

to be written according to the importance that each individual allocates, thus fostering autonomy (Konishi, 2003; Benson, 2001).

Many definitions of autonomy exist, but probably the most widely recognised is that of Holec (1981, p.3), cited in Benson (2001, p.52), where he states that an autonomous learner is “to say that [he] is capable of taking charge of his own learning.” From this definition we can see the importance that metacognitive strategies have and how through creating the belief among students that Robinson (1991) mentioned, it is feasible to empower students and eventually foster autonomy.

This does not mean, however, that autonomy is “something that teachers do to learners; that is, it is another teaching method” (Little, 1990, p.7). Neither does it imply that “in the classroom context, autonomy is an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher; or a matter of letting the learners get on with things the best they can” (ibid, p.7). So how do we as teachers foster autonomy among our students?

A stage of raising awareness among students needs to be included within writing tasks through the implementation of specific learning strategy training (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990). Furthermore, when students are able to exercise effective control over their cognitive processes via self-management (i.e. metacognition), they will indeed become more autonomous (Wenden, 1991; Rivers, 2001; Benson, 2001).

In addition, through collaborative work around and through the computer, student empowerment can occur where the traditional status quo of teacher–

student interaction is modified to one of student – student interaction. According to Warschauer et al. (1996, p.7), “learning is a social activity and knowledge is socially produced”, which therefore allows for not only a sharing of ideas among peers but also a self-awareness of information by making it public (McConnell, 1994, cited in Beatty, 2003, p. 112–113). This assumption is based on constructivist theories of education and the social development theory of Vygotsky (1978), more precisely the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD), where through schemata or previous knowledge, students are able to share and glean information from each other according to gaps in their knowledge and thus facilitate the learning process (Beatty, 2003). Obviously ZPD is juxtaposed to the idea of working alone, a popular misconception when talking of autonomy. A misconception which Little (1990, p. 7), through showing what autonomy is not, states that it “is not a synonym for self-instruction”; in other words, learning without a teacher or peers. Therefore fostering autonomy, collaborative work around and through the computer and process writing using a word processor can be said to be interrelated in terms of social interaction.

Second Language Acquisition, Computer Mediated Communication and Interaction

It is widely accepted nowadays that a focus on form approach is desirable for second language acquisition (SLA) to take place. It is argued that this approach, proposed by Long (1983), cited in Allwright and Bailey (1991, p. 121-122), in which

formal instruction of linguistic elements within meaning orientated learning scenarios (focus on form), does play a fundamental role in helping students with their language skills, and ultimately, in learning a foreign language through meaningful exposure, interaction and input. Within a focus on form approach, interaction (group and pair work, negotiation of meaning, treatment of errors and 'noticing') as well as focusing on specific linguistic elements, either reactively or pre-emptively (Lightbown, 1998; Ellis et al., 2001), between teacher/student and student/student are of the utmost importance.

The question therefore remains as to how CALL can fit into the situation described above. According to Chapelle (1998), where she highlights seven hypotheses for designing multimedia materials, CALL theory can directly draw from SLA interactionist theories. Nevertheless, Harrington & Levy (2001) contest this assumption making a division between what is face-to-face (f2f) interaction and CMC. They argue that CMC, although including elements of interaction, is in fact an area that merits its own areas of research rather than simply implementing theories from classroom based SLA. Therefore, taking into account this differentiation, it is worthwhile dividing the question into two, inasmuch as we need to analyse interaction around the computer (f2f) and interaction through the computer (CMC).

Interaction around the Computer

For interaction around the computer to take place, there must be collaboration

between two or more people. Beatty (2003, p. 102) defines collaboration "as a process in which two or more learners need to work together to achieve a common goal, usually completion of a task or the answering of a question". During this collaboration around the computer in constructivist tasks (of which process writing forms a part), students are constantly negotiating meaning, clarifying, confirming, repeating and noticing (Beatty & Nunan, 2004). As mentioned previously, these conditions are necessary for language learning to take place as well as providing the opportunity for scaffolding (Chaudron, 1988), comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985) and comprehensible output (Swain, 1985). Structuring collaboration for it to be successful around the computer is related principally to the idea that "no-one is successful unless everyone is successful" (Hamm, 1992 cited in Beatty, 2003, p. 107).

Hamm (1992), cited in Beatty (2003, p. 107), also talks of four factors of interdependence essential for successful collaboration that ultimately need to be taken into account when designing group process writing activities around the computer. These are:

1. Goal interdependence i.e. what skills are to be acquired or what language is to be learned after the task has been completed.
2. Task interdependence i.e. the aim of the group inasmuch as the purpose of the task.
3. Resource interdependence i.e. how and through what resources is the task to be completed.

4. Role interdependence i.e. the parts each member is to play in the completion of the task.

It is important to emphasise that in order for successful collaborative language learning around the computer to take place, the role of the learner in terms of decision making, planning, monitoring and evaluating within the task cycle, needs to be learner-centred and not teacher-focused so as to promote more autonomy and, hence, more collaboration on the part of the learners (Beatty, 2003).

Interaction through the Computer (CMC)

Obviously, in terms of collaboration, CMC can be structured similarly to interaction around the computer so as to include the ideas of scaffolding, negotiation of meaning, etc., but on a different level inasmuch as these are normally carried out through writing and not speaking. In f2f situations, the conversation is usually carried out orally between two people and almost always on an instantaneous level; nevertheless, within CMC the mechanics of a written conversation are different depending on whether it is synchronous (chat) or asynchronous (email, blogging, etc.) as well as being carried out among two or more people.

According to Warschauer (1997), writing and speaking traditionally differ due to the reflective and interactive nature of the skills. Due to the advent of CMC, this role, inasmuch as writing, has changed from being solely reflective to both reflective and interactive. Within asynchronous CMC,

learners are given the opportunity to read, reflect, digest and interpret information to then draft, edit, and revise a response. This is the case presented by González-Bueno (1998), where many of the arguments that have been presented in this paper regarding writing through the use of a word processor i.e. writing easier (less anxiety (Sullivan & Pratt, 1996) and more motivation (Warschauer, 1996; Torii-Williams, 2004)), writing more (Kern, 1995), writing differently (Bangert-Drowns, 1993; Kern, 1995) and writing better (Pennington, 1996) can also be applied to the situation of writing using CMC but with the added difference this opportunity offers in terms of interaction.

Writing through asynchronous communication provides opportunities where reflection and interaction can take place at the learner's convenience i.e. there is sufficient time to analyse the message and structure a response through the different stages of writing. However, Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasenforth (2001) highlight how learners, through the use of CMC, tend to presume that the topic is already understood by the reader and therefore spend less time contextualising their writing, hence questioning whether e-mail is in fact an effective medium for improving academic writing.

However, it is when we look at the characteristics of synchronous CMC that the emphasis seems more to be on interaction rather than on reflection due to the physical time constraints that are involved in 'virtual conversations'. Kern (1995), in his study related to the quantity and characteristics of language production during synchronous CMC, showed that in

terms of quantity of production students tended to produce more. This synchronous CMC over-production is not necessarily as beneficial as the over-production during word processing or asynchronous CMC, due to the lack of time the learner has to draft, revise and edit his / her response. Also in terms of the characteristics of language production, synchronous CMC showed more complex language than oral production (but less than word-processed content) and reduced anxiety, thus, motivating students to interact, who otherwise in f2f situations would not have been so willing to participate (Kern, 1995; Jones & Issroff, 2005). However, in a study by Schultz (2000), it was found that face-to-face interaction around the computer produced more opportunities for negotiation of meaning, more opportunities for language learning and, ultimately, better quality language than interaction through the computer. This finding according to her study is applicable to lower level students due to the lack of familiarisation of computer use and general language competence. Nevertheless, for advanced students whose language level is higher, interaction through the computer showed signs of content area corrections leading to more positive results in terms of quality of writing.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Through the semester long lesson plan (See Appendix 1) and its related materials (See Appendixes 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6), it is intended that process writing can be fostered through the use of the word-processor as well as through collaboration / interaction

around and through the computer resulting in creating more autonomous users / learners.

The tasks and materials proposed in the appendixes should encourage students' writing to become easier due to the fact that in all the tasks there are opportunities to hone word – processing and general computer abilities which can be transferred to other areas of study, not just for language learning (Hyland, 1993). In addition, writing becomes easier (Warschauer, 1996), due to the lowering of anxiety caused by the 'facelessness' of working with the computer (Schultz, 2000) coupled with the increase in motivation due to the 'novelty' factor (Salaberry, 2001). Furthermore, the visible integration of these tasks within the structure of the syllabus (Warschauer, 1996) creates a specific purpose for using the technology i.e. improve writing and a specific audience i.e. peers. Although Biesenbach-Lucas et al. (2000) and Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasenforth (2001) found that the medium of writing i.e. word-processing or e-mail affected the length of the messages, with e-mail producing shorter messages, in fairness (although this is an important finding) in this context the quantity of writing is not the focus of the class, but rather what students do with the content they have i.e. draft, revise, etc., thus entering into the interactive writing process (Zamel, 1983). Obviously, a consequence of the medium through which students write will be the way they write i.e. through e-mail the writing will be less-contextualised with more reader suppositions (Biesenbach-Lucas & Weasenforth, 2001). The purpose of the tasks presented in the appendixes is not to focus on or control one particular way of writing and interacting through and around

computers, but to empower students to collaborate and reflect on their own learning processes, thus, creating more autonomous learners (Wenden, 1991; Benson & Völlner, 1997; Benson, 2001; Coniam & Wong, 2004).

Conclusions

This paper has intended to show how through the use of word processing technology, process writing, using Pennington's (1996) framework, and interaction, taking into account Chapelle (1998), can both be fostered within a Colombian EFL context. Nevertheless it is necessary to guard carefully against making the claim that the technologies mentioned in this paper will, by dint of their use, automatically facilitate certain types of learning. Some types of technology, particularly WEB 2.0 technologies i.e. blogs and wikis, which are predicated on interaction, have the potential to facilitate more effective language learning but they do not in and of themselves do this and this is where good instructional design comes in. Therefore it is necessary to evaluate every individual teaching-learning context taking into account students' needs and characteristics, thus, leading to more informed and realistic learning outcomes while at the same time taking advantage of the technology to its fullest.

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About the Author

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Appendix 1: Lesson Schema

Time allotment: 4 class hours (3 real hours) per week.

Week	Task and task format	Language / skill focus	Word processing function	Learning outcomes / comments and observations
1 and 2 (Appendix 2)	<p>Stories</p> <p>Pair work around the computer.</p> <p>Getting to know the importance of process writing as well as commands of computer.</p>	<p>Story writing</p> <p>Vocabulary expansion: adjectives, adverbs and verbs.</p> <p>Coherence and cohesion</p>	<p>Text selection, dragging and dropping.</p> <p>Text selection, copying and pasting.</p> <p>General typing.</p> <p>Using the spell and grammar checker</p>	<p>This task needs that students control the mouse and operate essential keyboard skills.</p> <p>Raises awareness regarding spell and grammar checkers.</p> <p>Improves general typing skills due to the aspect of speed writing that they must carry out.</p> <p>Interaction around the computer.</p> <p>More focus on own learning process.</p> <p>Opportunities for negotiation of meaning.</p>
3, 4 and 5 (Appendix 3)	<p>Writing a short essay using www.essaypunch.com</p> <p>Pair work and collaboration around the computer.</p> <p>Getting to see the stages of process writing up close.</p>	<p>Asking for and giving information.</p> <p>Giving opinions.</p> <p>Organising your ideas.</p> <p>Planning, drafting, revising, editing.</p>	<p>Using the mouse.</p> <p>Inserting text into specific fields.</p> <p>Using the computer to generate ideas.</p>	<p>Improves general typing skills.</p> <p>More focus on process writing at the computer.</p> <p>More awareness of the stages of process writing.</p> <p>Interaction around the computer.</p> <p>Opportunities for negotiation of meaning.</p>
5 and 6 (Jarvis, 1997, p. 171-173)	<p>Report writing.</p> <p>A topic that is not politically correct but is at the same time highly motivating e.g. Kidnapping in Colombia.</p> <p>Individual and group work around the computer.</p>	<p>Giving opinions.</p> <p>Vocabulary expansion: adjectives, adverbs and verbs.</p> <p>Coherence and cohesion.</p> <p>Planning, drafting, revising, editing.</p>	<p>General typing.</p> <p>Using the spell and grammar checker.</p>	<p>Raises awareness regarding spell and grammar checkers.</p> <p>Improves general typing skills.</p> <p>More focus on process writing at the computer.</p> <p>Interaction around the computer.</p> <p>More focus on personal identity as a writer.</p> <p>Opportunities for negotiation of meaning.</p>

Week	Task and task format	Language / skill focus	Word processing function	Learning outcomes / comments and observations
7 and 8	Opening an email account. Sharing your e-mail with your classmates. Group collaborative work through the computer. Introducing yourself to your classmates.	Following instructions. Free writing about personal opinions. Responding to and sharing information Planning, drafting, revising, editing.	Form filling General typing Sending messages and checking mail. Using passwords.	Beginning of familiarisation of interaction through the computer. Still asynchronous thus giving time for focus on process writing skills. More focus on learning process and on decision making, directing attention, etc.
9 and 10 (Appendix 4)	Joining a forum: http://writingandcomputers.phpbb24.com Starting discussion threads. Writing about a topic of interest related to field of study. Individual work at computer. Group work through computer.	Agreeing and disagreeing. Personalising language use. Planning, drafting, revising, editing. Selecting discussions to participate in.	Opening threads. Posting and checking messages. Using passwords.	Group collaborative work through the computer. More focus on own learning process as well as that of others. Still asynchronous thus giving time for focus on process writing skills. Opportunities for negotiation of meaning.
11, 12 and 13 (Appendix 5)	Keeping an electronic journal through http://123.writeboard.com/af72dea0ea46b4546 Writing about own learning or habits of learning. Individual work at computer. Group work through computer.	Personalising language. Expressing opinions, beliefs, concerns, etc. Planning, drafting, revising, editing.	Blogging. Using passwords. Adding to favourites.	Still asynchronous thus giving time for focus on process writing skills. Raise awareness for reflection concerning learning process (Metacognitive knowledge) Opportunities for negotiation of meaning. Foster responsibility regarding learning process.
14 and 15 (Appendix 6)	Joining a Chat Room through: http://englishandfrench.campfirenow.com/ Chatting with other members of the course.	Using different discourse, i.e. similar to spoken. Able to determine topics of discussion. Selecting topics and conversations to participate in.	Chatting. Posting and responding to messages in real time.	Synchronous communication, therefore less time to plan, etc. more cognitive load. Many more opportunities for negotiation of meaning. Control over participation and therefore learning process. Interaction through the computer.

* The forums, blogs and chat rooms are intended to be left running after the semester has ended in order to promote their continued use.


Appendix 2: Stories

With a partner, look at the pictures below. They show a story but have been jumbled up. Select the pictures and drag and drop them into the spaces in the table on the next page. The first one has been done for you.





It was a beautiful summer day, the sun was shining and the birds were singing.

 <p>It was a beautiful summer day, the sun was shining and the birds were singing.</p>		

Once you have placed all the pictures into the table, swap computers with another pair and compare your stories. Hopefully you will have the same! If you don't, explain your reasons to the other pair.

Now read the following sentences. Which picture do they belong to? Copy and paste the sentences into the table below the pictures. The first one has been done for you. Be careful though as there is one extra sentence!

- a) a crowd of people had gathered and were watching her anxiously as she struggled to reach the bank.
- b) she heard someone whimpering below her and when she looked down from the bridge, she saw a small boy in the deepest part of the river waving his arms helplessly.
- c) she thought he was dead but when he coughed and his legs started to move, she knew he had saved his life.
- d) It was a fast flowing river and she had to swim harder than she had ever swum before, to get to him before it was too late.
- e) As Jean walked towards the bridge, she was thinking of all the things she could do now that the school holidays had arrived.
- f) Although she was panicking, she was able to grab him and she started to pull him back to the bank.
- g) she jumped off the bridge and dived into the rushing water.
- h) she managed it and threw both herself and the boy onto the warm grass.

In some of the sentences there is a word missing. Now copy and paste one of these words into the sentences to improve the flow of the story. There is one word you do not need.

1. Eventually
2. Suddenly
3. Without a second thought
4. By now
5. At first
6. Last but not least

When you have finished, walk around the class looking at classmates' attempts at the same task discussing where you think it's necessary.

Now let's try writing a story of our own! Read the following:

You have decided to enter a short story competition. The rules say that the story must begin with the following sentence:
As soon as he got out of the car, Martin felt uneasy.
Write your story in 120 - 180 words.

Open a new Word document, spend a few minutes noting down ideas for your story and then spend 20 minutes speed writing.

Look at your partner's notes and read his/her story. Suggest how your partner's story could be improved, listing relevant vocabulary you could both use, including a range of verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

Now re-write your story, without paying attention to the spell and grammar checkers.

After you have written your story, use the spell and grammar checker to revise your work. Do you agree with its choices, remember nobody or nothing is perfect! Discuss your findings with a partner.

Once you have your final draft, save it to disk so you can use it for reference later.¹

1 Capel, A. & Sharp, W. (2000). Objective first certificate. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix 3: Essay Punch

Screen shots from www.essaypunch.com

The screenshot shows the 'MERIT' logo and 'Welcome Guest User' at the top. Below the logo is a navigation bar with '<Back to Learning Center', 'Subject', and 'Print'. A 'Text' button with a plus sign is in the top right. The main content area is titled 'Essay Punch - Information: Introduction'. It features a 'Tip' box with a progress bar and a list of steps: My Progress: Introduction, Subject, Pre-Writing, Thesis, Building an Outline, Writing-Introductory Paragraph, Writing-Body, Organizing, Coherence, Writing-Conclusion, Reviewing-The First Draft, Revising-Content, Style, Sentence Structure, Grammar, Proofreading, Publishing. The text in the box reads: 'This program will help you to write a short essay that informs or explains. The aim of the essay is to tell about something based on factual knowledge. You will be asked to brainstorm. Your ideas will be put into a list. Then you will be asked to write sentences. Next you will arrange your sentences into paragraphs. In the last step you will combine your paragraphs to form an essay.' An 'OK!' button is at the bottom of the box. The status bar at the bottom says 'Done'.

The screenshot shows the 'MERIT' logo and 'Welcome Guest User' at the top. Below the logo is a navigation bar with '<Back to Learning Center', 'Subject', and 'Print'. A 'Text' button with a plus sign is in the top right. The main content area is titled 'Essay Punch - Information: Pre-Writing'. It features a 'Tip' box with a progress bar and a list of steps: My Progress: Introduction, Subject, Pre-Writing, Thesis, Building an Outline, Writing-Introductory Paragraph, Writing-Body, Organizing, Coherence, Writing-Conclusion, Reviewing-The First Draft, Revising-Content, Style, Sentence Structure, Grammar, Proofreading, Publishing. The text in the box reads: 'Good! You are going to write about something you know well. Enter the particular activity, interest, or hobby that you have chosen to write about. (Here are a few examples: collecting baseball cards, singing, playing basketball, fishing, playing guitar, horseback riding, visiting famous battle sites, biking.)' Below the text is an 'Input' field with a placeholder text: 'Use only words or phrases. You will be asked to write sentences later.' An 'OK' button is at the bottom of the box. The status bar at the bottom says 'Done'.

MERIT Welcome Guest User

<Back to Learning Center Subject Print

Essay Punch - Information: Pre-Writing

Tip My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing--Introductory Paragraph | Writing--Body | Organizing | Coherence | Writing--Conclusion | Reviewing--The First Draft | Revising--Content | Style | Sentence Structure, Grammar, Proofreading | Publishing

What else makes Music especially (interesting? unusual? enjoyable? satisfying?)?

Input

Use only words or phrases. Be brief. You will be asked to write sentences later.

OK

Pre-Writing Notepad

▷ satisfactions » Changes your mood

MERIT Welcome Guest User

<Back to Learning Center Subject Print

Essay Punch - Information: Thesis

Tip My Progress: Introduction | Subject | Pre-Writing | Thesis | Building an Outline | Writing--Introductory Paragraph | Writing--Body | Organizing | Coherence | Writing--Conclusion | Reviewing--The First Draft | Revising--Content | Style | Sentence Structure, Grammar, Proofreading | Publishing

The beginning of a thesis statement that could introduce the main idea of the essay appears in the Input box. For practice, complete the sentence.

On the next screen you will write your own statement.

Input

People who have talents or special interests

OK

Appendix 4: Forum

Screen shots from: <http://writingandcomputers.phpbb24.com>

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the forum page for **writingandcomputers.phpbb24.com**. The page features a navigation menu with links like 'FAQ', 'Search', 'Memberlist', 'Usergroups', 'Register', 'Profile', and 'Log in'. A table titled 'writingandcomputers.phpbb24.com Forum Index' lists forum topics. Below the table is a 'Who is Online' section and a 'Log in' form with fields for 'Username' and 'Password'. The page footer indicates it is powered by phpBB.

Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
Category 1			
Welcome to getforum.org! This is an example of a forum that you can change/delete and it contains a welcome message and important things about your new forum	1	1	Fri Apr 11, 2008 1:58 pm viewtopic

Who is Online
Our users have posted a total of **1** article
We have **1** registered user
The newest registered user is [mawxfar5](#)
In total there is **1** user online :: 0 Registered, 0 Hidden and 1 Guest
Most users ever online was **1** on Fri Apr 11, 2008 1:58 pm
Registered Users: None
0 registered users visit during the last 24 hours
This data is based on users active over the past five minutes

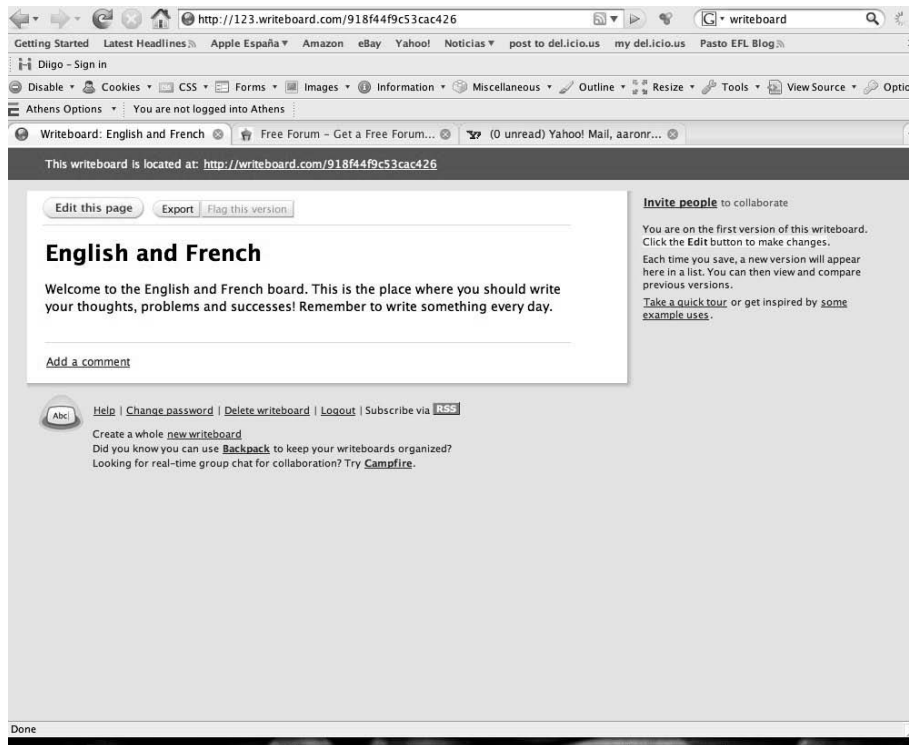
Log in
Username: Password: Log me on automatically each visit **Log in**

New posts No new posts Forum is locked

Powered by phpBB © 2001, 2005 phpBB Group

Appendix 5: Electronic Journal

Screen shots from: <http://123.writeboard.com/af72dea0ea46b4546>



Appendix 6: Chat Room

Screen shots from: <http://englishandfrench.campfirenow.com/>

