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**THE LANGUAGE LEARNING ACTIVITY OF INDIVIDUAL  
LEARNERS USING ONLINE TASKS**

**DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (EdD)  
EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

**OCTOBER 2012**



*So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be  
Old bridges breaking between you and me*

*Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall  
Confident that we have built our wall.*

–Seamus Heaney

To Ángeles, Isaí and Ian





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## The language learning activity of individual learners using online tasks

### Abstract

This study combines an initial interest in *private speech* (Flavell 1966; Vygotsky 1987; Ohta 2001; Ellis 2003), that is, self-addressed speech, used by individual language learners as they interact with online tasks, with a practice-based concern with the introduction of technology in a new self-access centre at the University of Guanajuato, Mexico. This had been done with little concern for the state of preparedness of learners and practitioners, as is often the case elsewhere (Benson 2001; Donaldson and Haggstrom 2006; Levy 2007; Winke and Goertler 2008). Literature on CALL, autonomy and task-based pedagogy revealed the need for an integrated, broad approach beyond technology itself with a special emphasis on the learning context, sociocultural issues and learner background. Often unexplored, the gap between what teachers plan and what learners do with tasks (Nunan 1989; Coughlan and Duff 1994; Roebuck 2000) began to focus the research efforts on investigating the nature of the language learning activity (Beetham 2007) of individual learners. Following suggestions from various authors from different traditions (e.g., Arnold and Ducate 2011; Lantolf and Poehner 2004; Chapelle 2001; Scanlon and Issroff 2005; Kaptelinin and Nardi 2006), activity theory (Vygotsky 1987; Leontiev 1978; Engeström 1987) was chosen as the most suitable theoretical framework and some of its key concepts, such as *disturbances* (Engeström and Sannino 2011; see also Montoro and Hampel 2011) and *contradictions* (Engeström 1987), were used to conduct a two-tiered analysis of empirical data gathered electronically during an online experiment followed by stimulated recall (SR) sessions. Findings include the widespread dependence of learners on private speech, memory and oral instruction and their underuse of learning tools (especially text-based ones such as dictionaries and notes),

signalling links to literacy issues to be further explored and the prevalence of orality locally.

Future research should explore these literacy issues and practical ways to improve the provision of language learning opportunities.

**Acronyms used in this Thesis**

<b>BERA</b>	British Educational Research Association
<b>CAL</b>	Computer assisted learning
<b>CALL</b>	Computer-assisted language learning
<b>CHAT</b>	Cultural-historical activity theory
<b>CMC</b>	Computer-mediated communication
<b>CRADLE</b>	Center for Research on Activity, Development and Learning (Helsinki Univ.)
<b>CREET</b>	Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology (OU)
<b>DICIS</b>	Engineering Division, Irapuato-Salamanca Campus (UG)
<b>EdD</b>	Doctorate in Education
<b>ELT</b>	English language teaching
<b>HCI</b>	Human-computer interaction
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technology
<b>IT</b>	Information technology
<b>OU</b>	Open University (UK)
<b>SLA</b>	Second language acquisition
<b>UG</b>	University of Guanajuato (Mexico)
<b>SR</b>	Stimulated recall
<b>VLE</b>	Virtual learning environment



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## THE LANGUAGE LEARNING ACTIVITY OF INDIVIDUAL LEARNERS USING ONLINE TASKS

### CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the practice-based point of departure of this study on language learning and the focus of the research. Emphasis is given to the rationale behind the study, outlining reasons for concentrating on individual learners using online tasks in a self-access environment. Some theoretical and methodological principles are reflected upon. Potential research gaps are mentioned and the positive impact of the study is considered.

#### 1.1 Focus of the research

As a language teacher and self-access centre adviser, I have sometimes been fascinated by seeing language learners ‘talk’ (even gesture) to the computer screen while working with online resources. Their talk is, of course, addressed only to themselves, that is, a kind of monologue (subvocal or fully-articulated) as part of their efforts to resolve the language task or exercise in hand. This type of interaction, often called *private speech* (Ellis 2003: 178), may be defined as “audible speech not adapted to an addressee” (Ohta 2001: 16), and it was the starting point of this study’s research interest, although the interest soon went beyond *private speech* and adopted a broader focus and scope.

The focus of research lies primarily in the area of the language learning activity of individual learners in an online environment from an activity-theoretical perspective, although task design also features in the study as a *task*<sup>1</sup> is used as both a research tool (in order to collect relevant data) and a learning tool. Findings from this study may have a bearing on online

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<sup>1</sup> A general definition of *task* has been suggested by Bygate, Skehan, and Swain (2001:11): “A task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective”. *Chapter 2* below includes an extended discussion of this concept.

task design, for both research and learning purposes, but the overall purpose is rather to depict the broader language learning activity in which online tasks are used.

## **1.2 Rationale**

Behind the study there are a number of underlying motives and assumptions that I have acquired over several years of practice- and research-based experiences.

### *Individual learner interaction with learning materials*

Personal and professional circumstances have gradually led me to shift research interest from classroom interaction (Montoro 1996) to individual learner interaction online. It is assumed that rich interaction does exist in this context. As Ellis puts it, “we need not characterize an individual participant structure as non-interactive” (2003: 265). Yet, this kind of human-with-learning-material interaction is qualitatively different compared to the human-to-human type. The choice over group work is simply motivated by practical and professional reasons, as individual work is becoming increasingly common in the learning environment under investigation, namely a new self-access language centre at a higher education institution in the State of Guanajuato, Mexico.

### *Technology*

This new self-access centre offers opportunities to use technological resources (as well as printed materials) to assist the language learning efforts of learners. Unfortunately, when it opened, there seemed to be little knowledge available within the institution about learner and practitioner experiences and perceptions of learning languages in a technology-rich self-access environment, as is often the case elsewhere (Benson 2001; Donaldson and

Haggstrom 2006; Levy 2007; Winke and Goertler 2008). Addressing this issue was one of the motivating factors behind this piece of research.

### *Language learning as a process*

It is assumed that language learning is a situated, social *process*, and not a *product*, consisting of “a dynamic interaction of person-in-environment” (Ohta 2001: 3), which must be researched as such. Hence, the focus is on the language learning process from a developmental and procedural perspective, on the ‘buds’ and ‘flowers’ of development, rather than on the ‘fruits’, as Vygotsky puts it (1987) (see *Chapter 2*). This kind of perspective has determined the choice of a sociocultural approach such as activity theory as described in *Chapter 2* and *Chapter 3*.

### *A humanistic approach*

Emotions seem to play an important part in language learning, and this geographical context is no exception, as learners constantly refer to embarrassment and lack of confidence when asked about their language learning difficulties. Hence, in this study learners had the opportunity to talk about themselves, their views and experiences, in an effort not only to triangulate data, but also to provide them with opportunities to gain something from their participation by increasing “their own self-esteem and their motivation to learn” (Ellis 2003: 31). Benson (2007: 27) also notes that non-classroom based modes of learning tend to “focus on technical issues, not on difficulties learners may experience in directing their own learning”. This potential pitfall has been addressed in this study by incorporating learner experiences in the research. Benson (2007: 30, drawing on Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001) also

argues against viewing learners as “processing devices” and sees them as “people” with “human agency”. The concept of *agency* is developed further in *Chapter 2*.

### *Tasks as learning tools*

From the early nineties, task-based learning and teaching has grown exponentially (Ellis 2003). This approach has had a significant impact on English language teaching (ELT) practitioners and researchers worldwide and I am no exception. In fact, in 2002-2005, whilst serving as an overseas volunteer for the Spanish government at the University of Belize (Central America), I had the opportunity to design and implement an award-winning task-supported Spanish language programme still in use at the time of writing. Naturally, tasks play a key role in the design and implementation of the current study.

Language teachers and advisers often encounter e-learning materials consisting of a number of discrete exercises focusing on linguistic form, paying scant regard to meaning. In contrast, *tasks* seek to place learners in a “language user” (Ellis 2003: 3) position in order to perform real-world processes, with the primary focus on meaning, and a clear sense of purpose, as their work must result in a specific outcome (i.e., a language product). Field (2007: 34) and Benson (2001: 101) also argue in favour of *tasks* that allow learners to benefit from learning opportunities that continually arise in language use. Hence, the principles underlying tasks justify their potential value and their use in this piece of research.

### *Tasks as research tools*

Tasks were also used to elicit empirical data. This use of tasks has been supported by Ellis (2003), Pica (1997) and Crookes (1986). As argued below (see *Chapter 2*), language learning

tasks are a good example of the ‘compatibility’ (Pica 1997: 61) between pedagogy and research.

### *Focus on learners*

The assumption in the study is that reality is subjective, shaped by the subjects’ consciousness and experience. In other words, there is a construction of meaning whereby learners interpret reality differently depending on their context, goals and motives. From an epistemological perspective, it is assumed that learners interact with input to construct knowledge – they do not simply react to input; they actively assign it meaning and make sense of it. The focus on learners is also borne out of the researcher’s desire to be what Laurillard (1999: 119) calls an “academic as learner”, working on a par with learners to problematise one’s own teaching and learn from learners, considering teaching and research as part of a continuum, not as two separate activities.

### *Research agenda*

From the outset, the aim of the study has been to be “responsive to the circumstances and needs of individual learners” as part of efforts to achieve a “democratic social ideal” (White 2005: 165-166). White has emphasised the importance of context and learning experience to learning. She has also argued (2005: 171) that not a lot of attention has focused on culturally diverse learners in the past. These issues are discussed at some length below (see *Chapter 2*).

### *Filling research gaps*

Ellis (2003: 199) stated a few years ago that “to [that] date, there have been relatively few studies investigating tasks from a sociocultural perspective”. In turn, Esteve (2003) argued



for the need for empirical data. As for the learning environment, classroom observation is arguably well established, but research involving out-of-classroom observation has not been developed to the same extent. It seems reasonable to attempt to fill this research gap by means of intensive observation of individual learners. For instance, Benson (2007) claims that little attention in the literature has focused on the use of self-study materials for self-instruction. He also argues that there is a need to theorise learning beyond the classroom in the same way learning in the classroom has been theorised (see also Benson and Reinders 2011). Similarly, White (2005: 173) points to the need for research evidence that can inform theory on pedagogical approaches to technology-mediated learning. Although theorising is not the primary goal of this study, some of my suggestions may contribute to theoretical advances.

### **1.3 Application to educational policy and practice**

The original practical interest of this study was (a) to understand and support language learners in this context and (b) to pave the way for the development of online, blended, and distance language curriculum at my institution. Some of the study's findings may be relevant to other practitioners and researchers in Mexico and elsewhere.

### **1.4 Development of professional knowledge**

This study has been beneficial at a professional level in more than one way. First, from a pedagogical standpoint, it has provided insights into a deeper understanding of how online learning works in a particular context. This understanding can, in turn, inform the design of appropriate tasks to support language learning in the future. At a personal level, the knowledge and skills acquired through this doctoral work have had a direct impact on my way of teaching and advising learners and my ideas about design and delivery of new

curriculum in the future. Fittingly, at the root of this fundamentally lies not greater technical expertise but a better understanding of how learners are shaped by their sociocultural and institutional context and how they, in turn, shape it with their actions. In other words, a broad understanding of the overall language learning activity, facilitated by the adoption of activity theory as the theoretical framework of the study, has been instrumental in unearthing some of the underlying inner contradictions affecting technology-mediated language learning. The broad approach adopted may make the findings useful for practitioners and researchers involved in supporting not only online and self-access language learning but other types of learning in other learning environments and possibly in different geographical contexts.

### **1.5 Conclusion**

This initial chapter of the thesis has presented a number of foundational ideas as they were originally formed in the years leading up to the start of the study and during the first few months of doctoral work. Most of those initial thoughts have been sustained throughout the study, albeit with modifications and expansions resulting from the experiences and findings of the research work conducted, as shown in the final chapters of the thesis. For instance, the focus has remained firmly on learners and their technology-mediated language learning activity from an activity-theoretical perspective. Private speech will also feature prominently, particularly in *Chapter 5* and *Chapter 6*. The importance of tasks (both as research and pedagogical tools) will be only too evident in *Chapter 2*, although task design has been kept out of the main focus of analysis. Instead, the attention has deepened around the interaction between the learner and the task by means of models of the language

learning activity system (see *Chapter 3* and *Chapter 4*). The orientation to the future inherent in a study of this type will be accounted for in *Chapter 7*.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review provides an account of the main concepts related to the present study on online language learning activity and lays the foundations of the theoretical framework, research methodology, approach and methods presented in subsequent chapters. This process of navigating through key concepts and theories progressively gives rise to a number of fundamental issues that are eventually formulated as relevant research questions at the end of *Chapter 3*. The aim is to offer the reader an overview of the field, and a clear picture of the research agenda underlying the study and its direction.

An earlier study (Montoro 1996) analysing classroom interaction in an ELT context concluded that language lessons were socially-constructed events in which social demands seemed to overpower pedagogic ones (Allwright 1984). Evidence from classroom data gathered and analysed at the time revealed a fundamental contradiction between efforts to keep the lesson as a conflict-free social event and the trouble necessarily associated with the transformational nature of the lesson as a pedagogical event. This study's research interest remains linked to the social forces at play in language learning interaction, albeit in an out-of-classroom context this time such as that of the individual learner interaction with computer-based language tasks in a self-access environment.

### 2.1 CALL and other technological approaches

From the perspective of a researcher-practitioner<sup>2</sup>, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) may be defined as “the search for and study of applications of the computer in

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<sup>2</sup> The term *researcher-practitioner* is used to reflect the increasing relevance of the ‘researcher’ role (see Montoro and Hampel 2011 for details).

language teaching and learning” (Levy 1997: 1). Beatty (2003) provides a more user-oriented definition of CALL as “any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language” (Beatty 2003: 7). Even though other terms, such as TELL (technology-enhanced language learning), have been used to refer to the field of technology-mediated second language teaching and learning, CALL seems to be the one that continues to be widely accepted in the research community (Chapelle 2001; Levy 2006; Thorne and Smith 2011). Within CALL, computer-mediated communication (CMC) is an increasingly popular area of research that focuses on communication between remote users via computers. Nevertheless, CMC was not suited to this study as there was minimal human-to-human communication involved (see Herring 1996 for a definition and a discussion of early CMC; for a more recent account see, for instance, Lamy and Hampel 2007).

In any case, as the study uses technology (e.g., computer hardware and software), the main focus of attention could have been placed upon technological aspects. Admittedly, the importance of technology, such as the online medium, cannot be ignored as it operates according to certain *affordances* (“the constraints and possibilities for making meaning”, Hampel 2006: 111; also see Gibson 1979 for a seminal definition, Kirschner 2002 for a wider and more updated definition and Blin 2010 for a discussion of the concept) which “help shape how interactions take place and how language is used in each setting” (Levy and Stockwell 2006: 2). This is not only true of the learner but also of the language teacher-designer<sup>3</sup> because “technological thinking 'enframes' us into particular ways of thinking”

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<sup>3</sup> *Language teacher-designer* refers to a practitioner who is “increasingly required to create online materials for independent study or distance learning” (Levy & Stockwell, 2006, p. xii) and captures the ‘practitioner’ role of the author of this study well.

(Coyne 1997: 9) and because "we are shaped by our technologies as much as we fashion them" (Coyne 1997: 7).

In fact, there seems to be a growing consensus in the literature suggesting that "any CALL implementation is heavily influenced by contextual factors" (Levy and Stockwell 2006: 8). Thus, technology is seen as part of a complex ecology rooted in sociocultural practices. As Gibson (1998) pointed out when he developed his concept of *ecological approaches* (as opposed to technological ones) to education, technology does not have effects on its own; it depends on learners' response and learner environment, which includes the institutional context and its effect in terms of demands and constraints on learners (Laurillard 2002). Thus, technology and technological tools, and especially how learners make sense of them in context, are duly considered, albeit resisting the temptation to give them undue emphasis from the outset to the detriment of the overall unit of analysis, that is, the language learning activity itself, as a unity, inclusive of a number of elements, technology being one of them.

In addition to needing to be mindful of learner context and learner background, the increasing complexity involved in processes of computer-mediated language learning recommends a principled approach to CALL research. The argument is made in this section and elsewhere in the thesis that activity theory principles (Engeström 1987) are well suited to address the complexity of the issues under investigation (see *Chapter 3* for a full justification).

Additionally, in the absence of 'native CALL' *theories* (Hubbard 2008), one can only speak of *approaches* to CALL research, such as that of integrating relevant elements, rather than studying them in isolation. The number of followers of integration in CALL has grown

because the “elements of the system can only be conceptualised meaningfully if they are viewed as part of the whole” (Levy 1997: 66). Coming from the field of human-computer interaction (HCI), Shneiderman (1987) has also argued in the past that we must consider learner background and learning context, and describes instructional design as a dynamic, horizontal, transformational activity concerned with discovering new goals, all of which echoes the motives and aims underlying this piece of research and activity-theoretical principles. Yet, the fact that HCI is mainly concerned with design and usability (and usefulness more recently) with a strong technical focus makes it an unsuitable theoretical approach for the purposes of this study. Nonetheless, relevant lessons learnt from the work of Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006), Kuutti (1996) and Mwanza (2002) combining HCI and activity theory have been incorporated when relevant to *Chapter 3* and *Chapter 4*, in particular, and elsewhere in the thesis.

The value of theory, particularly activity theory, has been emphasised by CALL authors such as Levy and Stockwell (2006):

Sometimes it is unclear where exactly one draws the line between what is and what is not exerting an influence, and what exactly constitutes the system in a particular educational or language learning setting. Conceptual frameworks can be helpful here. Note that activity theory proposes the activity system as the basic unit of analysis, where the activity system comprises a dynamic network of interacting and interdependent elements with its own cultural history.

(Levy and Stockwell 2006: 230)

More recently, Arnold and Ducate (2011) also mention sociocultural approaches, particularly activity theory (and dynamic assessment; see Lantolf and Poehner 2004), as potential directions for future CALL research, again partly on grounds of needing to give a strong emphasis to learning context and learner background.

Of course, activity theory is not the only theoretical approach with a systems-based perspective. Under different names, systems theory, initially developed as general system theory in the 1950s (see Bertalanffy 1950), has been spreading to different disciplines and gaining momentum in recent times (for an overview, see, for instance, Laszlo and Krippner 1996). However, the limitations of this study did not allow for an in-depth exploration of other systemic approaches and a decision was made to concentrate on the activity-theoretical framework for reasons described more fully in *Chapter 3*.

Going back to the question of the unsuitability of a technological approach to this study, an emphasis on technology appears to be more appropriate for researchers interested in the effectiveness of an artefact such as a language learning task (Levy 2000). In other words, artefact-oriented CALL research tends to concentrate on the effect of the artefact (and technology, more generally) on the learner (e.g., Pellerin 1999). Indeed, referring to ‘the impact of technology’ has become a standard phrase to refer to CALL research. As Thorne and Smith (2011) put it:

“[M]any CALL specialists have exhibited the understandable tendency to become focused on the technology while perhaps attending less assiduously to emerging trends and current findings in second language acquisition, and more broadly, from research on human development.” (Thorne and Smith 2011: 268)



For the purposes of this study, the one-way traffic generated by looking at processes going from the task-designer and technology to the task and the learner is reminiscent of a stimulus-response tradition in psychology that is at odds with the sociocultural and activity-theoretical principles adopted here. In fact, the study aims to have a broad scope inclusive of as many elements and as much of the complexity of the learning activity as possible, including horizontal and vertical dimensions of elements and mutually-transforming relationships. In addition, given the ontological and epistemological research stance adopted, it seems inappropriate to predetermine potential findings by focusing on certain elements (such as the computer or the task) *before* conducting the study. The aim, in this case, was not to find out the effect of one element on another but to consider the relationships affecting all the elements and eventually concentrate on certain relationships using theoretical criteria described in the next chapter of this thesis (*Chapter 3*).

The focus on the artefact and technology (linked to teaching and the teacher) clashes with the study's research concern with learning and the learner. Although a growing number of researchers (e.g., Breen 1987; Goodfellow 1999; Hémard 1999; Wiebe and Kabata 2010; Peters, Weinberg and Sarma 2009; Murphy, Shelley and Baumann 2010; Smith 2003) have acknowledged the importance of assessing artefacts from the point of view of learners rather than that of designers to gauge the "way a learner experiences their learning" (Goodfellow 1999: 113), data is usually collected using questionnaires and interviews (Levy 2000). These data collection methods appear to be insufficient in this case given the desired breadth and depth of analysis. Murray (1999) makes this point effectively when he argues that difficulties in understanding learners and their experiences are due to method-related issues. Perhaps the problem lies more deeply within the foundations of some of the CALL

approaches that focus on artefact and artefact effectiveness, as this might arguably be too narrow a focus to embrace neighbouring elements and processes.

Indeed CALL researchers seem to be struggling to find a context-appropriate theory to conduct their studies (Levy and Stockwell 2006). Seeing context as the stage where learning happens, as opposed to the driving force of learning (Poehner 2008), could well be the reason.

In sum, an artefact-oriented approach typical in CALL studies (especially those concerned with design and evaluation) may not have ideally contributed to unlocking systemic, context-dependent factors and thus not contributed ideally towards the achievement of expected research outcomes. This is not a study primarily concerned with CALL tool development but rather with language learner and language learning development using CALL tools. In other words, technological tools and artefacts will be considered from the perspective of their mediational role. Yet, the value of CALL research is not in dispute as its vast body of knowledge can contribute to understanding some technology-related issues (e.g., see Chapelle 2001 and Ellis 2003 for criterial features of tasks). In fact, CALL research itself supports the use of activity theory as a valid conceptual framework for studies involving technology.

In addition to CALL, computer-assisted learning (CAL) research must be considered. Pask's seminal work (e.g., 1975) developed a number of relevant concepts, such as that of 'teachback' (the learner's oral account of their understanding of the learning material in collaboration with the teacher), built upon his emphasis on interaction that culminated in conversation theory and a more holistic view of technology-mediated learning. The

emphasis of CAL (like that of CALL) is on instructional design but, to its credit, CAL has also been consistent in its constant efforts to bring together and fuse the activities of researchers, teachers and learners (Hartley 2010). Also from the field of CAL and relevant to this study is Moreno's (2006) 'modality principle' strongly recommending greater use of oral rather than text-based input in learning materials, a view supported by Ginns (2005). On the other hand, the importance attributed to gestures in this thesis is backed by research by Bavelas (1994), Kendon (1994) and more recently Hartley, Elsayed and Pesheva (2009). An important contribution of CAL research has come in the form of learner-generated contexts (LGCs) which may be defined as "the combination of interactions of learner experiences across multiple spaces and times" (Luckin et al. 2011: 73). Partly inspired by Vygotsky's concept of 'obuchenie' (Vygotsky 1978 ch. 6) (frequently translated as 'learning' or 'instruction' but rather referring to learner-teacher interaction; see Wertsch and Sohmer 1995 for a discussion), LGCs conceptualise a context-based framework that blurs boundaries between learning, teaching and the institutional activity in ways that resonate with the initial aims of this study. In this sense, the construct of personal learning environments (PLEs) (see Downes 2005) bears some resemblance to that of LGCs. These two concepts equate interaction with the context and the environment of learning processes.

A final useful contribution from the area of CAL is Scanlon and Issroff's (2005) concept of assessment that is neither formative nor summative but rather research-oriented and concerned with the interaction between technology-based learning materials, teachers and learners. These authors argue that activity theory provides us with a common language to explain phenomena.

To recap, the literature insists on the importance of context, learning environments and learner backgrounds in CALL studies. As Thorne and Black (2007) put it, “life and learning are not composed of isolated or strictly isolatable moments and spaces” (2007: 143). Hence, three strategic decisions have been made: (a) choosing a sociocultural approach and a cultural-historical activity theoretical framework that puts the emphasis on the learning activity (not just on interaction) which *is* (at least in part) the context (Nardi 1996); (b) conducting a cultural-historical analysis of the local institution (see *Chapter 6*); and (c) opening up the categories of analysis (see *Chapter 5*) to embrace sociocultural issues and the historicity of the activity under investigation.

Going back to CALL research, the concept of *CALL task* is potentially useful considering the learning tool used in the study. Levy and Stockwell (2006) include it under the umbrella of *CALL materials*, which they define as “the wide range of CALL artifacts or products that language teachers and designers create using technological resources” (Levy and Stockwell 2006: 3). Yet, the emphasis tends to fall on the production aspect and inevitably adopts a teacher and teaching angle. As Nunan foresaw in the early stages of developing the task-based methodology, “[w]e [teachers] tend to assume that the way we look at a task will be the way learners look at it” (Nunan 1989: 20) (see also Hémard 1999 and Goodfellow 1999). There is, therefore, considerable support for viewing a task as a “basic planning tool” (Nunan 1989: 1), not as a finished product embodying the means, the end, the teaching methodology and the implementation all in one, as the task-based approach to language teaching may claim.

Precisely, the CALL task used in this study is by no means an end in itself; it is a learning tool and also a research tool, used to collect data for research purposes rather than merely to

improve the design of the task itself (for further details on the use of computer technology in second language acquisition research see Chapelle (2001; 2003), Levy and Kennedy (2004) and the double-issue of *Language, Learning & Technology* (2000: 3(2)-4(1)) edited by Mark Warschauer and Irene Thompson).

But let us look at the task at the centre of this study from a pedagogical point of view again. Since it was conceived as a speaking task (albeit of a presentational rather than interpersonal kind), research on CALL and speaking skills must be reviewed. Until recently, it was widely accepted (e.g., Nunan 2005; Levy and Stockwell 2006) that the language area where CALL had had less of an impact was that of speaking, mainly due to technical and affective issues involved in communication between remote learners. Despite this potential difficulty and other challenges found locally, speaking practice appeared to be the biggest need as reported by learners themselves in the pilot study. Thus, a speaking activity was designed for online use. Nevertheless, given the technological limitations (generally and locally), the design is unconventional because the computer was used as a mirror where learner performance was enacted and reflected upon by means of recording and reviewing a video where learners introduced themselves. This solo feature of the CALL task replicated a common practice of *YouTube* users and stood in contrast with what commonly appears in studies of CALL and speaking. For instance, in a special issue devoted to technology and oral language development, the journal *Language Learning & Technology* (edited by Nunan 2005) presents six studies of which only one deals with individual oral practice online (Volle 2005). However, Volle's study involves reading aloud and drills (rehearsal) instead of free practice (message production). What seems to be emerging here is a potential new use of

the computer that may contribute to developing learner oral ability (see *Chapter 5*) that has not been considered.

In another relevant paper, Payne and Whitney (2002) compare oral language development in learners within CALL and non-CALL environments. This kind of comparative study has also been quite common in CALL research (see also Kern 1995 for an early example focusing on oral practice) but it does not seem to be of much benefit for the set purposes as the focus is still on CALL materials, not so much on learning.

To sum up, a balance must be struck between technology and people, between teacher-designer and learner along the lines of Levy and Stockwell's (2006) conclusions to their *CALL Dimensions* book: "The implementation of CALL can lean too heavily toward the technology, teacher-set objectives, or even the resources that are available at a given time." (2006: 203). They emphasise that teacher presence online is also important so that learners do not feel that they have been abandoned. In all this, the importance of the local and institutional environment cannot be overstated:

[T]he choices of technology are very often made at an institutional level, and teachers are left to decide how best to use what has been provided for them. (...) Although one of the underpinning features of CALL is that it enhances globalization and international exchange of information, the practice of CALL itself tends to be localized.

(Levy and Stockwell 2006: 208)

This feature of CALL makes the choice of activity theory as the study's theoretical framework, with its systemic and broad scope, and a localised sociocultural focus, even more relevant. Levy and Stockwell (2006) believe that developing expertise across

boundaries within the institution along the lines of principles outlined by leading activity-theoretical researchers (e.g., Engeström and Kärkäinen 1995) might be a way forward. In this regard, Blin's (2005, 2010; see also Blin and Appel 2011) work juxtaposing activity theory and CALL (with particular emphasis on learner autonomy) is also relevant and has been duly considered in the discussion included in *Chapter 3*. Let us turn now to learner autonomy.

## **2.2 Autonomy, self-access and independent learning**

Although many researchers would not agree with this, self-access language learning has been viewed by some as being almost synonymous with autonomous language learning (Benson and Voller 1997: 15), making autonomy (measuring it and promoting it, for instance) a central concern for researchers and practitioners (for a state-of-the-art review of the literature on autonomy, see Benson 2007; see Blin 2004 for CALL and autonomy; see Warschauer and Liaw 2011 for a more recent review of self-access learning and autonomy; see Reinders 2009 for an updated list of references). But equating self-access and autonomous language learning has been problematic, as Esteve et al. (2003) and Sinclair (2000), amongst others, argue very effectively. This is important because, as Reinders and Lázaro (2007) suggest, focusing on autonomy as an end in itself could make us lose sight of the means (the *how*) and motivations (the *why*) conducive to achieving greater levels of autonomy (for other relevant critiques, see Hand 2006, Sinclair 1999, Field 2007, Esteve et al. 2003, Cuypers 1992 and Little 1995). This potential pitfall may have been on Little's mind (1991: 4) when he revisited Holec's (1981: 3) seminal definition of the concept of autonomy ("the ability to take charge of one's own learning") and shifted the emphasis to the *capacity* for autonomy. Van der Aalsvoort and Lidz (2002), in their study of interaction in the zone of proximal development, conclude that the learner's activity is often neglected (whilst

mediation processes become the priority) and should be the focus of a greater number of studies. More fundamentally, Blin (2010) argues that these definitions of autonomy are no longer satisfactory in an increasingly complex and technological context.

A further criticism of mainstream research on autonomy is the “scant regard” (Benson 2007: 23) it pays to cultural variability. Blin (2004) too supported Benson’s (2001) demand for empirical studies “addressing the social and cultural context underpinning the use of these [CALL] technologies” (Blin 2004: 381). Holliday (2003) reinforces this idea by warning of the danger of falling prey to cultural reductionism in the study of autonomy. Assuming that there is truth in Holliday’s claim that “autonomy resides in the social worlds of the students, which they bring with them from their lives outside the classroom” (Holliday 2003: 116), aiming for autonomy understood as a universal that bears little or no relation to the cultures and lives of the learners could make them feel alienated. Additionally, as “foreign language study necessarily involves inter-cultural learning and a challenge to culturally-conditioned conceptions of the self” (Benson 2007: 25), any form of cultural reductionism could be seen as threatening and fundamentally compromise their chances of learning.

On a more positive note, research on autonomy has brought to the fore the connection between the concept of autonomy and original conceptions of a democratic society (Benson 2007: 31), with the goal of attaining a “democratic social ideal” (White 2005: 165-166) through more democratic, learner-centred processes (Warschauer 1999: 11). If we take that to mean pushing for greater equality, power sharing must be considered: “True learner empowerment consists of the ‘freedom to learn’ (see Rogers 1969) outside the teaching context and the ability to continue learning after instruction has finished (...). Learners [need] to be freed from the direction and control of others.” (Field 2007: 30). Along similar



lines, Freire (1970) argued in favour of the well-known ‘pedagogy of the oppressed’ to liberate and empower underprivileged groups.

Coming from a slightly different context, White (1997) reinforces the same idea:

“Learning has to be done by the learner [...]. Learners must be more than passive recipients of instruction: they must assume responsibility for their learning and exercise choice over what is to be learned, as well as how and when to do it.”

(White 1997: 179)

Self-access centres are expected to promote *independent learning*, which may be defined as “learners taking responsibility for their own learning and developing effective learning strategies” (Sheerin 1997: 54), a definition notably similar to the one of *autonomy* above. Yet, there is perhaps no such thing as *independent learning*, because “taking charge of one’s own learning [...] is both a social and an individual construct”, and therefore at some point between *independence* and *interdependence* (Blin 2005: 22).

It is clear that new learning concepts along non-traditional lines are needed. Fundamentally, understanding that any learning is embedded in sociocultural practices (Little 1994) is needed to research how learners make *sense* of their learning experience, as opposed to the *meaning* of independent learning that researchers may attempt to impose on them. For instance, in studies by Reinders and Lázaro (2007), and Reinders and Cotterall (2001) learners are depicted as misunderstanding independent learning or having a shallow awareness of the concept, respectively. Perhaps the learners do make sense for themselves of the learning they experience in the self-access centre, but not in the way the teachers would expect. It is precisely *how* they reach that personal, socially-constructed sense that

we should attempt to understand, rather than wanting to make them more *independent* for the sake of it. It is for that reason that this study pursues an interest in the nature of the language learning activity of participants in the study (see *Chapter 3* for research questions).

To sum up, it is not *learning autonomy* but *learning activity* where the research focus lies, for reasons that have only been outlined so far and are reinforced below. It is outside the remit of this study to account for the genesis of self-access centres in Mexico other than the one under study (for details see Herrera 2010). For general information on the creation and development of self-access centres, Gardner and Miller (1999) have written what is probably the most comprehensive book on self-access to date, notwithstanding the potential impact of a more recent book by Lázaro and Reinders (2009) on the topic.

### **2.3 Task**

As said earlier, this study made use of a *CALL task*. Before attempting to define what a *CALL task* is, the concept of *task* in ELT must be discussed. Ellis (2003) and Bygate et al. (2001) have provided particularly thorough and insightful accounts. More recently, Oxford's overview of task-based teaching and learning (Oxford 2006) has established itself as a very useful reference, whilst Samuda and Bygate (2008) have addressed controversial issues regarding the use of tasks in second language learning, teaching and research. Some relevant definitions are included in *Table 1* (p. 38) below, whilst other possible definitions have been initially left out for being too broad (e.g. general tasks in life; Long 1985) or too narrow (e.g. tasks in the classroom only; Nunan 1989).

Author	Definition of task
Breen (1987: 23)	"Any structural language learning endeavour which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a range of workplans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning – from the simple and brief exercise type to more complex and lengthy activities."
Prabhu (1987: 24)	"An activity which require[s] learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allow[s] teachers to control and regulate that process."
Skehan (1996: 38)	"An activity in which meaning is primary, there is some sort of relationship to the real world, task completion has some priority, and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome."
Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2001: 11)	"An activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective."
Ellis (2003: 3)	"'Tasks' are activities that call for primarily meaning-focused language use."
Klapper (2003: 35)	"Tasks [...] are meaning based activities closely related to learners' actual communicative needs and with some real-world relationship, in which learners have to achieve a genuine outcome (solve a problem, reach a consensus, complete a puzzle, play a game, etc.) and in which effective completion of the task is accorded priority."

**Table 1: Definitions of task**

These definitions reveal some of the tensions underneath approaches focusing primarily on the task as a unit of analysis. Firstly, with the exception of Breen's definition, all of them define task as *an activity (or activities)*, providing no clear indication of how they interpret the concept of *activity*. Presumably *activity* is used in opposition to *exercise*, where the former involves communication and the latter may be more of a discrete, drill-type piece of language work, lacking purpose or direction towards an *outcome* (Oxford 2006); only Breen leaves room for an exercise type to be considered a task too. Secondly, it is indeed worth noting that definitions of tasks lean towards describing them from the task designers' perspective. In contrast, Ellis (2003: 5) and Breen (1987: 24), refer to a task as "a workplan", opening up the possibility that what is actually planned at the design stage may not coincide

with what learners do with tasks. In contrast, Prabhu's (1987) definition above assumes teacher control over the task. Unless the learners are given a voice, designer-oriented definitions may yield results that are one-sided, losing sight of the dynamic structure and processes involved in the language learning activity. Consequently, in this particular study the assumption is that "tasks in which humans engage exist within a larger, multi-level segment of human activity" (Coughlan and Duff 1994: 174), a view consistent with activity theory principles.

It might therefore be useful to establish a clear distinction between the *task* as a "behavioral blueprint" for learning or research purposes (Coughlan and Duff 1994: 175) and the *activity*, that is, "the behavior that is actually produced when an individual (or group) performs a task (...) examined in its sociocultural context" (Coughlan and Duff 1994: 175). It is not tasks but rather what people *do* with tasks that generates learning: "tasks – or rather the activities that comprise participants' task performances – serve as a form of mediation that can bring about learning" (Ellis 2003: 178; added emphasis). Ellis himself specifically uses the term "the activity" (Ellis 2003: 180) later referring to what people do with tasks, as do Oxford (2006) and Beetham (2007). In short, "[t]he task represents what the researcher (or the instructor) would like the learner to do, and activity is what the learner actually does. Thus, activity is how learners, as agents, construct the task." (Roebuck 2000: 84). This view is consistent with the definition of *activity* as "the purposeful interaction of the subject with the world" (Kaptelinin and Nardi 2006: 31) upheld by activity theory. In this case, *learning*

*activity* refers to “a specific interaction of learner(s) with other(s) using specific tools and resources, orientated towards specific outcomes” (Beetham 2007: 28).

Thus, the assumption is that discrepancies between the plans and expectations of language teacher-designers and learner behaviour represent initial ports of entry into the analysis and understanding of the learning activity under study.

Tasks, and task-based language teaching (Nunan 1989), have proven to be very valuable as effective learning instruments because of the rich activity that they can bring about. The issue here is that a primary focus on task would simply be too narrow to account for the complex processes operating in the language learning activity.

As described earlier, in this particular study, *tasks* have also been used as a research tool, that is, to elicit empirical data that will substantiate research findings and claims. This use of *tasks* is supported, for instance, by Ellis (2003), Blin (2005) and Crookes (1986). Ellis (2003: 34) argues that “tasks constitute one of the best examples of ‘compatibility’ (Pica 1997: 61) between pedagogy and research”. But again, tasks are just tools; what matters is how people (the researcher and the learners as participants) make sense of tools and other elements of the overall learning activity. In line with sociocultural research the aim is to show how “performance depends crucially on the interaction of individual and task” (Lantolf and Appel 1994: 437).

## 2.4 The learner

As mentioned earlier, the study involves individual work with CALL tasks, but it goes beyond single language learning events, as the individual and the individual's activity are considered as both the result of (and resulting in) cultural-historical practices occurring in society at large. This is not a laboratory stimulus-response type of study. The assumption here is that individuals are inextricably embedded in society and social practices and that there is no simple, straight line connecting any given stimulus to a particular response. In brief, this particular study of individuals is the study of the dialectic processes between the individuals and society.

The risk of this approach focusing on the learner is to look at learners only as embodiments of learning identities, not capable of having other social identities (Firth and Wagner 1997). Averting this danger will be kept as a priority in the analysis and interpretation chapters of this thesis and the success (or otherwise) of efforts to see the learner holistically will be reviewed in the discussion in *Chapter 7*.

It follows from the position taken as regards the structure of the learning activity (see below) and the relations involved in it that the learner is a subject, with agency, capable of making conscious decisions stemming from motives and directed towards achieving certain goals. Activity theory might be an adequate theoretical framework to study individual language learners because it allows for an all-encompassing, detailed analysis of a number of features (consciousness, behaviour, motivation and orientation) of unique and unified individuals. Learners are not viewed as "processing devices" as perhaps cognitive approaches see them;

they are “people” with “human agency” (Benson 2007: 30, drawing on Lantolf and Pavlenko 2001) and teachers are not the sole “fount of knowledge” (Field 2007: 32).

## 2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has covered a number of key research areas (CALL, CAL, CMC, HCI, activity theory, systems theory and learning autonomy) and concepts (language learning activity, affordances, teachback, gestures, LGCs, PLEs, tasks, independent learning, disturbances, contradictions and learners) from the literature most related to the study. In so doing, some main arguments have been built to serve as foundations of the study. To summarise, the study is about learners and their learning, not about the impact of technology on them. As learners make sense of the task presented to them they move away from expectations of the teacher-designer and these discrepancies are set as entry points to the analysis that will lead to deeper interpretation of systemic and socioculturally-determined contradictions. Focusing on discrepancies between teaching plans and expectations, and learner behaviour can create opportunities for self-reflection and contribute to understanding the learners’ best interest, which might not necessarily coincide with the teacher’s best intentions. The activity-theoretical approach is expected to overcome the tendency of CALL to focus on the effectiveness of technological artefacts and focus instead on the technology-mediated language learning activity (for now established as the unit of analysis). This view is supported by CALL researchers (in the absence of ‘native’ theories) and others from relevant fields. Behind this kind of endorsement is a widespread preoccupation with the importance of learner background, learning context (including the local culture and the institutional

environment) and learner response. Systemic approaches, such as activity theory, are seen as well placed to tackle the increasingly wide and complex phenomena to be investigated. In this chapter, the research focus has progressively been narrowed down to language learner and learning development (rather than tool development) and learning activity (rather than learning autonomy). In the next chapter, suggestions made by several researchers about the need to blur the boundaries between the learning, the teaching and the research activities within the institution in line with activity theoretical principles will be presented.





## CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter describes the activity theoretical framework adopted to conduct this study into online language learning activity. The chapter opens with an account of some introductory concepts, such as private speech, internalisation and externalisation, and the zone of proximal development. This is followed by a concise account of (cultural-historical) activity theory (CHAT), including references to the three generations of the theory. A discussion of systemic disturbances and contradictions will bring the chapter to a close.

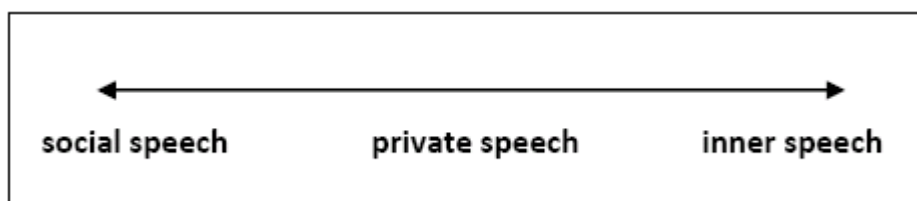
### 3.1 Private speech, internalisation and externalisation

Expanding on the initial interest of this study in private speech (i.e., self-addressed speech), it has been argued (Lantolf 2006) that *internalisation* of a second language occurs by means of imitation, especially when imitation takes place in private speech. Additionally, Ellis (2003: 178) argues that “self-mediation through private speech is possible”, and further adds that “such talk seems to function as a proxy for social talk”. Lantolf (1999) claims that private speech contains language that learners have internalised from their environment. Further, private speech is potentially relevant here because some of the learners in the study’s research setting have a low level of linguistic proficiency in English, which makes them more prone to “spend a substantial portion of the time self-regulating through the use of private speech” (Ellis 2003: 197).

Second language acquisition (SLA) has traditionally seen language acquisition as a one-way process, whereby the learner internalises language that exists outside, in society. Vygotsky’s

view (1987) challenges this notion by suggesting that the process is a two-way one, consisting of *internalisation* and *externalisation*, in line with his view that individuals are shaped by and shape society by means of their activity. The concept of *private speech*, defined as “audible speech not adapted to an addressee” (Ohta 2001: 16), was first coined by Flavell (1966) and plays an important role in facilitating processes of internalisation and externalisation. Piaget (1962) calls it *egocentric speech*, and claims that it disappears as the child matures. Vygotsky (1987) argues that it does not disappear but rather it is transformed into *inner speech* or *verbal thought*. The value of private speech data is endorsed by other authors (e.g., Saville-Troike 1988; Ohta 2001) as being “the meeting point between the social and the individual [...] an audible link between the individual’s social and inner worlds” (Ohta 2001: 13); thus, it deserves and receives due attention in this study, as it is possible that “private speech illuminates language learning in process” (Ohta 2001: 28).

To sum up, private speech is seen as having a bearing on both *internalisation* and *externalisation* processes. It belongs to a continuum that begins with social speech and ends in inner speech, with constant and dynamic movements backwards and forwards, as the figure below illustrates (*Fig. 1*, p. 46).



*Figure 1: Speech processes (adapted from Vygotsky 1987: 75)*

Related to this is the concept of *higher psychological functions*, as opposed to *natural psychological functions* (Vygotsky 1987). Beyond natural psychological functions (e.g., memory, perception) we can develop higher psychological functions, such as solving mathematical problems or reading maps, through social contact using culturally constructed artefacts as mediators. Thus, an external process such as navigating using a map can become an internal one when the navigation is done 'in the head' using no map. Another example could be that of reading out loud which is an intermediary stage while reading silently is being mastered (although a proficient 'silent' reader may occasionally read out loud, for example, to achieve higher levels of concentration when faced with complex tasks).

Internalisation is a process where movement occurs from the social world to the individual world, from the external to the internal, from the interpsychological to the intrapsychological. Vygotsky was convinced that anything that exists in an individual's mind must have existed out of it first, that is, before it lives 'in the head' it lived in an external, social context.

### **3.2 The zone of proximal development**

This leads us on to Vygotsky's seminal concept of the *zone of proximal development*. Vygotsky argues that learners are usually assessed in terms of their capacity to solve tasks individually, which is dependent on their past experiences. He advocates for the need to shift the focus to what learners can do with the help of more capable people, that is, to their potential to solve tasks with assistance that they could not solve alone. In other words, he

draws attention to the ‘buds’ or ‘flowers’ of development, rather than to the ‘fruits’. Hence, he defines the zone of proximal development thus:

It is the distance between the actual level of development 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)

Let us now turn to other key concepts within the activity theoretical framework.

### **3.3 Activity theory**

The concept of *activity* is central to every single aspect of this study, as will become evident in the coming pages. Revolving around the concept are the research methodology, data collection and analysis methods and instruments, including the CALL task used to gather data. They are all built upon principles of activity theory (also known as cultural-historical activity theory or CHAT), which originated in Marx’s cultural-historical materialism and was developed by Vygotsky, Leontiev and their colleagues within the cultural-historical psychological tradition in Russia in the 1920s and 1930s.

The following subsections describe the activity theory framework used in the study and its core principles in some detail, making connections between theory and the study where relevant, including an analysis of the model of a typical language learning activity based on

work by Blin (2010) and definitions of the CALL task and the language learning activity from the perspective of this framework.

### 3.3.1 The activity

To start with, a key tenet of activity theory is the need to avoid the all too common mistake of ‘atomising’ the phenomenon, in this case the language learning activity, by breaking it into smaller pieces, losing sight of the whole picture that emerges when it is analysed in its entirety. Vygotsky (1987) illustrates this point clearly using a metaphor: water consists of two elements, hydrogen and oxygen, which are highly flammable; yet, when combined, they possess completely different properties, making the unity of these two elements unique and impossible to account for by analysing them in isolation.

*Activity* is defined by Leontiev (1978: 50) as the ‘molar unit of life’ with its own structure:

“A unit of life, mediated by psychic reflection, the real function of which is that it orients the subject in the objective world. [...] [It is] not a reaction and not a totality of reactions but a system that has a structure, its own internal transitions and transformations, its own development.”

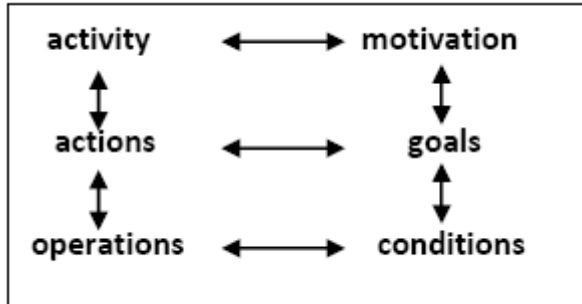
(Leontiev 1989: 50)

Engeström refers to *activity* as “a collective systemic formation that has a complex mediational structure” (Engeström 2008: 26).

### 3.3.2 The activity system: Activity, actions and operations

So-called *first-generation* activity theory (Engeström 2001) focuses on three hierarchical levels of data analysis: the activity, actions and operations. As shown below, *activity* is driven by *needs* that account for a general *motivation*. For instance, borrowing Leontiev's well-known example, in a hunting activity, the *need* for food is behind the hunters' *motivation* to obtain a prey. Nonetheless, hunters may perform *actions* that are not directly related to obtaining food, such as those of 'beaters' who drive animals out of their hiding places by beating bushes to lead them into an ambush prepared by another group of hunters. *Actions* ("goal-directed processes", Leontiev 1978: 63) are carried out by individuals or members of a group to attain specific goals in the pursuit of a more general motive. Importantly, Leontiev states that an *activity* can be realised by performing different *actions* (i.e., in different ways). It is worth noting at this point that there is a fundamental difference between *activity time* and *action time*: "Action time is basically linear and anticipates a finite termination. Activity time is recurrent and cyclic" (Engeström 1999a: 33). In this thesis, data is initially analysed in relation to the chronological time of the actions involved in completing the task; subsequently, the tendency is towards analysis and interpretation of the data in relation to the overall activity (of language learning, in this case), subject to a chronotope-like (see Bakhtin 1981, and Brown and Renshaw 2006) or holographic dimension of time where different temporal and spatial sequences are overlaid. Back to the hunting example, the *conditions* of the activity, such as the terrain and the weather, may change and thus require certain *operations* ("methods for accomplishing actions", Leontiev 1978: 65). Operations are

routine-like and performed in an unconscious manner. The hierarchical structure of all these elements is illustrated in *Fig. 2* below (p. 51).



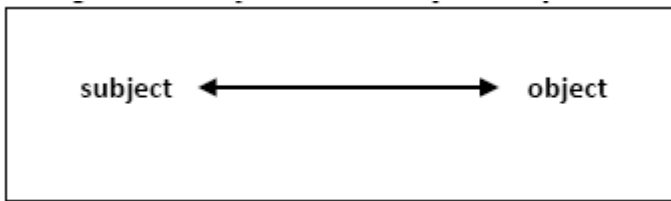
*Figure 2: The hierarchy of activity (based on Leontiev 1978)*

All the above elements belong to the same system, that is, the *activity system*, which is the unit of analysis here, as opposed to other possible units such as mediated action (Wertsch 1995), task (Long and Crookes 1993; Doughty and Long 2003) or situated action (Lave and Wenger 1991, Ohta 2001) (see *Chapter 4* for further details).

### **3.3.3 The foundations of activity theory: Agency, orientation and mediation**

Within activity theory, human activity is seen as a process of interaction between human beings and the world by means of mutually-transforming subject-object relationships (see *Fig. 3*, p. 52). Activity theory aims to analyse the genesis, structure and processes of activity in its natural setting.





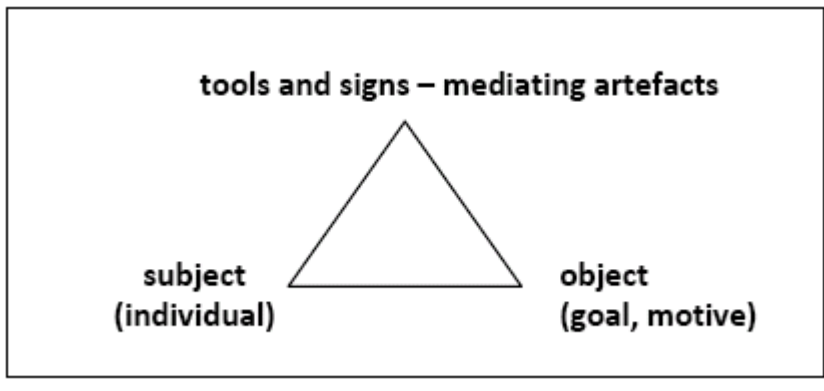
**Figure 3: The foundations of activity**

The assumption within activity theory is that any activity is the activity of a subject (an individual or a group) with agency, who purposefully engages in activity to fulfil *needs*. *Agency* may be defined here as “the ability and the need to act” (Kaptelinin and Nardi 2006: 33), typical of human beings. Alternatively, a broader view of agency may refer to “his or her capacity to change the world and his or her behavior” (Engeström and Sannino 2010: 5) or as “the ability to construct and transform independently one’s own life activity” (Davydov, Slobodchikov and Tsukerman 2003: 63, cited in Engeström 2005: 3-4). A relevant example is that of a learner who needs to learn English. Let us assume, from the teacher-designer’s perspective, that the learner is the subject and learning English the object directing the individual’s actions. The individual’s needs account for an underlying  *motive* that determines their *orientation* to tasks (Leontiev 1978). Motives are socioculturally determined, as Wertsch et al. (1984) demonstrate in their experiment with Brazilian mothers helping their children to complete a puzzle. Different backgrounds and motives (such as a desire to teach their children on the part of middle class, educated mothers in Brazil, compared to an urge to avoid mistakes and get the job done in the case of rural, uneducated mothers) are likely to result in different performances.

Hence, it can be inferred that “different people will approach the task differently depending on their underlying motives” (Ellis 2003: 184). Therefore, how learners approach the task

(what Ellis also calls *orientation*, 2003: 187) will be carefully analysed, as Ellis claims that the way learners *orientate* to a task is socio-historically determined.

However, there is no direct, causal, straightforward link between the subject and the object. Activity theory argues (Leontiev 1978; Vygotsky 1987; Engeström 1987) that human activity (as opposed to non-human activity, such as that of animals and machines) is mediated by artefacts, which are culturally, historically and socially produced and reproduced, by means of complex and multidimensional relationships. This is illustrated in *Fig. 4* below (p. 54). Lantolf (2000: 1) states that “the most fundamental concept in sociocultural theory is that the human mind is *mediated*” (original emphasis). Such mediation occurs as a result of social activity. According to Ellis (2003: 176), that mediation involves “(1) mediation by others in social interaction; (2) mediation by self through private speech; and (3) mediation by artifacts, for example tasks and technology”. My initial focus lies primarily in the latter two instances, although a secondary focus must necessarily be mediation type (1) as it is commonly argued to be the genetic origin of types (2) and (3) (Wertsch 2008).



**Figure 4: Basic structure of activity (based on Engeström 1987: 59 and Vygotsky 1978: 40)**

It is important to note that tools can be physical or psychological (i.e., tangible or mental). No distinction has been made in this thesis between tools and artefacts. Mediation is also conducted by means of linguistic signs, that is, through language in verbal interaction. Thus, sociocultural theory sees language learning as “dialogically based” (Ellis 2003: 176). The *monologic* type of interaction – such as the one resulting from the task used in this study – could be seen as incompatible with this view of language learning. Against this notion, Ellis (2003), drawing on Vygotsky (1987), argues that *monologic* talk can mediate learning too. Esteve et al. (2003) also argue that tasks can be a means to establish constructive dialogue (even if it is not addressed to others) to enable the formation of new knowledge.

### **3.3.4 Developments in activity theory**

Guidance and collaboration with others (i.e., the collective dimension) was largely missing in *first generation* activity theory (Engeström 2001), described above. It was to be superseded, in a significant step forward in the development of the theory, by Engeström’s (1987) *second generation* activity theory with the addition of more elements and complexity to the basic

structure, as shown below (Fig. 5, p. 55). In contrast, *third generation* activity theory focuses on clashes between different activity systems (Engeström 2001).

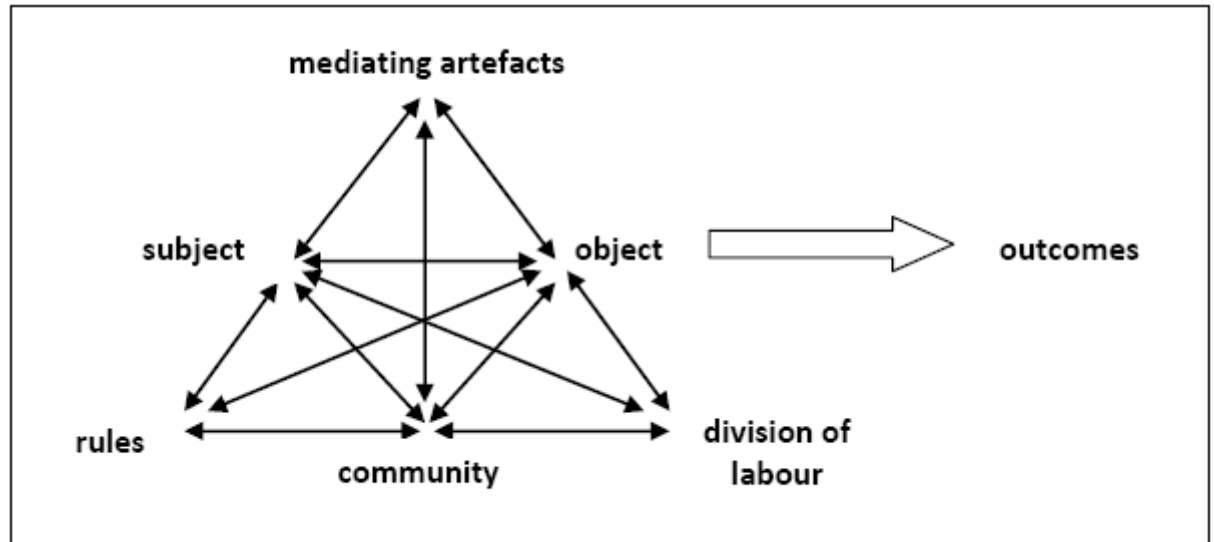


Figure 5: Complex structure of activity (adapted from Engeström 1987: 78)

The basic triangle has been expanded and many new sub-triangles can be formed within the overall triangle. Relationships between the various elements shift and develop during basic processes of human activity, namely production, distribution, consumption and exchange (communication) (Engeström 1987). Briefly, the *subject* is an individual or a group of people in pursuit of an *object* (or objective) that is expected to bring about desired *outcomes*. *Rules* are implicit and explicit indications of what must and must not be done within the activity. The *community* consists of people who share the object of the activity. The *division of labour* refers to how work is distributed amongst participants. As seen earlier, *mediating artefacts* are tools and signs mediating the activity. This complex structure of activity, or as it is often called the 'activity system triangle' or 'Engeström's triangles', will be used to model the unit of analysis of the study and analyse empirical data in the following chapters of this thesis, in line with the work of other authors, such as Blin and Appel (2011) and Lantolf and Thorne

(2006); earlier studies include Donato and McCormick (1994) and McCafferty, Roebuck and Wayland (2001). Clear and concise overviews of activity theory have been provided by Blin (2010) and Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006).

### **3.3.5 Core principles of activity theory**

Activity theory or CHAT (Engeström 2001) has five core theoretical principles, summarised as follows:

(1) The activity system is taken as the main unit of analysis. Actions and operations are dependent on the entire activity system and cannot be understood unless they are set against the background of the system.

(2) Activity systems are characterised by multi-voicedness or heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981). An activity system is always a collection of multiple voices from different actors. Participants carry their histories and have different labour roles assigned to them. Artefacts and rules also carry their own historical layers embedded. This multi-voicedness is increased when different activity systems interact with each other.

(3) The historicity of activity systems. Activity systems are formed over time and they cannot be understood without their history. History refers to the history of the activity and objects and that of concepts and ideas.

(4) The central role of contradictions as generators of change and development. Understood as "historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems" (Engeström 2001: 137), contradictions are not merely problems or conflicts. In capitalism, a

primary contradiction exists between the use value (intrinsic value) and the exchange value (societal value) of commodities. Contradictions generate external manifestations, such as disturbances and conflicts.

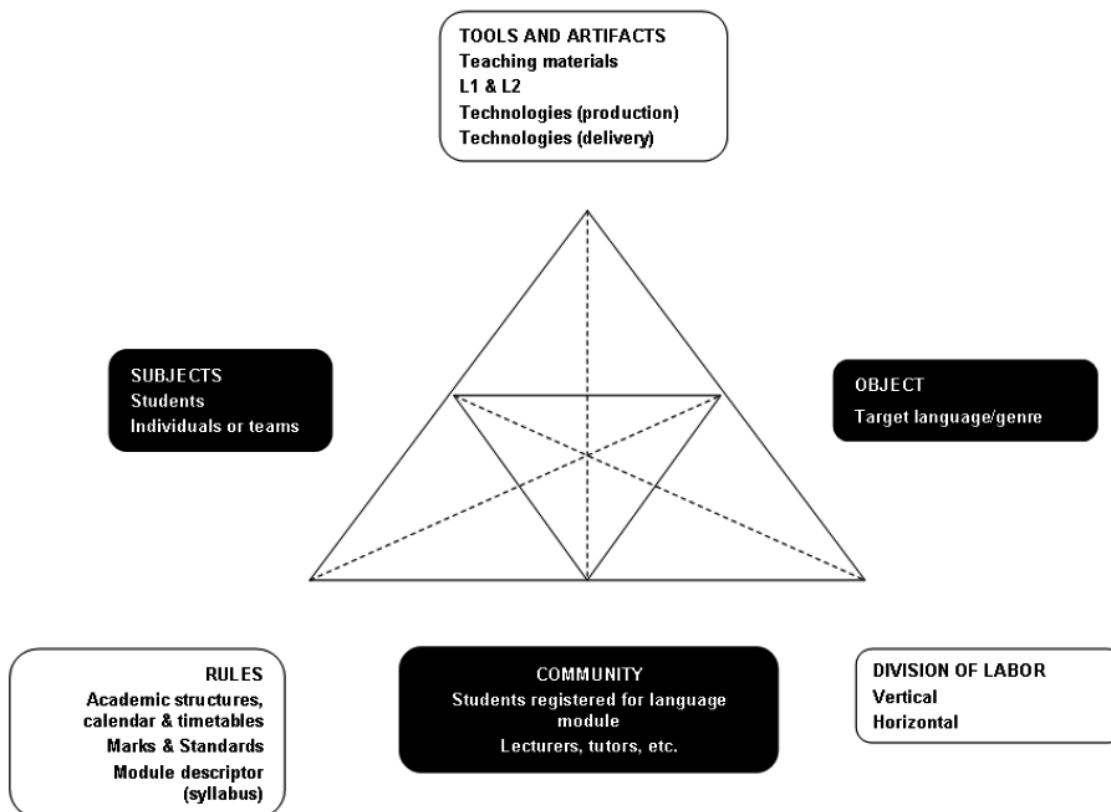
(5) Expansive transformation potential of activity systems. As activity systems evolve through time, contradictions may become untenable and individuals may start questioning (and deviating from) the set rules. If this escalates, a new collective vision may emerge and collaboration may result in collective initiatives for change. When the motive and object of the activity are reconceptualised, a new kind of activity is born and expansive transformation has been achieved.

### **3.3.6 The (language) learning activity**

Let us focus for a moment specifically on the *learning activity*. The learning activity is made up of a string of conscious goal-directed actions, which reflect true motives, and unconscious operations that respond to certain given conditions (see *Fig. 2* above, p. 51). As Leontiev showed (1978, 1981) and Engeström (1987) subsequently reiterated, actions can become activities, and the latter can become actions. In other words, one must track the movement from the individual to the collective, and vice versa, although the focus must remain upon the activity because “we may well speak of the activity *of the individual*, but never of *individual activity*; only actions are individual” (Engeström 1987: 66; emphasis in the original). However, actions make little sense if they are divorced from the overall activity to which they belong.

*Learning activity* has been defined as “a specific interaction of learner(s) with other(s) using specific tools and resources, orientated towards specific outcomes” (Beetham 2007: 28). However, equating *learning activity* with *interaction* seems limiting and therefore, in this thesis, in line with Engeström’s definition (2008) included earlier in this chapter (p. 49), the learning activity will instead be seen as a collective system with complex mediational processes. The outcomes are expected to be learning outcomes.

Next, in order to characterise the *language learning activity* that concerns us here, it is necessary to move on to Blin’s representation of a typical language learning activity system (here set within an institution such as a university), as shown below in *Fig. 6* (p. 58):

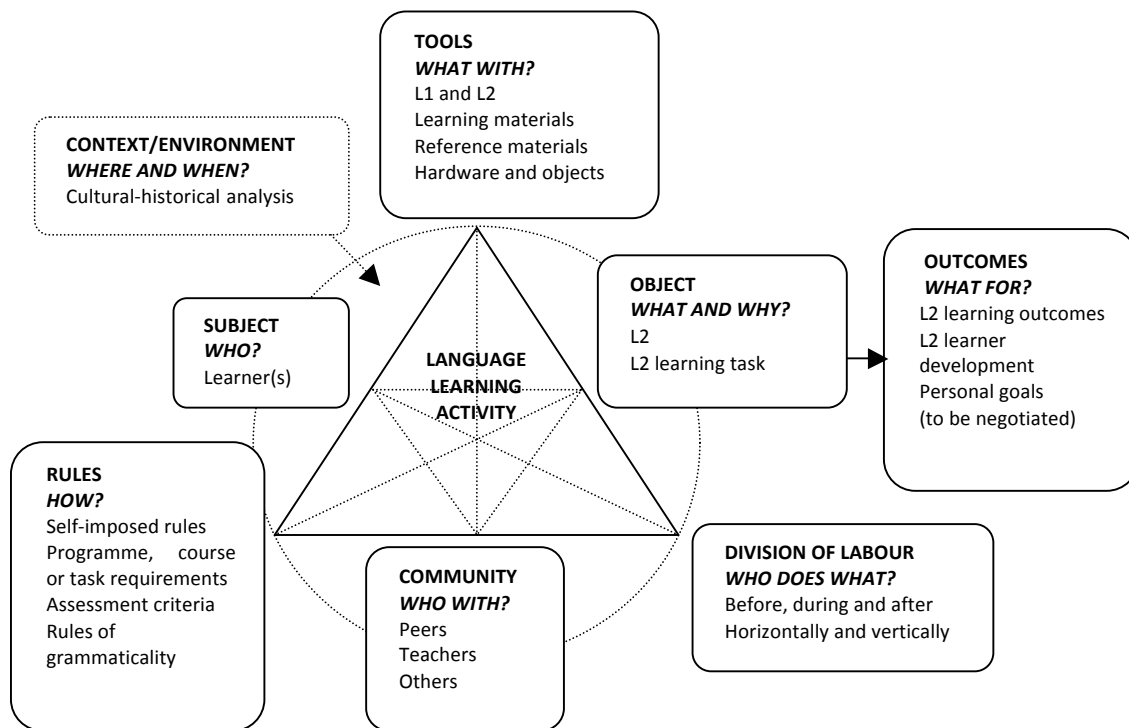


*Figure 6: Representation of a typical language learning activity system (Blin 2010: 184).*

This useful representation could be expanded by including additional details and aspects such as expected learning outcomes for particular contexts. It can be assumed that teaching materials include reference materials (e.g., dictionaries and grammar books). Under rules, rules of grammaticality of the L2 could be added. Finally, the inclusion of lecturers and tutors as part of the learning community is sensible but whether or not learners and teachers share the same objectives would have to be explored using *third generation* activity theory principles (Engeström 2001). Third generation activity theory has brought in an element of interaction between different activity systems. From this perspective, the typical language teaching activity system can be represented alongside the typical language learning activity system through empirical analysis and then the two can then be compared in search of possible contradictions between the systems whose analysis could lead to the co-construction of a shared object. However, bearing in mind the focus on the learning activity and the lack of longitudinal learning and teaching activity data, exploring clashes between activity systems has taken a secondary role in the study. Finally, peers who are *not* attending the course could be included as part of the community.

In my representation of a typical language learning activity system (see *Fig. 7*, p. 60), questions have been added to the elements in the system, descriptions have been modified and some additions have been made. This follows Mwanza's (2002) eight-step model approach, albeit with some differences, such as the type of questions asked. In Mwanza's case these tend to be more specific and detailed whilst they are more general and open in this representation to allow for a more flexible and generalizable representation that can accommodate a wider range of instantiations of language learning activity.





**Figure 7: Alternative representation of a typical language learning activity system**

In Fig. 7 above (p. 60), the subject (typically the learner(s)) responds to the question of 'Who is doing the learning activity?' The object is represented with the question 'What is the learner doing and why?' because the motivation for the learner is assumed to reside in the object (e.g., engaging in L2 tasks, such as recording a video presentation, or taking part in courses aimed at learning the language or developing as a learner). Yet, the object is not usually a direct correlation with the expected outcomes of the activity, which are represented with the question 'What is this being done for?' (e.g., to improve oral skills). The tools and signs used in the learning activity are embodied in the question 'What is this being done with?' (e.g., language and a CALL task). 'How should the activity be done?' refers to the set of implicit and explicit rules (e.g., societal conventions, grammaticality and task requirements) to be observed. 'Who is the activity being done with?' represents the

community of the learning activity. Finally, the distribution of labour is expressed in terms of 'Who is doing what?' Given the importance of contextual features, historical aspects, the learning environment and learner background, a circle has been added to frame the activity which refers to 'When and where is the activity taking place?', that is, to the sociocultural and historical aspects of the activity, its processes and its elements.

In light of the above activity-theoretical principles, it is now possible to formulate a definition of the *language learning activity* as a pedagogically-mediated collective system oriented towards engaging with the target language in pursuit of specific language learner and language learning development outcomes. The collective nature of the system makes it possible to talk of the *language learning activity of individual learners* but not of *individual language learning activity* (see above in this chapter for details). The language learning activity can be mediated by means of a *CALL task*, that is, a socioculturally-sensitive digital tool designed to mediate language learning activity. From this perspective, the CALL task ideally engages learners with an overall language learning motive and objective, specific goals and a set of outcomes, and affords learners adequate technology-mediated access to input, guidance, additional tools, rules and a language learning community in order to promote internalisation and externalisation of new language within their zone of proximal development. The CALL task is expected to perform a key function as a site for collective activity (akin to the description of social web applications in Blin 2010) that brings together learners, teacher-designers and researchers.

### 3.3.7 Contradictions and disturbances

In this section, contradictions and disturbances within and between activity systems are described. It is argued that disturbances can be manifestations of deep contradictions in the proposed language learning activity system and between the teaching, the learning and the institutional systems. In longitudinal studies (unlike this one) disturbances can also point to deviations from routinised practice.

Following on from the discussion at the end of *Chapter 2* (see *Section 2.3*, pp. 37-40) of discrepancies between what teachers plan and what learners do with tasks, it can be argued that such discrepancies are captured by Engeström and Sannino's (2011) concept of *disturbances*. These are defined as "deviations from the normal scripted course of events" (Engeström and Sannino 2011: 372; see also Engeström 2008) that "interrupt the fluent flow of work" (Helle 2000: 87-88), that is, language learning work, in this case. 'Scripts', which have been defined as "routinized patterns of performing and interacting" (Engeström 2008: 26), are not entirely relevant to this study because the unit of analysis is an activity system associated with one language task only, not with a whole course, for instance, in which routines or patterns could emerge. But disturbances, generally regarded as a valuable analytical construct because they "offer a potentially powerful lens for understanding the interconnection between the micro-level events and macro-level structures" (Engeström 2008: 26), are still relevant to this study because the design and contents of the task have a short-term script and a set of norms embedded in its design and contents, as determined by the teacher-designer. In other words, deviations occur between what the teacher-designer expected and what the learners actually did. From this perspective, disturbances, like Blin's

(2010) 'focus shifts' or 'disruptions' and Roebuck's (2000) 'shifts', can reveal teachers' misconceptions about learners, point to external manifestations of potential deep contradictions in the activity system (the language learning activity system as it has been modelled, in this case), or to deviations from learners' routinised practice in longitudinal studies. In turn, *contradictions* are crucial in activity theory because they are regarded as "[the] source of development" (Blin 2010: 181), and development plays a key role in the theory.

External manifestations of contradictions (e.g., disturbances) are observable but only derivative in nature. These manifestations may or may not be linked to contradictions, but they are not the contradictions themselves. For example, a learner whose actions break a routine or pattern thus deviating from typical behaviour can be manifesting a deep-rooted contradiction in a given system, but not in another. External manifestations can take different forms (e.g., conflicts, resistance, critical incidents, turning points, dilemmas and double binds) and are typically classified (e.g., according to a scale, as in Engeström and Sannino 2011) in an effort to track and identify links to contradictions in the system. Similarly, underlying systemic contradictions are traditionally divided into four different levels or layers, as follows (*Table 3*, p. 64):

Type of contradiction	Description
Level 1	Primary inner contradiction (double nature) within each constituent component of the central activity.
Level 2	Secondary contradictions between the constituents of the central activity.
Level 3	Tertiary contradiction between the object/motive of the dominant form of the central activity and the object/motive of a culturally more advanced form of the central activity.
Level 4	Quaternary contradictions between the central activity and its neighbour activities.

**Table 3: Types of contradictions (Engeström 1987: 89)**

### 3.4 Conclusions and research questions

To conclude this chapter let us summarise the main concepts presented above and introduce the research questions that this study of the language learning activity of individuals using online tasks tries to address.

To start with, the concept of *private speech* has been presented and the case has been made for its considerable research potential, not least in helping to account for key processes of internalisation and externalisation of new language. Higher psychological functions (Vygotsky 1987) and a definition of Vygotsky's (1978) *zone of proximal development* have also been accounted for. The chapter has emphasised and justified the importance of the *activity* construct in the study. Progressively the activity, the learning activity and the language learning activity have been described and defined by means of visual models of the relevant systems. The relevant processes (e.g., activity, action and operation; orientation; motivation; agency; mediation) and elements (subject, object, tools, community, rules, division of labour and outcomes) have been explained, including examples to illustrate

complex concepts and a definition of the CALL task. Attention has been paid to tracing the relevance of the concept of *contradictions* and how these can potentially manifest themselves as disturbances.

The validity of activity theory (also known as cultural-historical activity theory, or CHAT) resides in the fact that it takes a holistic, thorough and systematic approach to analysis, which has not always been present in CALL studies, as Blin (2005) has argued. Its use in this study is consistent with a desire to probe the initial hypothesis that some language learners are unsuccessful because their sociocultural and educational background makes them see learning a language as an unattainable goal. This hypothesis is based on my experience as a language teacher and adviser in Mexico for the last seven years and resonates with Wertsch et al.'s (1984) study with Brazilian mothers described below. A second argument to support using a sociocultural theoretical framework such as activity theory is the fact that in the Vygotskian tradition language development is seen as inextricably linked to sociocultural interaction, which is the necessary precursor of any internalisation and production of new language (Wertsch 2008).

As the reader can see below, the resulting research questions revolve around two main research foci which have been described and justified earlier in the thesis, that is, (1) the nature of the language learning activity and (2) its contradictions. The research questions, shown below, have evolved over the course of the last three years in two significant ways, namely, an initial focus on interaction gave way to the definitive interest in the learning activity and the original emphasis given to the online task used in the study (including having

two research questions devoted to it) was dropped to make room for a more general focus on the entire learning activity system (rather than parts of it).

1. What is the nature of the language learning activity system of individual learners using online tasks in this local context?
  - a. What are the main elements and processes involved in the activity?
  - b. What are the main disturbances affecting elements and processes?
2. What are the systemic contradictions affecting the language learning activity?
  - a. How are external manifestations (disturbances) linked to systemic contradictions?
  - b. In what ways are these contradictions the driving force determining the orientation and outcome of the language learning activity?

## CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Defining the boundaries of the learning activity system under study has been one of the biggest challenges when trying to operationalise activity theory. To account for this, the chapter begins with a short section charting the transition from activity theory to methodology, from theory to practice. After presenting the context (i.e., institution, language learning within the institution and participants), the research setting and the task used in the study, research methods are accounted for, including technical and data-preparation challenges, especially those encountered in the pilot study, and an account of the transcription conventions. Lastly, the language learning activity is modelled. The model and its limitations are described in detail as this will be the unit of analysis and thus central to the study.

### 4.1 From theory to methodology

The transfer of activity-theoretical principles to a general methodology and specific methods for conducting enquiry is not an easy one. This is a general, cross-disciplinary theory still in the process of being fully operationalized (Mwanza 2002; Nardi 1996b; Engeström 1993, 2003). It offers “conceptual tools and methodological principles, which have to be concretized according to the specific nature of the object under scrutiny” (Engeström 1993: 97). In other words, the methodology and methods to apply the theory in practical ways have to be built in a fairly *ad hoc* fashion for different fields and different studies. This has advantages in that the theory provides flexibility to build tools suited to particular disciplines, studies and participants because these are to some extent co-constructed by



researchers and participants. On the negative side, it leaves researchers relatively unarmed in the initial stages of data analysis and occasionally well into it. In this respect, particularly in studies involving technology, a number of strategies have been developed to ensure an adequate operationalisation of theoretical principles. For instance, Mwanza (2002), drawing on Engeström (1993), suggests three strategies:

- (a) focusing on the activity system as the unit of analysis
- (b) identifying contradictions
- (c) analysing the historical development of the activity

Nardi (1996b), in turn, suggests the following:

- (a) researching a long timeframe
- (b) concentrating on patterns of activity, rather than episodic fragments
- (c) using various data collection methods (e.g., video data, interviews, historical materials)
- (d) understanding things from the user's point of view

Nardi (1996b) and Engeström (1993) have some strategies in common. For instance, Nardi's emphasis on patterns of activity resembles Engeström's suggestion that activity should be the unit of analysis (and identifying systemic contradictions the priority). Both aspects have been observed in this thesis in various methodological ways; for example, despite looking at

moment-to-moment segments of interaction in the initial stages of analysis, these segments are always connected to processes, disturbances and ultimately systemic contradictions through subsequent layers of analysis, interpretation and discussion. This tendency is most obvious, for instance, in the different ways data was prepared and analysed, from larger data transcripts (see *Appendix 5*, p. 291) to smaller learner profiles (see *Appendix 3*, p. 283) and back. Modelling the language learning activity generally (see *Chapter 3*) and for the purposes of this study (see below in this chapter) has also been a way of operationalising theory. Additionally, the use of various data collection methods recommended by Nardi has been considered in this study's research design as video data, interviews and historical materials were used. The latter source of data, historical materials (together with interviews with institutional representatives), was used to conduct a small cultural-historical analysis of the local institution to compensate for the fact that, given the time constraints, researching a long timeframe (as suggested by Nardi) was not going to be possible. The alternative to the long timeframe for the study was to follow Engeström's advice and trace the historical development and genesis of the learning activity under investigation and the best method available was deemed to be a cultural-historical analysis of the institution following cultural-historical activity theory principles. Some elements of the cultural-historical analysis are presented below in this chapter and the full analysis appears in *Chapter 6*. Finally, it is hoped that the study put enough emphasis on seeing issues through the eyes of the learners and that the thesis reflects this adequately to conform to Nardi's final recommendation.

## 4.2 General methodological considerations

Following theoretical principles outlined in earlier chapters of this thesis, a process-oriented, participatory approach underpinned by activity theory was adopted in preparation for the pilot study. The focus was on learners and how they interacted with a CALL task, and on the learning process, and not the product, in an attempt to capture *how* learners learn rather than *what* they learn. In addition, the need to give learners a voice justified the participatory aspect. This double focus on learning and the learner, and the research questions about the nature of the learning activity system, its disturbances and contradictions, dictated choices made regarding the most suitable methodology and methods for the study. For instance, the experiment had to be recorded from various angles to capture the interaction in as much detail as possible, which made it necessary to resort to multiple technological solutions to track audio, video and computer activity in a reliable fashion. Additionally, given the interest in the whole learning activity system and the focus on the learner, stimulated recall (SR) sessions to probe experiment observations were held too, giving rise to another set of technological challenges to be faced, as described below.

Needless to say, apart from methodological considerations, the pilot study also led to a number of valuable preliminary findings and theoretical insights. Yet, as this is only a short section focusing on methodological issues emerging from the pilot phase and their impact on the design of the main study, the interested reader is directed to Montoro and Hampel (2011) where details of the pilot study can be found.

Methodologically speaking, the pilot study involved only two individuals (see below) and this raised questions about generalisability. The main study, which included a larger sample of 10 participants, addressed, at least in part, this potential shortcoming and aimed for greater generalisability. Although 10 participants still made a small sample, the hope was that in this case less could be more, for various reasons. For instance, such a small scale allowed for greater and deeper concentration on just a few aspects and left room for the unexpected to emerge in the research (see Coates 2004 for an example of the benefits and constraints of working with a small sample based on her earlier study (Coates 2002)). More significantly perhaps, almost from the outset the strategy was to prepare a fertile research ground in which to take up questions and findings arising from this study subsequently in larger-scale projects, as has been the case already, at least in this local context (see *Chapter 7* for details).

### **4.3 Context**

In the next three sections the context of the study is presented, from the more general institutional environment to the teaching of languages within it and the particular research setting of the study.

#### **4.3.1 The institution**

To delve into the institution's history, let us now present some key elements of the cultural-historical analysis conducted in it (see *Chapter 6* for full details). Despite having precursors dating back as far as 1732, the University of Guanajuato as such was founded relatively

recently (1945). Its autonomous status is even more recent (1994) and becoming fully autonomous is still an aspiration clearly apparent in its mission statement, where there are four references to 'free(dom)'. This study was born in the midst of a number of organisational changes affecting the institution at the time, particularly the expansion of self-access centres that led to the creation of the centre where the research was conducted in 2009. The scarcity of knowledge available on the local practices and experiences of language learning in a self-access environment, especially as far as technology mediation was concerned, was partly responsible for the motivation behind the research interest.

The University of Guanajuato is the largest public higher education provider in the state of Guanajuato, with a student population of around 18,000 and approximately 700 full-time lecturers (2010 data). As for the geographical context, Guanajuato is a fairly large (30,000 sq km), fairly rural (30% of population live in rural areas) developing state of Mexico, whose economic system is still significantly dependent on agriculture, although a number of important industries have established themselves in the area in recent years (for details, see *Chapter 6*).

In fact, the Engineering Division, also known as DICIS, is surrounded by fields (mostly corn), production plants and one of the biggest oil refineries in the country. The creation of this refinery in 1950 triggered great economic development in the city of Salamanca and the foundation of FIMEE (as DICIS was formerly known) a few years later, in 1964, as a high-achievers engineering school responsible for educating engineers that could feed the refinery's need for a skilled workforce to run its operations.

In this industrial environment, it is perhaps unsurprising to find top-down, production-oriented practices within the institution, which both reflect widespread mass production systems in the economic model of the state and impact on the behaviour of learners and practitioners who tend to prioritise speed and results over quality and reflection.

Despite self-evident economic progress, the area is also characterized by a lack of reliable telecommunications. For wider economic and political reasons, the institution is caught in between unsatisfactory provision from the Internet service provider (ISP) and the lack of expertise to run its own infrastructure, which results in poor and intermittent connectivity.

At the time of the study, the provision of education and health care in the state was still deficient, contributing to an extremely low percentage of university graduates (1% of the total population), and a large percentage of manual labour and informal employment. The levels of poverty, malnutrition (in children under 5) and illiteracy were close to 10% (“OECD Mexico” using 2010 data). Despite a very significant public expenditure, deficient education levels persist in the state of Guanajuato.

#### **4.3.2 Language teaching within the institution**

The provision of foreign language teaching at the University of Guanajuato started in 1976 in the form of continuing education courses. In 2000, the Language Centre opened in the institution’s main site. At the Engineering Division (DICIS) where the study was conducted languages were formally taught for the first time in 1996. Some informal classes had been offered before then by the student association. A limited number of general English and

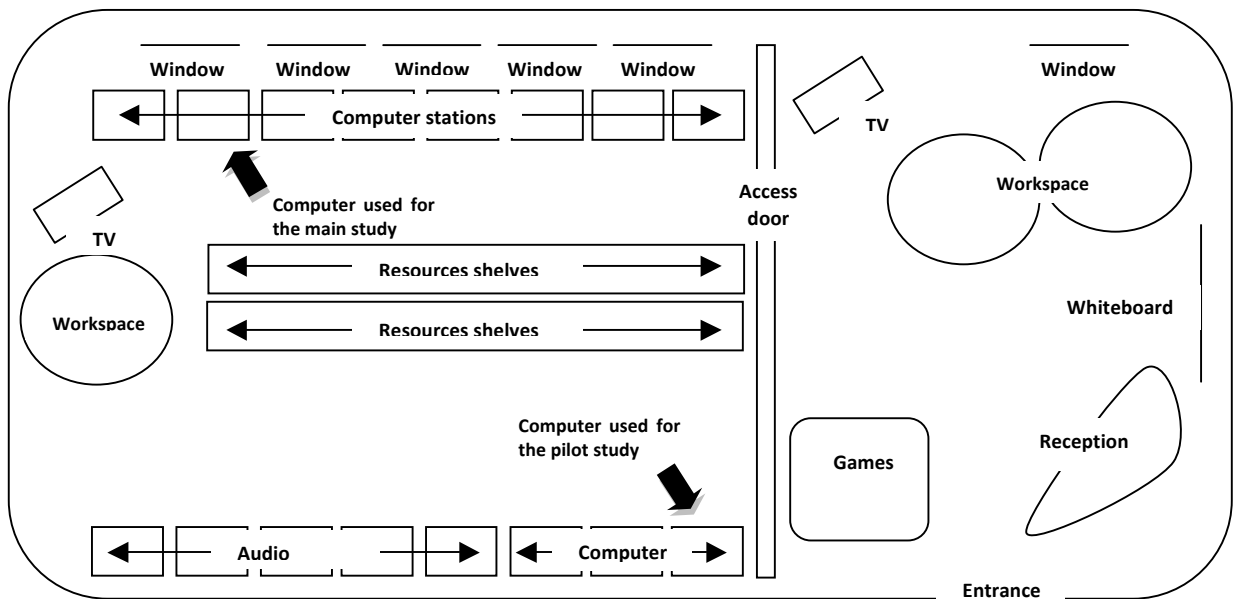
French language courses have continuously been offered since, all of them credit-bearing but optional. All the academic programmes offered at DICIS have an English language graduation requirement (i.e., an intermediate or higher-intermediate TOEFL test score). In spite of infrastructural deficiencies and limited resources, the number of English language courses offered to students has doubled between 2009 and 2012 (the period of the study), from six to 12 groups, and now includes higher levels that were not offered initially. In total, in the last term of 2012, six English language teachers (again, double the number involved initially) provided tuition to close to 300 hundred students. No courses to members of the general public were being offered at the time of writing, but the university was covering this demand with a continuing education centre in the city centre. The methodology was communicative and the teachers were mostly non-native speakers. Compulsory self-access centre use, involving a number of hours to be spent in the centre as part of their final assessment grade, was introduced in language courses 2011 and had been kept by some language teachers in 2012. This had no impact on this study because data was collected before this measure was introduced.

#### **4.3.3 The research setting**

Relatively small in size, the self-access centre where the study was conducted is located in a provisional, non-purpose-built space on the third-floor of the Engineering Building at the time of writing and was ascribed to DICIS, which is part of the University of Guanajuato. In 2009-2010, when data was collected, the Engineering Division consisted of approximately

1800 full-time students and 80 full-time lecturers in the areas of engineering, business and digital arts.

The part of the University that accommodates the self-access centre is located in an uninhabited, semiarid hilltop area almost 2,000 metres above sea level, about two kilometres away from a rural community at the foot of the hill and five kilometres away from the nearest urban area, the city of Salamanca. The layout of the self-access centre is illustrated in *Fig. 8* below (p. 75).



**Figure 8: Self-access centre layout**

It is worth mentioning that the experiment was conducted during regular self-access centre opening hours when the number of users present ranged between two and eight. Statistics show that the average number of users typically present in the self-access centre at the time of the study was three.



## 4.4 The task

This section includes a description of the task used in the study.

The screenshot shows a Blackboard LMS interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Página de Inicio' and 'Courses' tabs, and icons for Home, Help, and Logout. On the left side, there is a vertical menu with buttons for 'Master's\*', 'English 2\*', 'Forums\*', 'CAADI', 'Announcements\*', 'Your Teacher\*', 'News\*', 'Tests\*', and 'Activity'. Below this menu are buttons for 'Communication', 'Control Panel', 'Refresh', and 'Detail View'. The main content area is titled 'CAADI VIRTUAL > ACTIVITY' and 'Activity'. It features a large blue 'Hi!' graphic and the text: 'This learning activity focuses on **Introductions**. This is what you will do:'. Below this is a list of stages: 'Before You Start', 'Stage 1: Prepare', 'Sam Asks', 'Stage 2: Practise', and 'Stage 3: Review'. The text continues: 'The main **objective** of this activity is to introduce yourself in English. The **product** of the activity is to make a homemade video introducing yourself with the intention of putting it up on YouTube (although this is **not** obligatory). There is **no correct answer** to this activity. It is rather an opportunity to **prepare, practise** and **review**. Making **mistakes** is perfectly **OK** at this stage.'

*Figure 9: Partial screenshot of the task on Blackboard (pilot study)*

The task that I designed required the learners to introduce themselves on video working individually with only limited teacher support. In principle, it led to a communicative outcome and had a strong meaning focus. The design aimed to engage learners in a real-world instance of language use involving the four skills and use of higher psychological functions. Efforts were made to imbue the task with language learning potential and to make it fit for learners, despite the practical difficulties involved in implementing it in the local context. As pressure was mounting locally to offer distance and online language courses, this task was an opportunity to test the waters in terms of practicality issues and

the level of preparedness of learners to embrace new forms of learning languages. The future language learning courses were likely to follow a task-based approach and include online features, and both aspects, along with learner interest in speaking practice, determined the design of the task to some extent, because the task and the study were regarded as precursors of future developments in the area of languages.

In terms of design, the task consisted of six sections and had some support features embedded, as follows:

*Introduction:* This section outlines the whole task, as well as the task's objective, the expected outcomes and (in the *Moodle* version used in the main study) the help available. It also includes a note pointing out to the learners that there is no correct answer to the task and encouraging them to experiment and make mistakes (non-interactive section).

*Before you start:* This is a three-question survey exploring the learners' expectations, feelings and motives as they are about to introduce themselves on video. Learners are encouraged to be honest about their answers rather to say what they should *ideally* think, feel or do. Automated feedback is offered for each question to provide guidance and support especially around the topic of 'introductions'. Learners are made to reflect about the video format as a medium to introduce themselves. Uneasiness is anticipated and some supportive tips are given to counteract this.

*Stage 1:* Learners are asked to watch a YouTube video where a US college student, Sam, introduces herself on video [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXZCa3QP4FY&feature=fvsr;>

accessed on 10 April 2010]. The video transcript is provided; it is annotated with footnotes clarifying cultural references and references to grammatical (*Blackboard* version only) and phonetic aspects of the language used in the video.

*Quiz: Sam's video:* This is a questionnaire to test the learners' understanding of the video. It includes four questions: the first one to check comprehension and three more to motivate learners to start thinking about the main ideas, linguistic forms and the audiovisual content and form of their own video too. The automated feedback tells the learners what the main ideas in Sam's video are, encourages them to be original and creative in their own video, reminds them about the oral nature of the task by asking them not to read in their video but to speak naturally (with the help of some notes as reminders and rehearsal if necessary), and gives them some tips to make the content and form of their video more attractive.

*Stage 2: Practice:* The focus shifts momentarily to the linguistic features of Sam's video. Brief notes are given by way of explanation on the intonation pattern of a particular sentence and (in the *Blackboard* version used in the pilot study) on the position of frequency adverbs such as *usually* in the sentence. In the *Blackboard* version only, connections are made with self-access resources in case the learners want to have some practice with the highlighted linguistic aspects. Finally, learners are told that it is time for them to rehearse and introduce themselves on video by using the software and hardware provided.

*Stage 3: Review:* This interactive questionnaire poses four questions intended to explore learners' feelings by inviting them to reflect on their task performance and the resulting

product, that is, their own video. Finally, they are asked whether they will upload the video onto *YouTube* (admittedly before they are given feedback on it and the chance to make corrections) and they are required to submit the video to the teacher via *Blackboard* or *Moodle* in order to have it revised and get some feedback.

*Help:* This is a non-interactive space offering learners options to get support, such as using (online) dictionaries, chatting with the teacher online (via *Blackboard*, *FlashMeeting* or *Skype*), using self-access resources and asking a friend for help.

The task was made available on the local institution's official electronic platform, *Blackboard*, in the pilot study (see *Fig. 9* above, p. 76) and on the Open University's Moodle-based *OpenLearn* platform for the main study (see *Fig. 10* below, p. 80) for reasons presented later on in this chapter. In the pilot study participants were already familiar with the platform, whereas main study participants had been given one training session before using the *OpenLearn's* VLE and some of its learning tools in the main study. The *Moodle* version of the task was available at the time of writing at <http://labspace.open.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=5947>.

OpenLearn  
LabSpace

Who are you? (Sign in) ?

LabSpace ▶ All Units ▶ Open Educational Resources ▶ Languages ▶ PUB\_298\_1.0 ▶ Introduction ? Search units

**Learning Tools**

- Using Learning Tools
- FM Live Communication
- FlashVlog
- Knowledge Maps
- Learning Journals
- Learning Clubs

**Unit Outline**

- Outline
- Topic 1
  - Introduction
  - Learning outcomes
  - Before you start
  - Stage 1: Prepare
  - Quiz: Sam's video
  - Stage 2: Practise
  - Stage 3: Review
  - Help
  - Credits
- Topic 2

**Who are you? | Introduction**

This task is about **introducing yourself** - in other words, telling people who you are (*presentarse*, in Spanish). The **Unit Outline menu** on the left shows you the different sections of the task. It will help you to navigate through it.

This is just a **short description** of what you'll do in the next **2 hours**:

1. You'll **introduce yourself** (tell other people who you are) in **English** on **video** with the intention of putting your video up on **YouTube** (although this is **not obligatory**).
2. But **before** you do that, we prepared some materials to help you to **get ready**.
3. There is **no correct answer** to this activity. This is just an opportunity to **practise your English**. Making **mistakes** is perfectly **OK**.

If you need **help** at any point, click on the **Help** link (left).

**Tip:** You'll find links to dictionaries at the bottom of this page.

**Next:** [Learning outcomes](#) →

**Figure 10: Screenshot of the task on Moodle (main study)**

For the benefit of the interested reader *Table 2* (p. 81) presents a list of criterial features of a task (adapted from Ellis 2003: 9-10) and how these were applied to the task in the study.

CRITERIAL FEATURES	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	APPLICATION TO THE TASK
1. A task is a workplan.	Ideally, the actual activity that results from it is communicative.	This particular task presents the learners with a clear outline of the workplan and is meant to push them to engage in communicative action by introducing themselves.
2. A task involves a primary focus on meaning.	Learners must have the opportunity to be language users. The task must incorporate some kind of info gap. The task indicates the content, but the actual language to be used remain the learners' choice. However, tasks can focus on form too, constraining users to use a certain grammatical structure.	Although some grammatical ( <i>Blackboard</i> version only) and phonetic aspects of the input receive attention, the main focus of the task is firmly placed on meaning (comprehension and production). An info gap exists in the <i>Quiz: Sam's video</i> section (learners have to draw the main ideas from the input video). Although the focus is on some linguistic forms in the task, eventually the learners have freedom to choose the linguistic structures they want to use
3. A task involves real-world processes of language use.	The task may involve learners in real or artificial activity, but the processes of language use that result from performing a task will reflect those that occur in real-world communication.	This task replicates an activity people do in real life, that is, introducing themselves on video on <i>YouTube</i> .
4. A task can involve any of the four language skills.	A task may require <i>dialogic</i> or <i>monologic</i> language use.	Monologic language use of a presentational nature is required in this case, although it could be argued that simulated or imaginary dialogue is encouraged and may arise in the minds of the learners. 'Real' dialogue can also emerge if learners post their videos online and <i>YouTube</i> users are inspired to comment on them. The task involves integrated use of the four language skills, although the focus remains on oral production as the overall objective.
5. A task engages in cognitive processes.	For instance, selecting, classifying, ordering, reasoning, and evaluating information.	A wide range of higher-order mental functions are required in various sections, such as in <i>Stage 3: Review</i> , where learners have to evaluate their own video.
6. A task has a clearly defined communicative outcome.	The workplan stipulates the non-linguistic predicted outcome of the task (the product of the activity for learners, e.g. a poster). The predicted product can be open (several possibilities accepted) or closed (one correct solution only).	The predicted outcome or product of this particular task is a self-made video where the learners introduce themselves with the intention of uploading it onto <i>YouTube</i> (although this is ultimately the learner's choice). The form of the product is determined (and thus closed) from the outset, but the audiovisual content of the product is to be determined by the learners (i.e., open).

**Table 2: Criterial features of the task**

Having looked at the task in this section, let us now turn to the participants in the study.

#### 4.5 The participants

The sample of participants (full-time undergraduate students aged 20-26 with at least an intermediate level of English) was *opportunistic* in that it consisted of learners who volunteered to take part in the study after being offered the chance to do so. In the data collection period, some of the participants were my students in general English-language courses (Isabella and Núria; pilot study), other participants were my former students (learners A, B, C, D, F and G) while the remainder had not met me before (learners J, M, S and T). Participants were business, digital arts and engineering students. Out of the 12 participants, only two participants were male, which reflects the fact that women are in the majority in the business and digital arts programmes that contributed most participants to the study (seven; compared to five engineering students). Further information on the learners who took part in the study has been included in *Appendix 3* (p. 283). Technical details regarding the process of data collection and analysis appear in *Appendix 6* (p. 393).

#### 4.6 Ethics

Ethical principles were taken into account in the process of designing and conducting the research study. Initially the project had to be designed to conform to ethical standards set by the OU. Institutional consent was given and the OU's Human Research Ethics Committee and the Data Protection Office granted approval in 2009, before the start of the study. Subsequently, all participants signed the relevant British Educational Research Association

(BERA)-compliant consent forms (see *Appendix 1*, p. 280). Amongst other features, the consent forms included options for participants to opt out of the project at any point, have their data destroyed if they so wanted and refer their complaints to third parties.

Throughout the study the researcher became aware of deeper ethical issues, such as conducting experiments with former students, the sensitivities of young learners and the possibility of private disclosure during interviews. In this regard, special care went into dealing with participants who had been the researcher's regular students by explaining in writing and face-to-face that no part of the research would affect their activities or assessment at the institution. Although learners had been told that they were being video recorded (as well as audio recorded) during the experiment, some were not aware of this. When asked about their feelings about it in SR sessions, the participants insisted that they did not mind not knowing about it at the time because knowing would have made them more self-conscious. Additionally, some sensitive personal data obtained from one participant during a SR session was eliminated. The participant in question was contacted several times to discuss this issue until reassurances were obtained that the person was satisfied with the way the data was presented. References to names made by participants that could help readers identify the participants were deleted. Passwords used by participants in the study were also deleted. To date there is no knowledge of complaints raised or harm caused by the study.



#### 4.7 Research methods

This section deals with methods used for collection and preparation of data. The study involved the individual learners engaging with the CALL task during the experiment (henceforth referred to as ‘the task’ or ‘the experiment’) on 5 and 10 November 2009 (pilot study; n=2) and on several dates in September–November 2010 (main study; n=10), with the SR sessions following a day later (pilot study), a few hours later (in one case in the main study) or days later (up to 15 days later in the main study). Following Gass and Mackey’s advice (2000) SR sessions were conducted as soon as possible after the event; unfortunately, the ideal 48-hour lapse suggested by the authors could not be kept in most cases due to the lack of availability of the participants whose unpaid, volunteer status in the project did not make smaller intervals possible.

The research methods used were essentially qualitative. Participant observation was the primary data source, reflecting an interest in learners and what they said and did during their learning activity. Such observation included several data collection methods:

- (a) recordings of on-screen computer activity in video format (including learner input and output), which will be referred to as *computer tracking* or *computer tracking recordings* henceforth
- (b) audiovisual recordings of learner behaviour (both body movements and utterances) during the experiment, which also captured background noise and movements around the learner, and during stimulated recall (SR) sessions (see below)

henceforth called *experiment video, stimulated recall or SR video or video recording(s)*

(c) researcher notes with comments based on observations, henceforth called *researcher comments*.

The rationale behind using such methods was consistent with wanting to focus on the process, rather than on the product of the learning activity and to set the stage for “the unexpected [to] emerge” (Holliday 2008).

As for the *SR* sessions (Gass and Mackey 2000) held with each individual participant after they completed the experiment and used as a retrospective tool, these became essential for data triangulation purposes and also because “subjects may not be aware of the object of the activity until it has been transformed into an outcome. The awareness of the actual object of the collective activity is often gained through a retrospective analysis of the subject’s own practice” (Blin 2004: 383).

Having used *SR* before (Montoro 1996), I had some experience of its benefits and limitations as an elicitation instrument. Again, a concern with the learners and their learning experience motivated this choice of method, as *SR* aims to gather data that comes from the participants as they reflect on their own task performance. Gass and Mackey (2000) define this technique as “one subset of a range of introspective methods that represent a means of eliciting data about thought processes involved in carrying out a task or activity” (2000: 1).

During SR sessions, learners were presented with a recall stimulus in the form of the video recording of their participation in the experiment after the event and they were asked to reflect on their behaviour, motivations, thought processes, and strategic decisions in conversation with the researcher as both watched the video in its entirety, pausing when it was necessary. The sessions were only audio recorded in the pilot study but were then video recorded in the main study as audio data was considered insufficient, bearing in mind that the participants were watching and constantly referring to the video recording of the experiment and seeing (as opposed to just listening to) what they were watching and referring to became essential in the main study for data analysis purposes. Both the participants and the researcher were free to stop the video recording at any point to make comments. The sessions were conducted in the learners' native language (Spanish), although their words appear translated into English in this thesis.

It is relevant to note that SR has not been used widely in relation to oral production tasks such as the one used in this study. Reading, writing and testing tasks, for instance, have been subjected to SR more frequently. Cohen and Olshtain (1993), Dörnyei and Kormos (1998), and Mackey et al. (2000) are some of the few who have used SR to gather participant data on oral production performance. No studies could be found where SR had been used in e-learning or self-access contexts for research purposes, although Levy and Kennedy (2004) have used it under the name of *stimulated reflection* for teaching and learning purposes.

An alternative to SR is the think-aloud protocol, where learners verbalise their activity as it happens. It was discarded from the very beginning of this study for four main reasons: (a) it

may have prolonged the duration of the experiment excessively, as speaking about what one does slows down performance, (b) it may have interfered with naturally-occurring private speech, one of the research interests of this study; (c) it required participant training, which could not guarantee that participants would manage to engage in it successfully; and (d) it was almost impossible for participants to carry out a speaking activity – such as the one used in this study – whilst providing a running commentary of what was being done (Gass and Mackey 2000).

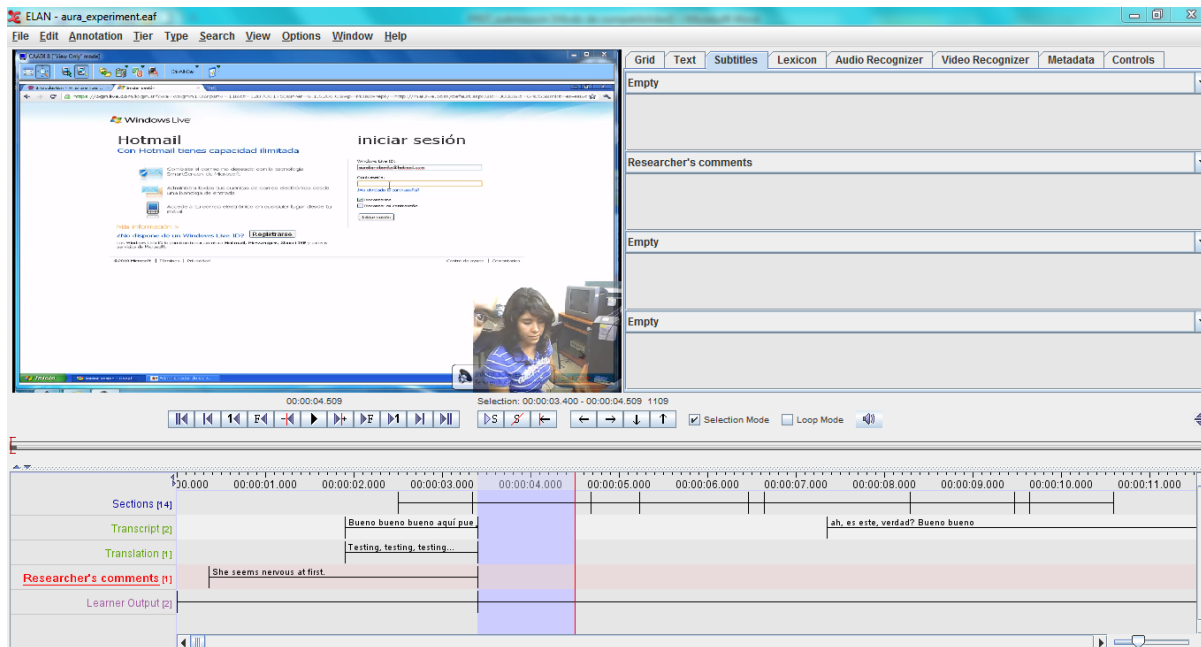
The researcher also kept an online research diary (an OU research blog that included private and public entries) to record details of the entire research process from beginning to end of the EdD programme, although the diary has not been used as a source of data in this thesis.

In line with the research agenda and theoretical framework, the study has constantly combined reading, analysing, writing and reviewing. Periodic written reports typical of this EdD programme forced me to engage in a “submission to detail” which occasionally endowed me with a certain degree of “stranger viewpoint” (Holliday 2008).

#### **4.7.1 Preparing the data**

Let us turn now to a short reflection on the experience of preparing the data for analysis. Unexpectedly, data preparation was not smooth. This was mainly due to the need to have efficient access (in a single digital space) to all the layers of data, including raw data (such as video recordings and computer tracking of participant input, output and reflections), transcripts, translations and researcher comments for both the experiment and the SR

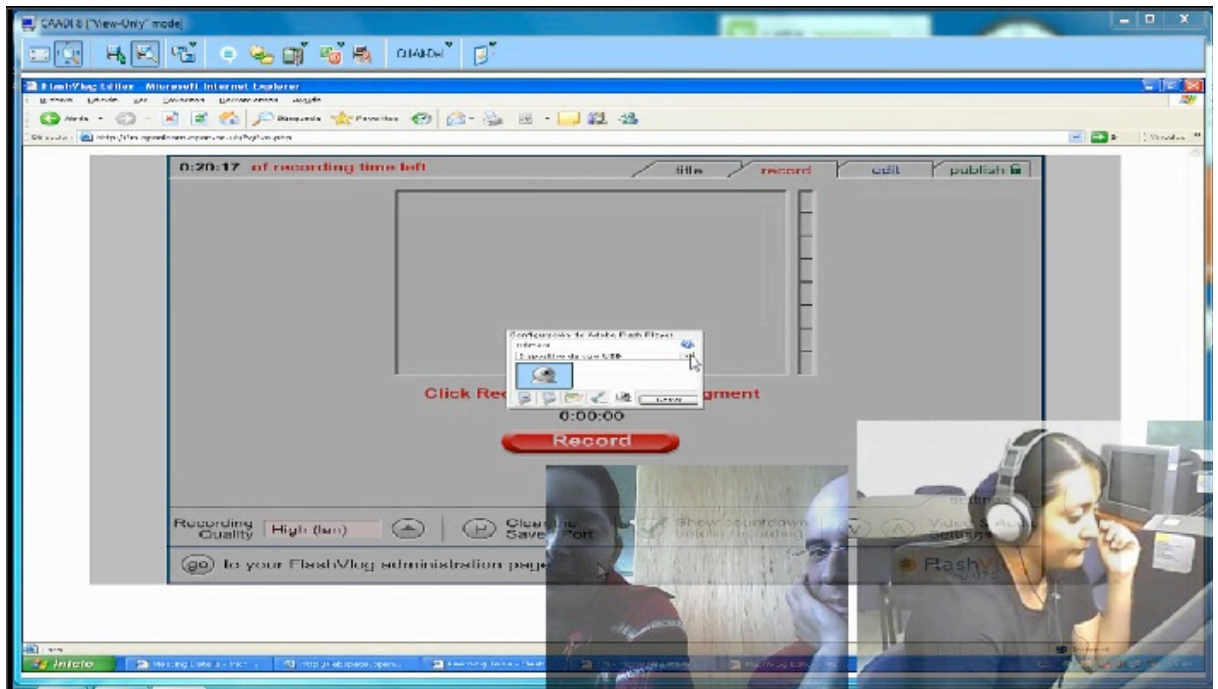
sessions. Regular text and tables in a word processor proved unsuitable in the initial stages of data preparation (but useful when doing data analysis later). *Atlas.ti* did not have the features to achieve this in an ideal form either, due to video data limitations. Some time was invested trying to subtitle and annotate videos using *Camtasia* too but the process was too time-consuming. Eventually, a potentially suitable software tool was found: *Elan*, from the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics. The results were positive almost from the start as the application allowed the researcher to have all the above-mentioned layers of data (video and text) on screen simultaneously and on a useful timeline that allowed viewing and searching at ease. *Fig. 11* below (p. 88) is a screenshot showing how *Elan* was used in the study.



**Figure 11: Using Elan to prepare data**

In *Fig. 11* (p. 88), the box on the top left shows the video feed being analysed (featuring the computer tracking recording across the box and the video recording in the bottom right corner), the tiers of analysis (where transcripts, translations and comments were written) below the line of video-control buttons and the various data viewing tools on the top right section of the window.

Finally, the question remained as to how the SR video could be integrated with the experiment data shown in *Fig. 11* above (p. 88). Fortunately, *Camtasia* also provided a solution for this that allowed the results shown in *Fig. 12* below (p. 89).



**Figure 12: Screenshot of three video feeds integrated into a single video file**

*Fig. 12* (p. 89) shows the computer tracking source in the background across the whole window, the video recording of the experiment in the bottom right corner and the SR video to its left. Once this video file was obtained, the data was prepared using *Elan* in a similar fashion as that shown in *Fig. 11* above (p. 88).

Regrettably, data analysis could not be conducted in the *Elan* environment because it was not possible to handle the large number of data categories required effectively. Thus, once prepared (in other words, transcribed and translated) data was conveniently extracted from *Elan* and transferred to *Word* documents in table format to be analysed. Details regarding the process of categorising data appear in *Chapter 5*.

#### **4.7.2 From the pilot study to the main study**

This section covers a number of issues encountered in the pilot study, mostly related to technology, and how these impacted on the design of the main study. Let us start with the issues found initially when recording from two different sources (i.e., computer tracking and video recording) using two different software applications, and playing the recordings later using two different media players (as any one of the most popular media player applications cannot be opened twice simultaneously on a single computer). Somehow either the recordings were recorded at different speeds or the media players played them at different speeds, making it impossible to view the recordings simultaneously in synch. What is more, each individual file had the audio and video streams out of synch (possibly due to compression issues).

These problems were partly related to software issues. For instance, *CamStudio* (an open-source computer tracking application used in the piloting stages) could not record the images from the window where learners were recording their presentations using *VirtualVCR* (another open-source application used in the pilot study). This added up to the recording and viewing problems. The solution for the main study was to use *Camtasia*, a robust commercial application that allowed running both computer tracking and video recording simultaneously, rendering a single video file with two windows on the screen showing both feeds in perfect synch, free of video and audio streaming synching problems too (for further analysis of computer tracking solutions, see Levy and Kennedy 2004; video data issues are discussed by Bødker 1996).

Secondly, during the pilot study, being at the Reception Desk area of the self-access centre proved to be less than ideal, because I was busy dealing with staff and users, unable to respond to the participants' requests timely and being distracted from the teaching and research duties I should have been concentrating on.

Another lesson learnt during the pilot study was the need to look at all the experiment data before engaging in the SR session with the learners. Although the entire recordings were watched during the SR sessions with the learners, it was harder to notice certain aspects of the data that required a lot of attention to pick up on there and then. Significant efforts were therefore made in the main study to watch everything ahead of the SR sessions.



On the positive side, the experience of using the SR method in the pilot study was very promising. Indeed, this play-within-a-play format proved to be at least partly responsible for a great level of attention to detail and a multi-layered kind of analysis that almost inevitably and 'effortlessly' rendered rich and complex data in the main study.

The only change made in relation to the stimulated-recall sessions was to replace audio recordings of the sessions with video recordings, more suited to the multiple references both the learner and the researcher made to the video.

Further changes included moving from *Blackboard* to *Moodle*. This transition from the local VLE used in the pilot study to an external one used in the main study was motivated by a desire to curb the connectivity<sup>4</sup> and unreliability issues observed when piloting. The results were only partially satisfactory because linking to an external VLE had its own problems associated with it. Firstly, perhaps rather naively, the expectation was that connectivity issues would disappear. Far from it, the remoteness of the new VLE not only did little to alleviate the slow connection experienced by the learners; it also brought about a time-out problem that prevented some learners from logging into the VLE altogether. This issue was discussed with IT staff at the OU but could not be resolved. Not being able to log in had severe implications as the new learning environment had a new set of password-protected learning support tools associated with it. In principle, *FlashMeeting* and *Vlog*, the

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<sup>4</sup> Oddly, connectivity problems, which significantly affected technology-mediated learning in the context of this study, are not mentioned as an obstacle for the implementation of ICT in education by relevant authors such as Pelgrum (2001), Bax (2003) or Levy (1997). Authors who do mention unequal geopolitical access to ICT include Castells (2004); van Dijk (2005); and Warschauer (2003).

*OpenLearn's* native videoconferencing system and video blogging tool, held great technological potential. Unfortunately, if learners were not logged in to the VLE, these could not be used. As a result, a new set of tools had to be improvised, namely *Skype*, a proprietary videoconferencing application, and the free version of *IMCapture for Skype*, an add-on to *Skype* that allowed making video recordings of the *Skype* video feed and therefore was a good alternative to *Vlog*, with which learners were expected to record their video presentation. Further to this, the migration to *OpenLearn* was used to simplify the task by including a menu to help participants navigate through the various sections, learning outcomes to inform the participants about the task's goals and generally reducing the amount of content and its complexity in the various sections.

Further technical details regarding the equipment and software used in the study have been included in *Appendix 6* (p. 392) for the benefit of those readers who might be interested.

#### **4.7.3 Transcription conventions**

Before turning to *Chapter 5*, some details will be provided regarding conventions used in the transcripts included in this thesis. Bearing in mind that the purpose of the data transcripts is to shed light on the research focus and questions (mainly related to learner behaviour and learning activity), data has been transcribed in the plainest possible way to include all the relevant words and actions of the learners as they interact with the computer and the language learning task. Thus, the words uttered by the learners and the teacher during the experiment (E) and the stimulated recall (SR) session that followed appear in a regular font

with no emphasis of any kind, preceded by the initial of the learner<sup>5</sup> (e.g., 'A' for learner A) or that of the teacher (i.e., 'T' for teacher). Learner output has been kept unedited (no corrections have been made) to allow the reader to see the language production in the task 'as is'. Because of a primary interest in private speech, anything other than spoken words (e.g., typed words) appears in parentheses in the transcripts. That includes computer-related events such as typing (preceded by a keyboard  icon; when relevant, typed words are included too in single quotation marks), clicking, selecting and other mouse-related events (marked with a mouse  icon) and more general interactions with the software and the hardware (e.g., moving the camera and copying and pasting); gestures (e.g., pointing and gesturing at the computer), non-verbal cues (e.g., laughing and gasping), facial expressions (e.g., smiling and frowning), gaze (e.g., looking somewhere other than the computer screen) and body language (e.g., posture). When the participants' native Spanish language was used this is indicated in the translation by shading the text background in light grey; a white background in the transcript signals that English was being used.

For every particular disturbance (i.e., deviation in learner behaviour from the teacher-designer's expected course of action), the sequence in the transcript is chronological to provide the reader with a linear narrative of events at the time. The time code referring to the moment when the data excerpt started and ended is provided in an hours-minutes-seconds-milliseconds format (hh:mm:ss.msmsms – hh:mm:ss.msmsms) preceded by the

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<sup>5</sup> Pseudonyms, instead of initials, were used in the pilot study to refer to participants (see *Appendix 3*, p. 283) and these have been kept in this thesis to be consistent with what was reported in Montoro and Hampel (2011).

initial L (for learner) and the learner's initial (e.g., A) followed by a hyphen plus E (for experiment data) or SR (for stimulated recall data). For instance, "LA-E 00:00:00.000–00.13.56.600" refers to a data segment for learner A gathered during the experiment starting at the beginning of the experiment and finishing 13 minutes 56 seconds and 600 milliseconds into the experiment. These times refer to points in the video data in relation to the overall duration of the data file in question. No attempt has been made to include time codes for every utterance or event transcribed from the data as that kind of level of detail was deemed unnecessary. Nor has there been any attempt at matching *all* the experiment data with *all* the SR data in the transcript for two main reasons, namely (a) the experiment video used as a stimulus in any given SR session was not watched running uninterruptedly as the learner and the teacher were free to stop, pause, fastforward or rewind the feed at any time; and (b) comments in the SR session do not necessarily tally with what is happening on the video screen at all times (for instance, the participants may occasionally be discussing issues not related to the video feed of the experiment or they may be referring to things that happened earlier or later during the experiment). Nonetheless, whenever possible, references made to a particular section of the experiment video data in the SR session appear in a column that is adjacent to the transcript of the experiment data. A third column includes preliminary comments the researcher made when looking at the video data of the experiment for the first time, normally ahead of the SR session, and subsequent observations preceded by the date when they were written. Data transcripts for each learner are headed with details about the date when data was collected and the duration of the data collection session.

Single quotation marks (‘’) have been used when a single word or word cluster was used in the native Spanish language while speaking English and the translation has been provided in square brackets (e.g., How do you say ‘empanizado’ [coated in breadcrumbs]?). Single quotation marks (‘’) have also been used to quote text from the screen, be it input text (e.g., Clicks on the word ‘Next’) or, as said earlier, output text (e.g., She types: ‘about interpersonal relationships, and some background about myself’). Double quotation marks (“”) have been used when direct speech is being quoted in conversation (e.g., I said: “Where is the link?”).

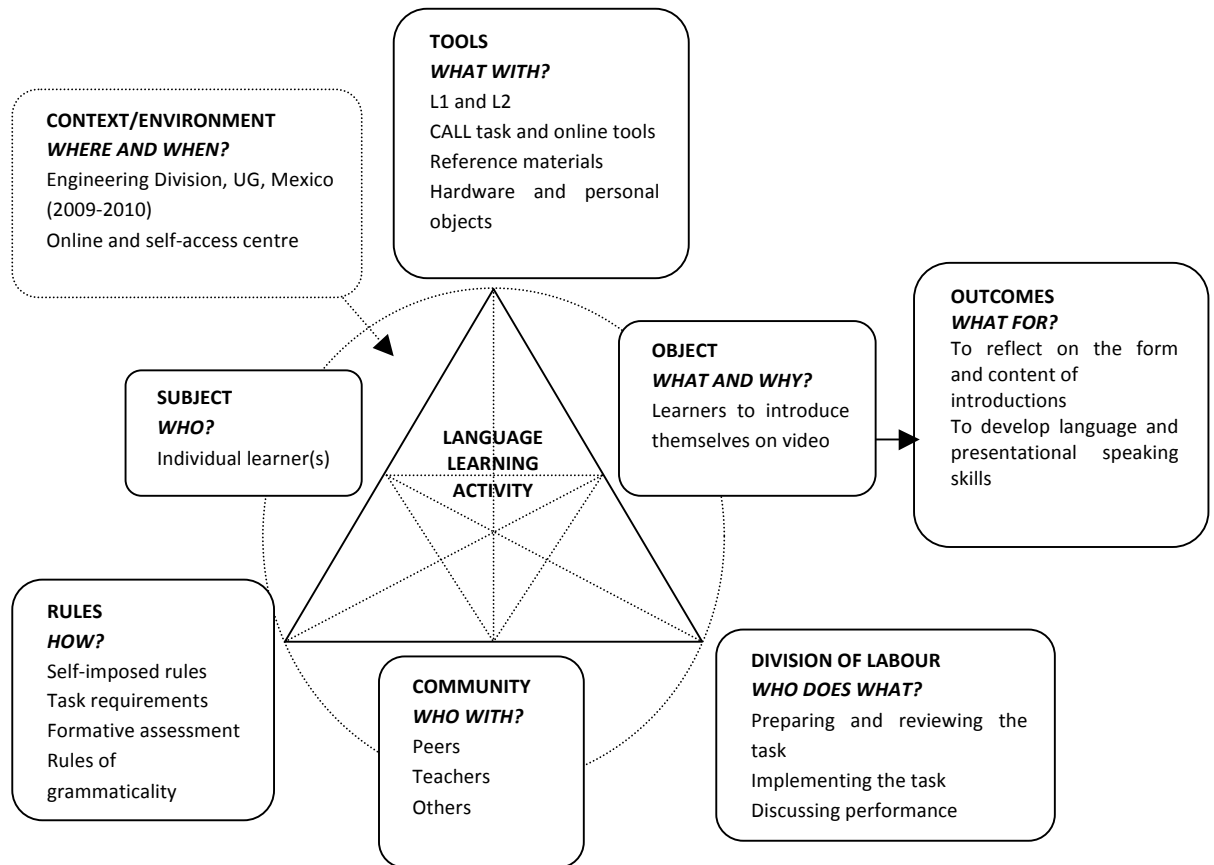
Learner output has been transcribed ‘raw’, that is, without editing grammatical mistakes, to offer the reader the chance to see what the learners actually said and wrote, which is particularly significant given the language learning focus of the study. Where mistakes might have impeded understanding, an edited version of what the learner was likely to be trying to say has been provided in square brackets ([]).

Full data transcripts for three learners (learners A, B and F) have been included in *Appendix 5* (p. 291).

#### **4.8 Modelling the language learning activity system**

Following on from the discussion on general ways of modelling a typical language learning activity system included in *Chapter 3* above (see *Fig. 6* and *Fig. 7*, pp. 58 and 60), this section presents a specific model of the language learning activity system (see *Fig. 13* below, p. 97) linked to the CALL task used in this study and accompanying resources available to the

learners. As shown by Blin and Appel (2011), the model is a key analytical tool to be used in the process of applying activity theory to the study and it is referred to again in *Chapter 6*.



**Figure 13: The language learning activity system of the study**

As presented in *Fig. 13* above (p. 97), the *subject* of the learning activity was each individual learner that took part in it. As for the *object*, the specific goal set for the learners was to introduce themselves on video in English. Several *tools* or *mediating artefacts* were available in this particular case, such as the computer, linguistic forms, the CALL task, online and physical dictionaries as well as other self-access tools and resources. Support was available within the *community* in the form of teacher chat-based and face-to-face support, and peer

support (both using electronic devices, such as the computer or the mobile phone, and face-to-face in the self-access centre). There were a number of *rules* in place when the study was conducted, such as time-limits (1:30-2:00 hours to complete the task), affordances of the self-access and online environments, societal conventions that apply to introductions and the grammaticality of the language used. The *community* consisted of the teacher, peers and others. Other individuals, such as stakeholders, IT and self-access centre staff and the institution's management are not considered a part of the learning community at this stage. This will be discussed later on in the thesis (see *Chapter 6*). Additionally, imaginary English-speaking interlocutors (for instance, *YouTube* viewers) may also have been present as the intended audience and thus could be considered as part of the *community* in the minds of the learners, affecting their behaviour and performance during the learning activity. The *division of labour*, on a basic level, involved the teacher designing the task in advance, setting up the necessary software and hardware and being available during the task to provide support and after it to give feedback and discuss performance with the learners; the learners had to complete the task; peers could provide support if needed. The expected *outcome* of the activity consisted of a set of learning outcomes including noticing and preparing relevant content and form, developing language and presentational oral skills by rehearsing and delivering a presentation and reviewing it. Let us now turn to the unit of analysis in the study.

#### 4.8.1 Unit of analysis

The choice of a language learning activity system as the unit of analysis in the study can be justified at three different levels. First, ontologically, the choice of activity theory as the study's theoretical framework was made to address the main research interest regarding the nature of the language learning activity on the basis of its potential suitability advocated by authors in CALL (Arnold and Ducate 2011; Lantolf and Poehner 2004; Chapelle 2001; Levy and Stockwell 2006; Blin 2005, 2010; Blin and Appel 2011), CAL (Scanlon and Issroff 2005) and HCI (Kaptelinin and Nardi 2006; Kuutti 1996; Mwanza 2002). Once the choice was made, activity-theoretical principles and concepts were upheld to keep the study theoretically consistent.

Secondly, epistemologically, the ultimate aim was to reveal findings at a macro level (i.e., systemic contradictions). A different focus on (mediated or situated) action could potentially have limited the analysis to a meso level (see *Fig. 2*, p. 51), that is, learner interaction.

An alternative approach would have been to take the task as the unit of analysis but, as task design was not the main research interest, focusing on the learning tool itself was considered too limiting and therefore ruled out.

Thirdly, methodologically, a number of choices were made to serve the overriding purpose of the study. Although these involved looking at the task, mediated actions and context (situational factors) in detail, these elements were not the final objective and as a result decisions were made (e.g., in terms of the analytical tools and categories used) that



reflected the fact that, ultimately, characterising the overall learning activity was a priority (for more details on differences between activity theory, situated action and distributed cognition and their units of analysis see Nardi 1996a).

Finally, as shown in *Chapter 3*, although the general language learning activity at the local institution remains the research focus, for the purposes of analysis the unit of analysis is limited to the language learning activity system linked to the CALL task used in the study, that is, a particular instantiation of a typical language learning activity system (see *Fig. 6* above, p. 58) modelled in *Fig. 7* (p. 60). As such, a clear limitation is the fact that only interaction during a one-off two-hour session using the set CALL task was involved, rather than a whole module or course. Such a short-time scale (unchanged from the pilot to the main study) has been criticised by some authors (e.g., Lemke 2001), although others, such as Barab, Hay and Yamagata-Lynch (2001) have also adopted a single event as their main source of data, albeit using a different research approach. Although time constraints did not allow for a longitudinal study, the whole research endeavour was rooted in the belief that the learning activity would be complex, dynamic and embedded in history. Thus, the single sessions analysed have been considered as inseparable from their historical roots, which were traced back in two ways: (a) through SR conversations held with each individual participant where some questions raised broader issues to do with the learners' histories and their wider sociocultural trajectory and (b) by conducting a cultural-historical analysis of the local institution where the study was held. Further, focusing on the activity system itself was a way of setting it in its historical context, both by taking into account how the activity is

shaped by past experiences and how it might shape the course of future activity. In short, this study was conceived from a developmental perspective because it assumed that learners develop as they go along their educational experiences (White 2005). Even more to the point, the inclusion for data collection purposes of a *formative experiment* in the Vygotskian sense reflected the assumption that the nature of the activity and participating in it may determine developmental changes in the research participants. Yet, the potential to see development in the activity over time remained limited and the comparability with other studies where courses or modules were analysed (e.g., Blin and Appel 2011) was restricted.

The research design and implementation in this particular setting (12 students engaging individually with a CALL task) necessarily meant that the unit of analysis was an activity system made up of a collection of instantiations bound by the circumstances and conditions of the local context. The main source of data came from moment-to-moment interactions between the learner and the CALL task and thus an entry point to data analysis consisted of segments of data, complete in terms of meaning, consistency and coherence, where one or more disturbances (i.e., deviations in learner behaviour from the language teacher-designer's expectations; Montoro and Hampel 2011: 124) could be observed. It is perhaps worth mentioning at this point that Engeström and Sannino's (2011) concept of disturbances from organizational studies had to be adapted because in this particular study the juxtaposition of learner behaviour and teacher-designer expectations as reflected in the task is more relevant than the concept of scripts (see *Chapter 3*, p. 45 for details).

#### 4.8.2 Categorization and segmentation of data

Data analysis in this study was challenging because of the extensive data transcripts handled. From the early stages of data analysis it became clear that new categories emerging from the data had to be considered and that further intermediary tools or concepts would be required before attempting to identify contradictions in the activity system. Thus, the need for a multi-layered type of analysis became clear. Initially, the most obvious traits of the learning activity were analysed by inspecting the experiment video data and writing some preliminary notes. Next, during SR sessions, efforts were made to reflect about deeper issues related to the overall activity in collaboration with each of the learners. Constant movements forwards and backwards from the data to the literature were made during private study and supervision meetings, discussions with colleagues and researchers, at research forums, at conferences and during research visits (including three short-term visits and one long-term visit to the OU in the UK and a three-month stay at Yrjö Engeström's CRADLE Research Centre in Finland). Writing and rewriting conference and forum presentations and two academic articles also helped in this process. Half-way through the doctoral programme a cultural-historical analysis of the institution and its context was also conducted (see *Chapter 6*); full and abridged versions of the cultural-historical analysis were written, although they have not been published yet.

As the data was transcribed in rough form, the concept of *disturbances*<sup>6</sup> (i.e., deviations in learner behaviour from the language teacher-designer's expectations; Montoro and Hampel 2011: 124) was then used to create 15 initial data categories or 'dimensions'. These dimensions were in turn analysed to find larger groups of data categories initially referred to as 'clusters'. At this stage, three problems were encountered. Firstly, the number of 'dimensions' was insufficient to cover the increasing number of categories that were emerging. Secondly, trying to map clusters onto parts of the activity system proved to be fruitless and frustrating at this stage due to the shifting nature of the interconnected relationships between the various elements in the system. Finally, initial attempts to present all 'dimensions' in binary terms as either 'having' or 'not having' a certain attribute were more cumbersome and confusing than helpful.

Therefore, a number of decisions were made resulting in a new classification (see *Table 4* below, p. 109). The number of dimensions was increased to 23 and the idea of clusters mapped onto elements of the activity system was abandoned in favour of concentrating on *processes* operating within the system (see *Chapter 5* for further details on data categories). One thing remained unchanged, though, that is, the focus on the language learning activity as the unit of analysis. Lastly, the study addressed the task of going deeper, looking at the essence and the systemic root causes of what was observable in the language learning activity. This deeper kind of analysis, conducted making use of the concept of *contradictions*,

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<sup>6</sup> The nature of the data available in this study (not conceived as an intervention) did not make it possible to find a range of external manifestations of contradictions (e.g., conflicts, dilemmas, double binds). Therefore, all manifestations have been classed generically as disturbances, that is, as deviations and variations from the expected norm.

is accounted for in chapter, *Chapter 6*. Ultimately as one of the generalisability aims of this study was to provide analytical tools that can be further developed in subsequent studies, future studies in this local context and elsewhere are expected to explore the processes and dimensions presented here or new ones to advance this area of research further.

In short, the process of analysis has been multi-layered, shifting the focus from (a) analysing disturbance-related phenomena observed after preparing and reviewing all the ten available data sets at a micro level to (b) connecting those segments of disturbance-related data to the relevant processes in the activity system that seem to be primarily affected at a meso level and, eventually, (c) digging for macro-level systemic contradictions that the data may be revealing.

The study does not make claims about a general, cross-cultural and all-encompassing language learning activity system. In fact, the relationship between the language learning activity system of the modelled CALL task and the general language learning activity within the institution is tenuous, as shown elsewhere in this thesis, because there is virtually no online language learning in place to speak of, as VLEs are currently only used as repositories of learning materials if used at all. Instead, one of the study's expected outcomes is to provide reliable information to pave the way for the future development of online distance language learning courses at a local level. The study is seen as a stepping-stone in the direction of creating the right conditions for a new form of language learning activity to emerge. In this spirit, despite a data collection and analysis focus on the interaction between the learner and the task at hand, the study attempted to make connections with wider

sociocultural issues (e.g., peer support and transfer of digital routines) that expanded the physical boundaries beyond the self-access centre and online environment where the participants operated during the experiment.

It could be argued that the activity under investigation is seen excessively from the perspective of the teacher rather than that of the learners. This is indeed a limitation acknowledged in various sections of the thesis. Although some efforts have been made to counteract this (e.g., through transparency and detailed SR sessions), it is also clear that future studies (based on third generation activity theory) should model the teaching activity too, compare the learning and the teaching systems and actively seek discrepancies between learner expectations and the actual design of the task, to name but one possible strategy.

#### **4.9 Conclusion**

This chapter has concentrated on the challenges faced in the process of transferring the activity-theoretical framework to its practical implementation in the study. Various methodological strategies and methods used to harness the potential of the theory have been described, such as modelling the activity system, using this activity system as the unit of analysis (and discussing its limitations) and conducting a cultural-historical analysis and focusing on the learners. It has been argued that although the study involved an analysis of a single language learning event, this is viewed in its sociocultural and historical context as a stepping-stone towards the development of future research projects of higher calibre. Data

collection methods, such as the task used in the experiment and the subsequent SR sessions, have been described. Particular emphasis has been placed upon technical difficulties (mainly related to managing video data) and unresolved connectivity issues, and how these were dealt with, the value of SR (underused in studies involving oral tasks in online and self-access environments) and the runaway nature of the object in the activity system. Finally, all transcription conventions are accounted for. The level of detail provided is considerable in some instances in an effort to provide transparency, useful information for other interested researchers and rigour to the thesis.

## CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

This chapter consists of three main parts: (a) the classification and description of disturbances (divided into processes and dimensions) found in the data; (b) a general overview of data analysis of the whole 10 data sets available (learners A, B, C, D, F, G, J, M, S, T), including patterns of learner behaviour, and (c) a qualitative in-depth data analysis of two cases (learners A and F). But first, a reminder of the research questions under investigation appears.

### 5.1 Research questions

1. What is the nature of the language learning activity system of individual learners using online tasks in this local context?
  - a. What are the main elements and processes involved in the activity?
  - b. What are the main disturbances affecting elements and processes?
  
2. What are the systemic contradictions affecting the language learning activity?
  - a. How are external manifestations (disturbances) linked to systemic contradictions?
  - b. In what ways are these contradictions the driving force determining the orientation and outcome of the language learning activity?



## 5.2 Classification and description of disturbances

The concept of *disturbances* has been borrowed from the field of organisational studies (Engeström and Sannino 2011) to be used in this study of language learning activity as a key analytical tool that can be defined as “deviations in learner behaviour from the language teacher-designer’s expected course of events” (Montoro and Hampel 2011: 124). In other words, the focus is on variations between what the teacher planned and what learners did. Thus, learner behaviour may exceed or not meet prior expectations of the teacher-designer in relation to certain attributes called *dimensions*. For instance, in this study the teacher-designer expected learners to adhere to the task, that is, to follow the task’s sequence and instructions at least to some extent. When they skipped whole sections or ignored instructions, this has been considered to constitute a disturbance. Notice that both teacher-designer’s expectations and learner behaviour can be anywhere along the continuum of a given dimension. This provides a combination of flexibility and analytical power that is highly advantageous for the researcher.

*Table 4* below (p. 109) includes all the final categories used to analyse the disturbance-related segments of data. For the sake of clarity, disturbances have been classified according to 23 dimensions that, in turn, belong to six processes within the learning activity system. Process 4 (mediation by tools) has been divided into seven subprocesses to account for the richness and variety of data related to actions mediated by the use of tools.

Processes		Dimensions
1. Mediation by self through private speech		1. Inner speech – private speech
2. Mediation by others in social interaction		2. Peer support – peer problems
		3. Teacher support – teacher problems
		4. Support from others – problems with others
3. Mediation by language		5. Language learning opportunities – language learning problems
		6. Focus on meaning – focus on form
		7. L1 – L2
4. Mediation by tools	4.1 Tool = computer	8. Transfer of digital routines
	4.2 Tool = recording device	9. Technological affordances
		10. Listening to music while speaking to camera
		11. Delaying tactics
		12. Being camera-shy
	4.3 Tool = notes	13. False starts
	4.4 Tool = dictionary	14. Mental notes – written notes
	4.5 Tool = feedback	15. Using a dictionary
4.6 Tool = transcript	16. Using feedback	
4.7 Tool = task	17. Using the video transcript	
5. Orientation		18. Adhering to the task
		19. Language learning orientation
		20. Success – failure
		21. Time pressure
6. Personal development		22. Searching - finding
		23. Personal development opportunities – personal development issues

**Table 4: Classification of disturbances**

Since disturbances have the potential to be manifestations of deeper systemic contradictions affecting the language learning activity, the analysis of the above disturbances presented in this chapter will feed into a subsequent interpretation of deeper systemic contradictions revealed (see *Chapter 6*).

*Description of disturbances*

The disturbances can be described as follows:

*Process 1: Mediation by self through private speech.* This process concerns movements along a continuum that has several parallel dimensions, namely individual–society, intrapsychological–interpsychological, internalisation–externalisation and inner speech–social speech where private speech acts as a “proxy for social talk” (Ellis 2003: 178; see also Vygotsky 1978) mediating processes to and from, backwards and forwards, between both ends of the scale (Vygotsky 1987; see *Chapter 2*). This process fits in well with the concept of ‘mediation by self through private speech’ suggested by Ellis (2003: 176) as it can mediate learning and facilitate the formation of new knowledge (Ellis 2003, Ohta 2001 and Esteve et al. 2003).

*Dimension 1: Inner speech – private speech.* In this particular study, the assumption was that learners would use some private speech. Data segments of learners spending a considerable amount of time or none of the time using private speech during the experiment were considered to be unexpected and classed as disturbances.

*Process 2: Mediation by others in social interaction.* Even though learners were meant to work on the task mostly alone, the opportunities and constraints afforded by their social interaction before, during and after the task played an important role and influenced the way learners behaved in significant ways. Evidence has been found of disturbances affecting their relationships with peers, the teacher and other people. This process is potentially significant because the triangle subject-object-community is the basis of any learning activity (Blin 2004 quoting Kuuti 1996).

*Dimension 2: Peer support – peer problems.* Interaction with peers (in the self-access centre and elsewhere) has a significant impact on learners. Peers such as (boy or girl) friends, family members and fellow students of a similar age, through social interaction, can support learners in their learning or in their general wellbeing. Conversely, when problems arise, these relationships can upset learners to the point of blocking their ability to learn or function normally. Any evidence of this kind of impact has been considered a disturbance worthy of detailed analysis.

*Dimension 3: Teacher support – teacher problems.* Some participants, as soon as they encountered a problem, asked for online support from the teacher, whilst others did not do so at any point during the experiment. These ‘extreme’ reactions have been analysed as disturbances. On the other hand, conflict caused by the teacher is seen in the same light.

*Dimension 4: Support from others – problems with others.* Occasionally, social encounters or relationships with others (people who are older and may hold a position of power, such as older family members and other members of society, but excluding teachers) may influence learners and their behaviour. For instance, problems at home may force learners to behave in a more or less conscientious manner; alternatively, involvement in a social group can provide an unexpected opportunity to practise English.

*Process 3. Mediation by language.* This process is particularly important on several accounts. Firstly, this type of mediation is related to Vygotsky’s (1978) belief that human development owes much to the use of language (signs) as a psychological tool to regulate one’s own

activity. Secondly, the fact that the object of the activity under investigation is the English language makes language (input, output and mediation) all the more important. Thirdly, the fact that in the language learning activity language is not only a learning instrument but also the object of the activity makes this education activity unique.

*Dimension 5: Language learning opportunities – language learning problems.* Opportunities and problems that emerged in the study provided rare insights into particular learners' struggles as they attempted to develop their linguistic ability, especially those that pointed to the formation of an incipient zone of proximal development for the learner. The focus here is on instances that relate to linguistic skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) or language areas (vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) not to support or tool use, for example, which have been included in other relevant dimensions.

*Dimension 6: Focus on meaning – focus on form.* A disturbance classed under this dimension relates to learners who tend to focus heavily on either meaning or form (or both), in a way that seems unbalanced and tends to produce undesired results, such as anxiety or substandard English. Some repetitive or unproductive learner self-corrections, hesitations and decisions (i.e., those where the fluency of the activity is considerably disturbed) had not been predicted and are therefore classed as disturbances.

*Dimension 7: L1 – L2.* Although code-switching between L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) is not the focus of this study, events related to code-switching that disrupted the normal course of events are treated as disturbances and analysed in search of their potential significance.

*Process 4: Mediation by tools.* The amount of data included in this process suggests the prevalence of mediation by cultural artefacts inherent in all human activity, not least the language learning activity. In this case, the attention shifts from psychological tools to actual digital and physical tools. Some tool-mediation disturbances concern learner-generated tools (i.e., notes), whilst others relate to external tools (i.e., dictionaries) or teacher-generated tools (i.e., feedback, video script, teacher support, task).

*Subprocess 4.1: Tool = computer.* This subprocess focuses on the computer as the main tool mediating the learning activity. The affordances created by the use of a computer are varied and complex but the attention here is constrained to the transfer of digital routines and technological affordances.

*Dimension 8: Transfer of digital routines.* Disturbances related to this particular dimension come about as traditional forms of education clash with the emerging new online provision of learning opportunities. Learners' digital routines (acquired in their own personal use of digital resources) do not always work in the task's environment or, vice versa, they may not meet the expectations of the teacher-designer. As a result, there are movements from routine to action and vice versa in situations where "the tool itself [technology] may temporarily become the object of the activity" (Blin 2004: 392).

*Dimension 9: Technological affordances.* Institutional decisions related to connectivity, VLE issues, hardware and software issues can potentially "disrupt the activity and change its object" (Blin 2004: 385) and have an impact at all levels, including operations, actions and the activity (Kuuti 1996). In this case there is also evidence that countrywide political and

economic activities have a negative impact on the provision of acceptable levels of connectivity (see *Chapter 6*). But technology also creates opportunities, which are duly analysed within this dimension (see Kirschner 2002 for details of ‘technological affordances’).

*Subprocess 4.2: Tool = recording device.* Using a recording device such as a camera as a tool in the task had a significant impact on learner behaviour. Most learners experienced anxiety before recording the final version of their video and this had several surprising consequences.

*Dimension 10: Listening to music while speaking to camera.* Unexpectedly, one of the participants felt the need to listen to music using headphones while recording the video presentation. Even more surprising was the fact that instead of being distracted by the music the learner may have improved her performance as a result.

*Dimension 11: Delaying tactics.* It was also unexpected to see some learners making use of delaying tactics (sometimes for extended periods of time) before recording their video. Some delay before starting the actual recording was expected, but not a prolonged one. It is also worth analysing what learners did while they were delaying their presentation, *window-zapping*<sup>7</sup> being the most common type of behaviour. Delaying tactics are not always related to the presence of a camera and this will be considered in the analysis of this dimension.

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<sup>7</sup> *Window-zapping* refers to using the mouse or keyboard shortcuts to change active windows in quick succession.

*Dimension 12: Being camera-shy.* Although some camera-related nervousness or embarrassment was to be expected, when the feeling became overwhelming and somewhat paralysing this has been considered a disturbance. Some attempts have been made at distinguishing between camera-related shyness and general shyness.

*Dimension 13: False starts.* It was anticipated that learners would make a number of false starts when recording their video. Indeed, this was desired behaviour as false starts could provide opportunities for language practice. In the experiment, the number of false starts was occasionally greater than expected or non-existent as with those who just recorded once. Both extremes have been seen as disturbances.

*Subprocess 4.3: Notes. Dimension 14: Mental notes – written notes.* Using written notes (on paper or on screen to be consulted during the presentation) was recommended and expected. To the teacher's surprise, though, most learners did not use any notes. Instead, they reported having used mental notes to speak, prepared in advance 'in their head'. This is contrary to Vygotsky's argument that some sort of external artefact (e.g., written notes) is necessary before people can do certain things 'in their heads'. Additionally, preparing written notes was desirable because it involved manipulating the target language.

*Subprocess 4.4: Tool = dictionary. Dimension 15: Using a dictionary.* Underuse (or no use) of dictionaries or only resorting to poor web-based translations during the experiment is considered a disturbance. No-one overused dictionaries but one learner (learner F) relied heavily on *Google translate*.



*Subprocess 4.5: Tool = feedback. Dimension 16: Using feedback.* The task provided automated written feedback (through hyperlinks) for every question asked. Not making use of it or using it in ways that were not anticipated counts as a disturbance too.

*Subprocess 4.6: Tool = transcript. Dimension 17: Using the video transcript.* The task also included a link to an annotated version of the video transcript. Most participants did not refer to the video transcript. This disturbance is also investigated.

*Subprocess 4.7: Tool = task. Dimension 18: Adhering to the task.* In line with the interest in the discrepancy between task design and task use embodied in the concept of disturbances, specific instances of adhering to the task sequence and instructions to the letter or not much are considered worth analysing.

*Process 5: Orientation.* At the core of the activity is orientation, that is, the relationship between the learner (the subject) and the objective of the activity (the object). Orientation is closely linked to the needs and motives of the learners as they engage with the task.

*Dimension 19: Language learning orientation.* Learners were expected to have a language learning orientation, that is to say, to be genuinely interested in learning some English as a result of taking part in the experiment. When this was not the case, the relevant data segment was taken as a disturbance.

*Dimension 20: Success – failure.* Generalised local perceptions of success and failure, typically characterised by references to people being ‘muy inteligente’ (he’s very intelligent) or ‘burro/a’ (stupid; literally a donkey), or being financially well-off or not (‘le ha ido muy

bien/mal') triggered considerable levels of fear of failure resulting in unexpected learner behaviour. Related data segments may provide insights into sociocultural and cultural-historical factors affecting learner orientation.

*Dimension 21: Time pressure.* It was unexpected that most learners felt a considerable amount of pressure to complete the task in the shortest possible time, even though in most cases leaving early was not a concern for either the learner or the teacher. This may reflect societal practices, especially institutional and work-related ones.

*Dimension 22: Searching – finding.* There seemed to be an expectation amongst some learners that answers must be found rather than searched for. This caused a number of disturbances in learner behaviour.

*Process 6: Personal development. Dimension 23: Personal development opportunities – personal development issues.* Vygotsky and his colleagues believed that the development of individuals and the collective was the ultimate goal of any intervention based on activity-theoretical principles. Disturbances in this category reflect forces affecting the transition to adulthood experienced by the young adult learners that took part in the study.

Having described the various processes and dimensions used in the study, it is now time to turn to the analysis of data.

### 5.3 Overview of data analysis

This section includes an overview of the analysis of data from the study's 10 data sets (learners A, B, C, D, F, G, J, M, S and T). The aim is not to provide statistical proof for any claims but rather to offer a general description of all the data and to support (and expand on) the analysis presented earlier in this chapter. The information included in this section has been summarised for quick reference purposes in *Appendix 4* (p. 289).

Simple questions were formulated to address key issues connected to each of the dimensions under investigation. In the case of Dimension 1 (inner speech-private speech), the question is how many learners used private speech. Evidence shows that five learners used private speech (learners C, D, F, G and S), although only three of them used it substantially (learners C, F, S); learners D and G used private speech only occasionally but the latter admitted that she made a conscious effort not to resort to private speech because she knew that she was being recorded (like learner S, who constantly used private speech but in a very low voice to avoid being overheard by others). Both learners G and S acknowledged that they generally use private speech to study (not just English). Learner M acknowledged speaking to herself often but not in this case. Some of the reasons given by learners for using private speech include concentrating more, understanding better, memorising things, the need to hear things, giving the text a voice, establishing a kind of dialogue with the learning materials and linking ideas and words.

As for Dimension 2 (peer support-peer problems), the question asked is how many learners experienced instances of (a) peer support and (b) peer problems. Four of the learners

(learners A, F, S and T) reported having regular informal peer support in the form of conversation practice. In contrast, two learners (learners A and J) reported having had their request to set up informal conversation practice sessions with peers turned down. Assuming Sam (featuring in the input video) is a peer, all learners felt slightly intimidated by Sam's video because of her proficiency (she is a native speaker) and the ease with which she spoke to camera but they also valued the video as a good example of an ideal outcome for the task. Half the learners (learners C, D, F, M and S) were negatively affected (to greater or lesser degrees) by the presence of other self-access centre users working nearby.

In relation to Dimension 3 (teacher support-teacher problems), how many learners asked for teacher support? Six learners asked for various forms of teacher support during the task (learners A, B, D, F, G and J). Support was sought face-to-face and online via the text-chat or audio options of a videoconference. Having both audio and text options available for online communication seemed beneficial. The kind of support needed ranged from technical support to assessment of performance (cognitive or meta-cognitive), lexical questions, clarification of task instructions or questions, emotional support and encouragement, and permission to do certain things during the task (confirmation of rules). The online and the nearby physical presence of the teacher was reassuring for two learners (learners A and F) whilst two other learners felt embarrassed and did not want the teacher to be looking at them or listening to them (learners C and S).

As regards Dimension 4 (support from others-problems with others), how many learners reported (a) support from others or (b) problems with others? Five learners (learners A, F, J,

M and T) felt supported in their learning through social contact with others, namely receiving support from their family, from a charity, from a religious group and from professionals in their field. Conversely, five learners (learners B, D, F, S and T) spoke of problems with others that affected them and their learning, such as issues at home, at school and in society. Finally, seven learners talked about picturing an imaginary interlocutor while speaking to camera. For learner C, for instance, the interlocutor was a kind, patient, older and wiser native speaker. Learner B in turn had an audience of supportive Mexican peers in mind. In contrast, learners D and S, for instance, imagined a mean-spirited and intolerant audience with an aversion for grammatical errors. The kind of audience that the learners' minds conjured up might have been a projection of their hopes and fears and have affected their performance.

Next, Dimension 5 (language learning opportunities-language learning problems) revealed that all learners experienced language-related problems during the task. The most common problems had to do with listening comprehension (not understanding Sam's video), as reported by six learners (learners C, D, F, J, S and T) and with productive skills such as speaking (six learners: A, B, C, J, M and S) and writing (seven learners: B, C, F, G, J, S and T). Listening and especially speaking problems were blamed on lack of opportunities to practise the language in conversation with more expert people who can feed back on their performance. Speaking trouble was often also connected to the stress caused by the learners' general feeling of embarrassment of having to speak (English) with others (eight learners: B, C, D, F, J, M, S and T). The embarrassment was sometimes also seen as the

consequence of the lack of opportunities for frequent speaking practice. Writing difficulties were often attributed to syntax (not knowing how to form or link lexical items) or lack of vocabulary. Spelling (often referred to by learners as 'not writing properly' or 'not writing well') was a significant concern for five learners (learners A, B, J, S and T) even though it affected all the participants given the number of errors and the lack of proofreading and editing strategies and skills shown. Only one learner (learner F) had problems reading text or questions because of her low level of proficiency. Lack of proficiency itself was explicitly adduced as the source of difficulties by two other learners (learners C and G). Finally, inaccurate pronunciation was quoted as a problem by six learners (learners A, B, D, F, J and T). In terms of language learning opportunities, seven learners (learners A, B, F, J, M, S and T) reported making effective use of out-of-classroom resources such as novels, video games, films, social media, music and self-access learning materials. Half the learners (learners A, B, G, M and T) initiated opportunities to learn new vocabulary and discuss learning strategies during the SR session. This would support the appropriateness of Levy and Kennedy's (2004) use of SR for teaching and learning purposes (see *Chapter 2*) and the potential value of Engeström's (1999b) concept of 'miniature cycles' of expansive learning (see *Chapter 7*). In contrast, the learning interest observed during the SR sessions was virtually absent during the task. With the exception of learner S, learners tended to abandon lexical items and structures they could have learnt or reaffirmed and used more basic items or structures (or none at all) instead. This phenomenon may be due to (a) the learners' preference for face-to-face instruction in conversation with a more expert speaker, (b) their underuse or ineffective use of tools such as dictionaries and (c) their orientation.

Let us now turn to Dimension 6 (focus on meaning-focus on form). How many learners could be observed focusing on form or meaning during the task? Although it is hard to separate focus on form and focus on meaning, a consistent concern with form (what learners often called 'writing well' or 'writing properly') was shown by eight of the learners (all except learners B and T, who only focused on form in SR sessions). The concern with form often responded to wanting to 'look good' or 'not look stupid' (learners A, C, F and T). In some extreme cases (especially learners B, M and S), learners deleted whole sentences even though these were often perfectly correct.

As for Dimension 7 (L1-L2), how many learners used English (L2) consistently? All learners used English consistently to complete the task (including private speech). Communication with the teacher was sometimes established in Spanish (L1) but this was often prompted by the teacher. Code-switching was mentioned as an obstacle to effective communication by two learners (learners A and B). Learner B believed she needed to stop thinking in Spanish before speaking in English. Three learners did not expect to have to do everything in English in the task (learners C, D and J). One learner (learner F) had to switch to Spanish to express technical or complex content. As shown below, a number of learners used *Google translate* during the task.

As for tools, the question that concerns Dimension 8 (transfer of digital routines) is how many learners transferred (or did not transfer) digital routines in ways that were beneficial or detrimental to their performance. As the reader may expect, all learners transferred some digital routines to this learning environment. Signs of low digital skills were rare, learner A

being the only obvious case of a victim of the 'second-level digital divide' (Hargittai 2002: 1) regarding inequalities in terms of computer skills. Six of the learners (A, F, J, M, S, T) used the pointer or cursor to follow text on the screen as they read. They admitted to doing the same when reading on paper by using their index finger. This may be linked to basic literacy practices in the learners worth investigating further. Seven learners (learners B, C, D, G, M, S and T) demonstrated having adequate digital skills, such as absence of erratic online behaviour, using keyboard shortcuts and browser tabs effectively as well as keeping the digital working space tidy by closing windows and browser tabs after using them to avoid clutter. Three learners (J, S and T) used the browser-embedded spellchecker naturally to correct spelling mistakes because it resembled that of *Microsoft Word*. Three learners (learners A, C and F) clicked on images included in the task expecting interactivity that did not exist, signalling expectations of having rich media content online transferred from other online services such as *YouTube* and *Facebook*. Significant disruption was caused by the transfer of expectations of finding immediate answers or solutions from other online experiences in three cases (learners A, B and T). Learners A and T missed key information they required from a body of text because of not reading in detail and expecting to obtain a quick, simple answer to their query. This phenomenon may be indicative of a general literacy issue worthy of further investigation. The same kind of restlessness could be seen in learner B who epitomised 'window zapping' before recording her video (and admitted to being equally agitated when listening to music or watching TV generally). As one might expect, the online performance of these learners (especially learners A, B and T) and their chances of



learning new things were seriously compromised as a result of the potential 'attention-scattering' effect of the digital media (Carr 2010).

It is time to turn now to Dimension 9 (technological affordances). How many learners were affected by technological affordances of the online medium or the computer equipment used? Not surprisingly all learners were affected in one way or another by the affordances of the technology. Notably, most were affected by the deficient local internet connection and restrictions imposed on the VLE and applications used. Sometimes both factors appeared in combination causing great disruption, as learner G's inability to log on to the *OpenLearn* VLE made clear. Naturally, not all technological affordances were negative. Positive aspects include the learners' general view that this kind of task was helpful to learn English, the way in which learner J seemed to learn to spell a few words ('don't', 'speak' and 'English') using the spellchecker and improvements suggested by learners as a result of their experience, such as using headphones with built-in microphones to capture even soft speaking and changing the speaking format from an online monologue to a dialogue with a more expert speaker online. Finally, most of the participants in the study (all except learners A and T) were not willing to publish their videos. Although this was often due to their embarrassment about the quality of their L2 and that of the video, at least four learners (learners F, J, M and S) had strong objections to publishing their videos online, perhaps due to lack of security in the local context or general shyness (unrelated to the camera). This reluctance to going public online gives weight to Thorne's (2003) argument that technologies have their own

culture of use and are not neutral, as he found out in his study of an email exchange project between American and French students. Students use tools differently in different cultures.

As for Dimension 10 (listening to music while speaking to camera), although only one learner (learner B) did listen to music while recording, her behaviour is worth analysing because (a) it was consistent with her need for 'noise' (e.g., window zapping and watching Sam's video) during the task and her general impatient habits in the digital world (e.g., constantly changing songs, TV channels and PC windows) and (b) to my surprise listening to music seemed to have been beneficial rather than detrimental to her performance.

Next, Dimension 11 (delaying tactics) has been analysed starting with the question of how many learners used delaying tactics before recording their video. Three learners (learners B, C and S) used delaying tactics (learner C: 10 minutes; learner B: 14 minutes; learner S: 1 hour 14 minutes) before they began recording. During these times learners were reviewing the task and Sam's video and testing the equipment and software while preparing their presentation either in their heads (learners B and C) or in writing (learner S). Learner B also sought online teacher support in this period. Learner S waited until all the other self-access centre users left before recording. She wrote, edited and rehearsed the presentation carefully while she waited. Although there might be confusion about whether learners are delaying or preparing their presentation, these three cases have been interpreted as instances of the use of delaying tactics because the main reason for putting off the recording was camera-shyness, not wanting to prepare, as shown in SR data. In contrast, learner F's delay before and during recording, for instance, has not been seen as a case of delaying

tactics because evidence showed that her main purpose was preparing and rehearsing her presentation.

How many learners felt camera-shy in the task (Dimension 12: being camera-shy)? Five learners admitted to feeling camera-shy (learners B, C, D, M and S), slightly fewer than those who admitted to general shyness (eight; see above). In fact, six learners (B, D, F, J, S and T) participated in the study partly because it involved recording themselves on video and therefore was an opportunity to overcome shyness. However, the learners' shyness and unease could also be attributed to having to use L2 instead of L1, to being new to video-recording practices and perhaps to being unfamiliar with the task and the technology being used. Additionally, four female learners felt uncomfortable with their physical appearance on video (learners B, F, G and S). This issue deserves attention in further studies. Three learners (learners B, J and S) objected to the 'monologue' required of them; to cope with it seven learners (all except for learners M, S and T) thought of an imaginary audience with whom to have a 'conversation'. 'Dialogue' with someone else is what they would have preferred. Although the task tried to cater to the learners' need for speaking practice it failed to provide the kind of practice they wanted: speaking with a more proficient speaker (e.g., a teacher, a peer) from whom they could learn, which could be done online.

Turning to Dimension 13 (false starts), how many learners could be observed making false starts before recording the final video? Four learners (learners C, D, F and S) made false starts before recording their final video. The number of false starts ranged between five (learner D) and 29 (learner C); learner F recorded 18 attempts and learner S, eight. Three of

the four learners (all except learner C) also wrote and modified notes with each attempt. These false attempts brought about significant improvements (especially as regards fluency and confidence). Reasons for not making false starts included not wanting to see their mistakes (learners A and B) and not wanting second chances (learner J) lest the video appeared to be too staged (raising suspicions of 'cheating').

Regarding Dimension 14 (mental notes-written notes), how many learners took and used written notes in the task? Only three learners (learners D, F and S) made use of written notes (either on paper or on the computer screen). Those who used notes complained of difficulties reading from them (free desk space at the workstation was scarce). Learner D suggested a teleprompter on the PC would have been ideal and learner S enacted that solution by reading on-screen notes whilst recording.

The remaining seven learners (learners A, B, C, G, J, M and T) had done some preparation before recording their video 'in their head'. Indeed, some of them (notably learners C and M) could be seen thinking in silence during the task. The idea that improvising would result in a better-quality video explained the decision of five learners (learners A, B, G, J, T) to avoid written notes. Learner C thought using notes would amount to cheating. In the end, the seven learners who used no notes, when they realised that their video was too long and had too many pauses and mistakes in it, reflected that they should have prepared their video presentation more, which included taking and using written notes in four of the seven cases (all except learners A, M and T).

Moving on to Dimension 15 (using a dictionary), how many learners used a dictionary during the task? Most learners did not use a dictionary at all during the task (six learners: A, B, C, D, F and J). Four learners (learners G, M, S and T) used one or both of the recommended online dictionaries (monolingual and bilingual) but only on one or two occasions. Learners G and M used the dictionary only to check spelling; learner S attempted to find the meaning of a whole sentence unsuccessfully (the reason behind learner J's dislike of dictionaries); learner T used the dictionary a couple of times ineffectively, which denoted lack of familiarity or skills using this tool. Local connectivity problems hampered the few attempts to use online dictionaries. None of the learners used physical dictionaries (available in the self-access centre or their own). With the exception of learner S, no-one reported using dictionaries regularly. Learners B and J said they preferred asking the teacher or someone else for word meanings (giving strength to the hypothesis of the local culture's marked orality). Three learners (C, F and S) turned to online machine-translation applications (*Google translate* in all cases except that of learner C who used *Reverso*) with negative results due to (a) the inaccuracy, inconsistency and unreliability of the translations of sentences and phrases provided and (b) the fact that there are no explanations or examples to go along word-for-word translations of single lexical items. There is abundant evidence of the unsuitability of this tool in the data sets of learners F and S, who used *Google translate* extensively, especially when used to check grammatical accuracy. Further to this, there is little evidence (if any) to claim using *Google translate* (or *Reverso*) led to any real language learning gain. Learner J suggested using a dictionary application that allowed double-clicking on any word on the screen to find its meaning. A similar kind of application, *1-Click answers*, had been

used in the pilot study unsuccessfully because it required a good internet connection that was unavailable.

Dimension 16 deals with feedback and the question posed is how many learners used the feedback provided in the task. Only two learners (learners C and F) did. In fact, learner C was the only one who used it as expected, that is, for support and guidance purposes. Learner F used it to 'cheat' by modifying it slightly to use it as her own when answering questions. Of the eight learners who did not use the feedback at all (learners A, B, D, G, J, M, S and T), two claimed not to have seen the links (learners S and T) and four (learners B, G, J and M) said they were not interested in it or did not need it. Learner B preferred face-to-face oral feedback.

Next, let us briefly analyse Dimension 17 (using the video transcript). Compared to the feedback dimension, a few more learners (four: learners F, G, M and T) read the video transcript carefully and found it useful. Of the six learners who did not use it (learners A, B, C, D, J and S), learner B insisted on preferring oral information, learners C and D were about to click on the relevant link but thought better of it for unknown reasons and learner J thought using the transcript would amount to cheating.

Dimension 18 (adhering to the task) focuses on how many learners followed the different sections of the task (especially the preparation and practice sections) instead of skipping them. Half the learners (learners D, F, J, M and S) adhered to all the sections of the task whereas the other half (learners A, B, C, G and T) skipped key questions in the preparation or the practice section or both. The preparation was thought to hold potential for learning. Six

learners (learners A, B, C, D, F and S) found the instructions (or being asked to prepare, practise or reflect) confusing. In contrast, four learners (learners G, J, M and T) found the task's instructions easy to follow and logical. As seen earlier, despite its defects and technology-related problems, most learners (six learners: A, B, G, J, M and S) valued the task as a good tool for the purpose of practising and improving their English (and because it made them realise the importance of preparing and practising more) and four (learners A, B, D and G) valued Sam's video (used as input) because it provided a good model of the task's expected outcome. Finally, unlike Sam in the input video, all learners but learner A talked about their families in their video. This not only reinforces the perception of the importance given to the family institution in the local context but, perhaps more importantly, it shows that the digital practices take different shapes in different cultures.

It is time now to turn our attention to the orientation process. Dimension 19 (language learning orientation) deals with whether learners appeared to have a language learning orientation or not. Six learners (learners C, D, F, J, M and S) had a genuine language learning orientation whilst four (learners A, B, G and T) did not. The main deciding criterion to determine this has been whether the learner was actively pursuing new language or language-related learning or not. For instance, learner C spoke of her interest in learning for learning's sake and could be seen modifying her output intensively following a trial-and-error approach conducive to learning. In Learner D's case, she modified her output often and there is no evidence to suggest that any other non-language-learning priority was guiding her work. Learners F, J, M and S are clear-cut instances of participants with a language

learning orientation given the significant amount of evidence found in the data, such as the considerable commitment and investment of time and effort made by learners F and S using all kinds of learning tools and the motives that the SR sessions of learners J and M revealed in support of their language learning efforts during the experiment. Others were motivated by either their need or strong desire to talk about themselves and see themselves (on the resulting video) (learners A, G and T) or by the need to overcome camera-shyness (learner B).

Still connected to orientation, Dimension 20 (success-failure) refers to how many of the learners' orientation to the task was partly determined by either their drive for success or fear of failure. As one cannot exist without the other, separating success and failure in some of the data sets became all but futile. The importance of this dimension is in no doubt if we consider that all ten learners were significantly influenced by these opposing forces. Ignoring their fear of failure or showing bravado (as could be observed in learners A, B, G and T) could be interpreted as confidence when it is not. Conversely, constant hesitation (such as that of learners C, D, F and S) could easily be seen as a paralysing fear of failure although it shows great courage and determination to learn. All learners harboured great ambitions for their future and great fears of making mistakes in English in equal measures. One thing is clear, though: those learners with a non-language-learning orientation (learners A, B, G and T; see above) were also the ones who were most averse to making mistakes (or learning from them) judging from their reluctance to rehearse, practise and reflect on their performance. Their focus was to get the job done as quickly as possible, tiptoeing over the learning



opportunities that the task was presenting for them. Finally, six learners (learners C, D, F, J, M and T) can be said to have experienced the task as some kind of test. Some of them even behaved as though trying to cheat (learner F) or avoid cheating (learners C and J). This test-like orientation was arguably detrimental to the learning process.

Time pressure (Dimension 21) was felt by seven learners (learners A, B, C, F, M, S and T) and this affected their decision-making during the task, such as not using learning and support tools. Unexpectedly, four of these learners (learners A, B, C and F) were also concerned about encroaching on the teacher's time.

The last dimension related to orientation is Dimension 22 (searching-finding). How many learners consistently and actively searched for information (e.g., vocabulary, feedback or references made in the video)? Only two learners (F and S) did. Others (learners A, B, C, D, G, J, M and T) got by with what they knew already, expecting to find the required information either in their heads or in the most immediate and straightforward manner possible (learners A and J), simply missing it when it was part of a body of text (learners A, M and T) or preferring to be told about it face to face (learners B, G and J).

Finally, Dimension 23 (personal development opportunities-personal development problems) concerns the issue of how many of the learners' performances or orientation were significantly influenced by personal development matters. It could be argued that this was the case for five learners (learners A, B, F, S and T) who were motivated by other-than-language-learning needs of a rather personal nature somehow typical of their period of transition into adulthood, such as the need to talk about personal conflict (learner A), the

need to overcome camera-shyness of a digital arts student (learner B) and overcoming general shyness and a fear of speaking in public (learners F, S and T).

#### **5.4 Patterns of behaviour**

Let us analyse some of the patterns of behaviour observed during the experiment based on information presented so far. Firstly, a considerable number of learners (six) used private speech generally to study (not just English). This reliance on their own voice to learn reveals not the expected behaviour of low-proficiency language learners but rather the overall orality of the local culture. Testimony to this can be the preference for peer-support (four learners), teacher support (six), and support from others (five) shown by a considerable number of learners, which often meant oral face-to-face support by more capable speakers. This need to establish a dialogue with others to learn became evident when seven learners admitted to picturing an imaginary audience to which their video presentation was addressed. On the other hand, evidence of issues and problems with peers (seven learners) and others (five) revealed, in some cases, the unaddressed need for supported language practice (mainly of productive skills, especially speaking) felt by most learners. In short, language learners in this context are in need of work with others within their zone of proximal development to advance their language learning skills, strategies and proficiency. However, some obstacles must be overcome before actual development can be achieved. For instance, the reliance on orality implies, in this case, that recourse to text, that is, literacy, has fallen out of favour with the learners. Ample evidence of this appeared in the data, such as the relatively small number of learners (four) who made false starts before

recording their final video, of whom even fewer (three) used notes as guidance. In other words, most learners (seven) relied on preparation done 'in their heads' as they presented on camera, mainly because they thought (five learners) that improvising would produce better results, a belief not confirmed by their subsequent experience in most cases (four). Further evidence of this phenomenon is the underuse of text-based materials and support tools such as dictionaries (used by no learners consistently in the experiment and only one generally), written feedback (used by two learners) and the video transcript (used by four); the inability of some learners (two) to find key information in a body of text; the unwillingness of most learners (eight) to search for information, expecting instead to find it readily available or to get by with what they already know and the difficulty or unwillingness to follow written instructions provided in the task (experienced by six learners). Last but not least as many as six learners used the pointer as an aid to read on-screen text, a likely indication of underdeveloped literacy more generally.

Another significant obstacle to be addressed is the issue of the general tool-free approach to language learning observed in most learners. As said earlier, virtually none or very few learners used dictionaries, notes, transcripts and feedback. Digital tool use was hampered by local connectivity problems, VLE-related issues and in one case signs of low digital skills. Technology itself became a double-edged sword as it raised unfulfilled expectations of interactivity (in three learners) and immediacy of answers (three learners) as well as fears of 'going public' online (eight learners dreaded the idea of posting their videos), camera-shyness (five learners, three of whom used delaying tactics) and negative perceptions of self-

image on camera (four female leaners). The monologue-like format of the video presentation required in the task raised objections too in three learners who would have preferred a conversation. Having the recording of a video as the object of the activity can also be seen as problematic because it raised certain expectations and focused most of the attention and efforts of learners perhaps obscuring the fact that this was merely an excuse to pursue language learning outcomes.

This brings us to the case of more general social forces shaping learner behaviour in the study. Only six learners showed a genuine language learning orientation to the task, whilst the remaining were more concerned with talking about or dealing with personal development issues, which significantly affected the performance of five learners. The number of learners who saw the task as a traditional success-rating test (six) was considerable, as were the associated fear of failure (four), fear of being caught 'cheating' (three), signs of bravado to overcome fear of failure (four), feeling under time pressure (seven) and concerns about encroaching on the teacher's time (four).

The combination of the reliance on orality, the test-like approach to the task, the underuse of language learning tools, relying on known information 'in the head' and expecting being 'served' information (rather than searching for it) produced high numbers of learners who skipped (or did little of) the preparation and practice sections (five), concentrated on 'getting the job done', that is, recording the video in the shortest possible time using the smallest amount of assistance to avoid (or engage in) 'cheating' tactics. General shyness (reported by eight learners) and overcoming it (which motivated six learners to take part in

the study) hold the key to some of the root causes to be found in social practices and likely solutions to difficulties experienced by learners in this kind of environment, as argued in *Chapter 7*.

### **5.5 Detailed analysis of two data sets**

In this section, the reader will find a detailed, in-depth qualitative analysis of data sets from two learners (learners A and F). The reasons for choosing these two learners and not others from the pool of 10 data sets collected lies in the richness and variety of disturbances these two cases presented. Neither of the two learners found the task instructions and questions easy to engage with, yet the causes for this vary between learners. On the other hand, learner F, perhaps because of her low proficiency, resorted to making extensive use of private speech, unlike learner A. Generally speaking, other learners (particularly learners D, G, M and T) did not deviate much from the teacher-designer's expected course of action and this made their cases less worthy of detailed analysis for the purposes of this study.

Conversely, learners B, C, J and S were also good candidates for in-depth analysis for various reasons. However, learner B was not ideal because her case resembled that of learner A too much (except for her use of delaying tactics and listening to music while recording). Learner C was not chosen because beyond her use of private speech and her many false starts not much more was observable in terms of disturbances. Learner J was ruled out because his slightly older age (26) made him less representative of the other nine participants (of whom eight were 21 and one was 23). Finally, as for learner S, her performance was expected for the most part, except for her delaying tactics.

*Learner A's case*




Learner A's case is that of a learner whose general behaviour during the task (e.g., not using dictionaries; not preparing and not using notes) was considerably removed from the teacher-designer's expectations. This was coupled with several instances of significant breakdowns in the expected flow of events or course of action. Although her case is perhaps 'extreme' in that she takes a radical 'other-than-language-learning' orientation to the task, some of her data reveals patterns of behaviour (e.g., not adhering to the task's practice section; not using embedded support features of the task) shared to a greater or lesser extent by several other learners in the study, as shown below.

There are two segments that are particularly convenient entry points to the case of learner A, namely (a) an initial segment where the learner cannot remember her password to access the task's VLE and the associated *FlashMeeting* videoconference application and (b) an segment towards the end in which she cannot follow written instructions to record her video and looks for links leading to immediate answers to her problem. Let us call these two segments the 'Lost password' segment and the 'Links, links, links' segment for ease of reference.

The first one, the 'Lost password' segment, is an almost 14-minute long segment in which the learner could not remember her password to access the VLE website where the task was hosted (the OU's *OpenLearn* website, in this case) and the associated *FlashMeeting* videoconference service. With some face-to-face support from the teacher (LA-E

00:08:47.300 – 00:10:32.400) she eventually managed to send a request to have a new password sent to her by email. In the process of doing this, some signs of a lack of transfer of digital routines started to become visible, such as struggling to request a reset of the password, which turned this expected routine-like operation into a labour-intensive action (requiring the physical presence of the teacher twice) that concentrated all efforts on accessing the website. Additionally, the learner did not seem to be familiar with the fact that websites often use the users' email addresses as their usernames.

Of still greater significance perhaps was the fact that when she finally received the website's email message with her password, rather than noticing the new password included in it, she immediately clicked on an unhelpful link in the message.

- 1 A: Here it is! (Very excited at realising that the email message with the required
- 2 password appears in her inbox) Mmm... (  Opens the message and reads from the
- 3 screen) ... 'we're visiting whatever'... (  clicks on an irrelevant link included in the
- 4 message) And then, 'sing in' (sic)? (resting her chin on her hand, she looks and sounds
- 5 fairly frustrated)
- 6 T: Let's have a look at what the message said... (  T opens the email message
- 7 window)
- 8 A: (Reading from the screen) 'You have requested a change...' Ah, it's this one [the
- 9 password] instead (highlights and copies the password).
- 10 T: And I think that with this [password] and your email address you'll be able to get
- 11 in.

- 12 A: (Types her username and password on the videoconference password-protected  
 13 page) Uh-huh. (Tries to paste her password onto the relevant field but she can't) No, I  
 14 should type it [the password] ( goes to the email message window and reads the  
 15 password out loud) [password deleted] ( types and says the password out loud)  
 16 [password deleted] ( goes back to the email message and reads the password out loud)  
 17 [password deleted] ( types the password in the relevant field and clicks on  
 18 'Continue') I'm in! (excited)  
 19 T: There you type your name and [click on] 'enter'. And we can communicate through  
 20 there [the videoconference].  
 21 A: Yep! Oh, I'm in! (smiles and admires herself on camera) Mmm... mmm... mmm...  
 22 (cheeky, casting a sidelong glance at the camera)

(LA-E 00:11:34.300 – 00.13.56.600)

Her excitement at receiving the email message with her new password (line 1) contrasted with her immediate lack of patience to read the contents carefully and find the actual password, and the frustration caused by her clicking on an irrelevant link in the message (lines 2-5). With some assistance from the teacher, she looked at the message for a second time and was able to see the password. Interestingly, after copying the password she tried to paste it in the appropriate field using the relevant right-click option on her mouse (lines 13-14); however, this did not work (possibly due to a restriction in the VLE environment). The fact that she did not resort to alternative methods to paste was an early sign that she was not familiar with keyboard shortcuts (e.g., control + v), yet another basic digital routine missing in her 'repertoire'. When she did manage to access the VLE and the videoconference



application her reaction (lines 21-22) was the first indication that her orientation responded to personal needs rather than language learning needs, as confirmed by further experiment data and especially by SR data, as shown in this excerpt:

- 23 T: I wanted to ask you about something. I'm going to rewind a bit. 12'03". Look ,  
24 here you get the message from the Open University with your new password. And  
25 there is a lot of text. But the interesting thing is that you receive the message and...  
26 let's see what happens, eh?
- 27 A: No, that password was super-long.
- 28 T: Yes. Here it is. I just want you to watch. Did you notice? (both watch)
- 29 A: I immediately go to the link.
- 30 T: You immediately go to the link. And you didn't even see that there you had...  
31 A: ... there was the password.
- 32 T: The link opens, it takes you to a weird page, which has nothing to do...  
33 A: ... it does not correspond, uh-huh.
- 34 T: And there you realise. What happens there? I want you to comment on that.
- 35 A: What it is... it's visual. I'm like very visual. Besides, the first thing you see, you  
36 associate it. For example, the messages from *Facebook*, they all tell you 'so-and-so  
37 has commented on such a photo. Click to see the comment.' Then, you go, bam, to  
38 the link. And normally the link sends you to the comment, the answer that you're  
39 looking for.
- 40 T: So, a link is always going to catch your attention more...

41 A: I'd say... yes.

42 T: ... than something else.

43 A: Or, unless it is underlined in colour because visually colours do catch people's

44 attention a lot. It was blue and underlined, and everything else was in black. So you

45 do have to see that important stuff is highlighted.

(LA- SR 00:10:09.960 – 00:12:40.660)

She justified her not noticing the much-needed new password in the email message by referring to certain digital routines typical of online services such as *Facebook* which made her 'expect' to be sent messages with links to immediate answers to her user needs or questions (lines 35-39). Her practices as a *Facebook* user and her personal preferences seemed to intertwine and blur in her narrative: (a) she claimed to be a visual person (which she seemed to link to being a *Facebook* user), (b) she had a preference for quick answers (preferably in link form only a click away, as is the case with *Facebook* notifications). These are sufficient grounds to claim that she was able to transfer certain digital routines to the task's environment only too easily (e.g., expecting links to immediate answers) but not others (e.g., resetting an online password; assuming her email address is her username; using keyboard shortcuts).

A further example of a transfer of digital routines that she did make had to do with the inclusion of a thumbnail image of Sam's video in the introductory section of the task. Unexpectedly, the learner reacted with anticipation, unsuccessfully clicking on the image eager to watch the video the thumbnail represented.

- 46 T: Here you're reading the Introduction (...). When you read this part you took  
47 some time. But, what did you feel? I don't know if you remember. [Did you think]  
48 this has nothing to do, or it does help me or...?
- 49 A: I felt anxiety like to watch the video (laughing). I said: "I want to watch, I want to  
50 watch... I want to watch to see what happens, I want to make my own video." I was  
51 like a little anxious. (...) It's just that... I don't know, it's kind of exciting.
- 52 T: Did you know that you were going to watch a video?
- 53 A: Well, I imagined so, because of the picture.
- 54 T: It anticipated...
- 55 A: Yes.
- 56 T: You recognise that that image is typical of *YouTube* or something like that, right?
- 57 A: Yes.

(LA-SR 00:14.50.000 – 00:16:12.600)

She recognised the thumbnail image as belonging to *YouTube* (line 49) and became excited about watching that video and making her own (lines 49-50).

In contrast, there were signs that a number of other basic digital routines had not been acquired, namely double-clicking on icons that only required one click, typing things in a textbox field that had not been selected first and using her pointer to read from the screen. These were aggravated by technological constraints of the online tools used, such as missing code that would automatically bring the cursor to the relevant textbox field, especially in sign-in pages, the instability of *FlashMeeting* (which kept crashing), a disruptive message

asking the learner if she wanted to join the learning unit every time she changed sections (even though she was signed in to the VLE) and the fact that right-clicking to paste text was not allowed in this environment. *FlashVlog* did not work properly either but this was likely due to connectivity limitations in the local network used in the experiment. Nevertheless, these constraints of the VLE and its toolkit cannot justify the gaps in the learner's digital skills, something a small amount of instruction could probably resolve.

Beyond issues around digital skills, the fact that learner A could not 'see' the password in the body of email text seems to be a literacy issue of a more general nature (perhaps exacerbated by online affordances) worthy of further analysis.

The second segment, referred to earlier as the 'Links, links, links' segment, is rather relevant to pursue this literacy issue. It is a 10-minute long section in which learner A becomes frustrated as she unsuccessfully tries to read (and refuses to follow) written instructions (including information about how to record the video) to complete the practice section.

- 58 A: (👁️ A moves on to the practice section of the task and begins to read, her  
59 chin resting on her hand, looking uninterested)  
60 (A frowns and shifts in her chair)  
61 (takes off her headphones)  
62 (throws her hands up in the air in desperation after reading the instructions in the  
63 section for about 3'30")  
64 (👁️ moves on to the next section without having done any of the practice

65 suggested in the previous section)

66 ( 👤 clicks on the word 'Next' at the bottom of the page twice to try to go on to the

67 next section, but the word is not hyperlinked; the text that follows is, but A doesn't

68 realise)

69 ( 👤 goes to the videoconference page)

70 ( 👤 goes to the task page; 👤 clicks on the back button in the browser; reads the

71 instructions in the practice section again) ( 👤 clicks on the *FlashVlog* link

72 provided on the page in the main VLE menu; when the *FlashVlog* page opens

73 👤 she then clicks on the 'Quick Start' link provided; A scrolls quickly through the

74 *FlashVlog* Quick Start page and then 👤 goes to the videoconference window;

75 👤 goes back to the Quick Start page and 👤 clicks on an irrelevant link; frowns and

76 👤 tries to close the window repeatedly but the 'Close this window' button doesn't

77 seem to be working)

78 ( 👤 She goes back to the videoconference window and 👤 clicks on 'Open test

79 application'; 👤 she quickly closes the window when she realises it's irrelevant; 👤

80 goes back to the videoconference window)






81 A: Teacher! I can't access *FlashVlog*.

82 ( 👤 goes to the irrelevant *FlashVlog* window that she opened earlier and 👤 tries

83 to close it again, to no avail; reads the Quick Start page again)

84 T: [*Teacher videoconference audio not available*]

85 A: I can't get into *FlashVlog*.

- 86 T: *[Teacher audio not available]*
- 87 A: (hums) OK (  goes back to QuickStart page;  clicks on the only icon in the
- 88 taskbar twice as though wanting to maximise the window but the window is
- 89 already active and showing on the screen;  clicks on a *FlashVlog* link in the main
- 90 VLE menu; reads the main *FlashVlog* page)
- 91 A: Where does it say click, teacher?
- 92 T: *[Teacher audio not available]*
- 93 A: (  Clicks on the right 'Vlog now' link and the password-protected *FlashVlog*
- 94 main page opens) Yes, now it's asking me for my password and... to get in. Is it the
- 95 same that I used a while ago?
- 96 T: *[Teacher audio not available]*
- 97 A: (  types in her username and password and is granted access to the *FlashVlog*
- 98 application) Yes, I managed to get connected. Thank you, teacher (hums and
- 99 begins recording her presentation).
- (LA-E 00:40:16.909 – 00:50:05.620)

From the moment she opened this practice section she seemed to be lacking motivation to engage with it (lines 58-59). Her body language and gestures confirmed her restlessness (lines 60-63). Still, she did try to read the text in the section carefully for about three and a half minutes, at which point her frustration became explicit as she threw her hands up in the air (line 62-63). She then decided to move on to the next section in the task and what followed was erratic behaviour taking the learner nowhere (lines 66-80). For instance, she

clicked on a non-hyperlinked word (lines 66-68) and then clicked on an icon in the taskbar for no apparent reason (lines 87-89). In lines 78-80 she clicked on another irrelevant link after facing a technical error of the VLE (or the browser) that prevented her from closing a pop-up window (lines 76-77). She then decided to stop trying for herself and went to the videoconference page to ask the teacher for help (line 81). Next came a series of online audio instructions from the teacher (similar to those written in the task) that the learner followed until she successfully managed to access *FlashVlog*, the video recording tool embedded in the VLE.

In the SR session, the learner was critical of the task; she felt negatively affected by the way it was designed.

- 100 T: Yes. We're at 44'. Ah, I want to go back to 43' because there's something  
101 interesting. I want you to help me remember. Here you took off the headphones,  
102 you're reading this part for a long time and notice what you're going to do now,  
103 OK? (both watch A throw her hands up in the air on the video).
- 104 A: So it's like 'what'? (A repeats the gesture we just watched on the video).
- 105 T: What? And what does it mean... what happened...? Tell me because this seemed  
106 very interesting to me.
- 107 A: I didn't understand. It's like I didn't concentrate, or I don't know. It's saying 'OK,  
108 I have to then... go to the... menu of whatever and then click and click...' I said:  
109 "Why didn't they give me a link to say 'I click here and I go straight and make my  
110 video'?" Yes. And this is when I just said: "Oh God, I don't understand anything".

- 111 And it's like I didn't try to find out more and I just said: "OK, what's next".
- 112 T: Here you realise that you were supposed to have recorded the video already.
- 113 (...) And here you go back and look for something at the bottom I think...
- 114 A: And I went: "The link? Where is it...?"
- 115 T: And now, OK, [you thought] "I have to get in here"; because the instructions
- 116 were already telling you that you had to go to *FlashVlog*. And here the problem...
- 117 A: I should have gone into the second [link]...
- 118 T: Exactly.
- 119 A: And I went into the first one.
- 120 T: And there we lose some time... What happened there? Why did you go into the
- 121 first one?
- 122 A: No, I don't remember. Ah, because it said 'Quickstart'. And I said: "Start quick..."
- 123 T: (Finishing her sentence) ... that's what I want".
- 124 A: Yes. And I [said]: 'Quickstart' (mimes clicking with the mouse).
- 125 T: What happens is that this term is used in English to refer to learning or induction
- 126 guides.
- 127 A: Ah, OK. And that's what I didn't know, then.
- 128 T: And here you go into another link... And we get lost.
- 129 A: But, if you notice I always go into links. It's like links, links, links...
- 130 T: Links are your saviours.
- 131 A: They are my saviours, yes. Links, links...

(LA-SR 00:41:00.600 – 00:46:41.756)



Apart from the teacher's use of 'we' in lines 120 and 128 (denoting perhaps his level of involvement in the SR session as a teacher, as a researcher or identifying with the learner), the excerpt clearly illustrates the self-reported preference of learner A for links ("Why didn't they give a link"; line 109) that lead to immediate 'answers' (e.g., in lines 122-126 she recalled being mistakenly drawn to the 'Quickstart' name of a link expecting a 'quick' solution) and her disdain for the written instructions provided (lines 107-108). When she was not given what she preferred, her reaction was one of giving up ("Oh God, I don't understand anything"; line 110) and deciding to move on to another section ("OK, what's next"; line 111). Although her progress in the task came to a halt without the instructions she refused to follow, her quest for links elsewhere continued, bearing no results ("The link? Where is it...?"; line 114). This dead-end situation was resolved with a sort of compromise when the learner accepted to be given instructions but only orally, online. Yet, the experience confirmed the learner's belief that links are her 'saviours' (lines 130-131).

Yet, if links really did have this saving grace, why did the learner not use any of the support links provided in the task (for instance, those leading to pop-up windows with sample answers to set questions)? When asked about this, she reported that she had clicked on one of the feedback links in the beginning and experiment data confirms this (LA-E 00:28:54.924 – 00:29:10.654).

Nonetheless, as she pointed out in the SR session, she found it of little use:

132 A: Oh, yes: I used it [the feedback] once.

133 T: You did?

- 134 A: Yes. I checked it and then I realized it was about the text and I said 'OK' and  
135 that's it, I moved on.
- 136 T: And you didn't use them anymore. You didn't use them much. What was the  
137 reason for not... you weren't in that part called feedback.
- 138 A: Because I supposed that it was feed... I mean, like an example of what...
- 139 T: Like a model.
- 140 A: Like a model.
- 141 T: And you didn't need it.
- 142 A: No.
- 143 T: What you wanted was to do...
- 144 A: What I... no, because the first one I checked, the first feedback was the model,  
145 so I guessed that all the other ones would be the same, models for the questions  
146 that were there, I mean related to that.

(LA-SR 00:37:16.600 – 00:38:21.400)

Learner A reported that the feedback provided consisted of 'model answers' (lines 138-146) and this was unhelpful for her. What kind of feedback would she have preferred? Her answer to this, provided in the SR session, reiterated her preference for 'immediacy'.

- 147 A: (...) I'm not used to writing so so much in English, and if I do write it's like  
148 translating and stuff like that, with my cousins, so it's different. Besides here  
149 there's nobody correcting you. For instance, when I'm on the chat with someone  
150 else they correct the words and that's it, and there I learn. But here, I didn't have

151 any feedback, so if I was wrong it was like, let's see, let me check it again just in

152 case, right?

(LA-SR 00:19:50.400 – 00:20:45.790)

In lines 148-151 she was suggesting that the automated feedback provided in the task did not count as feedback because it was not 'live' feedback, that is, not immediate feedback of the kind she would get in an online chat application. The text chat option was available to her through the *FlashMeeting* videoconference application during the task but she may not have been aware of this. Instead, when in need of support from the teacher, she always spoke to him online or face to face in the self-access centre; in other words, she made use of oral means of communication.

Let us recap at this point. Learner A (a) appeared to be lacking some basic digital skills ('Lost password' segment), (b) seemed unable or unwilling to read and follow simple written task instructions ('Links, links, links' segment) and retrieve key information (such as a password) from a body of email text ('Lost password' segment), which suggests some sort of literacy problem, and, in general, (c) had a preference for links to immediate answers and 'live' feedback rather than automated feedback.

So far learner A's behaviour appears to be motivated by reasons other than language learning ones. But if language learning is not her motivation, what is it then?

In terms of mediation by tools, her use (or rather lack of use) of other tools available to her was consistent with this suspected non-language-learning approach. For example, she did

not use written notes during her video presentation, nor the task's feedback, the video transcript or dictionaries, and she did not adhere to the task but instead skipped whole sections (e.g., the preparation and practice sections). Additionally, she rehearsed none of her presentation, made no false starts (where development of learner abilities can usually be observed) and generally only took 40 minutes to complete a task that was expected to last at least twice as long (1 hour 30 minutes).

Let us briefly consider her insightful justification for not using the dictionary:

153 T: So you are self-correcting yourself. (...) you normally try to write properly or  
154 correctly, following rules...

155 A: Yes, exactly. Because you never know when someone might read you and might  
156 say: "Look, she's such an ignorant". For example, on *Facebook*, too, on the biggest  
157 social network, I sometimes write comments and all in English, and I try to check  
158 that they are well written.

159 T: How do you check? You just read them again and look carefully?

160 A: I read it again, I look carefully and I try to remember, perhaps, I try to remember  
161 if it's OK or not, and if I'm not sure at all, I go to *Google translate* and there I check  
162 the word, and if I'm still in doubt because many words are a bad translation and  
163 don't work, then what I do is I'd rather not put anything.

164 T: And you don't use other tools, for example a good dictionary; here in the task I  
165 put them as links down there, but you didn't use them.

166 A: No, I'm not really used to using dictionaries because I have the idea of the

167 primary school dictionary; we had to take it and start looking up words. But for  
168 example I find using the internet easier, *Google translate* like this bam-bam-bam  
169 (mimes typing on a keyboard) then it gives you the meaning. But I started to use  
170 the *Oxford [Advance Learner's] Dictionary* in the Toefl course we had and I liked it  
171 because there they give you even the sound and all. And... but I'm not really used  
172 to looking up words there. I'd rather look them up... well, not look them up but  
173 find them in songs or in articles...

(LA-SR 00:20:45.800 – 00:23:36.539)

Apart from the reference to *Facebook* again (line 156) as being the environment where her proofreading standards were set and another reference to her known preference for immediate answers justifying her use of *Google translate* (lines 167-169), two other comments are worthy of analysis. First, she associated dictionaries with bad experiences in primary school; we can only assume that dictionaries were used in an unattractive fashion which explains her reluctance to use them generally. Investigating this phenomenon could shed light on learner culture and current practices and ways to intervene, although this lies beyond the scope of this study. Second, she referred to a positive experience using dictionaries (lines 169-171) at a recent course, although this might have been a comment uttered to please the researcher, who taught that course and insisted on the importance of dictionaries. Her final comment, though, in lines 171-173, is quite crucial. Normally, she would rather 'find' words than 'look them up', that is to say, when she needs vocabulary she 'searches' for it 'in her head' by trying to retrieve the required item from her memories of

language she has been exposed to before. Failing that, she resorts to *Google translate*, which is often fruitless. This is a clear example of her position at the ‘finding’ end of the searching-finding dimension (Dimension 22). Needless to say this strategy may not be all that successful because when it does not work she simply abandons the idea she is trying to express (line 162-163). Admittedly, abandoning a message can also be seen as an acceptable language learning strategy, especially in lower levels of proficiency.

Her justification for her aversion to using dictionaries seems to share a connection with her dislike of preparing (e.g., written notes) in that she would rather do both things ‘in her head’. Once again, this is partly related to her inclination to do things ‘fast’:

- 174 T: And you begin recording (...). What made you decide “I’m going to improvise”?
- 175 A: No, it’s just that I had the topic structured in my head, I said: “I’m going to talk
- 176 about this and this” but then it was like I became nervous because... My mind went
- 177 blank. I said, “What am I going to say?” And I [said]: “What if I don’t use the right
- 178 words for my speech?” (...)
- 179 T: Now, with hindsight, do you think that your strategy was effective or would you
- 180 do it differently if you did it again?
- 181 A: It was effective but not efficient, because I succeeded in talking and providing
- 182 information and completing the experiment, but it would have taken me less time
- 183 if I had, for example, prepared a written text and read it when “oh, I forgot”
- 184 (mimes reading from a piece of paper). Fast. (...) Yes, but I’m also very much like
- 185 poof and pah and pah, like... I don’t know, I like talking with that passion. (...) And

186 also when I speak I also try to gesture a lot with my hands. It's like part of the way I  
187 express myself (...).

(LA-SR 00:46:49.100 – 00:50:31.800)

Again, in lines 175-176 she argued that she had prepared 'in her head'. When asked about the success of her strategy, she was satisfied with her effectiveness (i.e., she completed the task); her only concern was her efficiency (not having completed the experiment fast enough) (lines 179-184). She said nothing of the quality or accuracy of the language she used or the amount of English she had learned during the task. The fact that she likes to talk spontaneously and passionately was used as a justification for not preparing her presentation on paper (lines 185-187).

Going back briefly to mediation by others, peer support was mentioned earlier in relation to learner A's chatting in English online with her American cousins. The other side of this coin, peer problems, appeared in the form of two recent incidents with fellow students. This is how she recounted (during the experiment) the first incident in which she was not accepted by a group of peers:

188 A: (recording her first video) But I want to talk about it about the interpersonal  
189 relationships. Once a friend told me that I was not required (chuckles) in the kind  
190 of project because I was like a kind of annoying or something like that but I didn't  
191 like it because I said: "Hey you, you can tell me but relax, you know, you can use  
192 another words to tell me that".

(LA-E 00:51:31.200 – 00:52:19.515)

She felt so strongly about the incident that she decided to talk about it in the experiment, although that was not in line with the task's requirements.

193 T: Why did you decide to talk about interpersonal relations?

194 A: Because days earlier I had had... mm... a conflict with my classmates. I decided  
195 to speak about interpersonal relations because it's a topic that was hot (draws an  
196 ascending curve in the air with her hand). And I said: "I'll talk about this".

(LA-SR 00:40:03.700 – 00:40:45.200)

It is clear that her emotions about the incident were still raw ("it's a topic that was hot"; line 195) and therefore she felt the 'need' to take advantage of the experiment as an opportunity to talk about it. Her motivation to get this negative experience off her chest was beginning to give shape to her orientation to the task. She had her own personal agenda which coloured the way she assigned meaning to the task.

A second instance of a recent problem with peers ushers us into the analysis of mediation by language:

197 A: Yes, for example, I see my classmates and I tell them that we should have  
198 speaking afternoons and everything in English and I feel that I'm the most  
199 advanced one and still I feel that there so so so much I need to learn and I would  
200 need to talk to people who could [say] "No, it's this and that..." and correcting, for  
201 example, "No, you don't say it like that, you say it like this". "Ah, OK". And begin to  
202 practise. They should kind of force me to some extent, to keep practising practising



203 practising. Because I do it on my own but it's not the same.

(LA-SR 00:52:37.208 – 00:53:13.953)

Her attempts to organise English practice sessions with her peers were met with resistance. Her need for (fairly imposed) oral practice with more capable peers is shared by learners in this local context (as stated, for instance, by the two participants in the pilot study, whose comments motivated the design of a speaking task rather than something else). This lack of supported speaking practice opportunities will be addressed in the final chapters of this thesis (*Chapter 6* and *Chapter 7*).

The lack of opportunities in the school context is sometimes compensated by opportunities provided by others in social interaction, even from unlikely sources such as members of a religious congregation:

204 T: Then you talk about a nun...

205 A: Oh, yes. They came to knock [at my door] and I thought it was cool because as I

206 was saying it's hard to speak in English... The nuns came and [said] "Does anyone

207 speak English at home?" And I [said], "Yes, I do". And then, oh, they start talking

208 about God in English and reading the Bible to me in English. And I went... (makes

209 gestures to indicate she was in trouble). I saw a chance to practise the language.

210 They invited me to go to Bible readings and I thought it would be interesting

211 because it's all about past events and I have problems using the past [tense] (...).

(LA-SR 00:50:58.283 – 00:52:08.700)

Bible readings and other religious activities seen as language learning opportunities attracted learner A (line 209) and keep appealing other young adults in countries like Mexico and Belize. Learner A could even pinpoint the kind of area (grammar: the past tense) that she could improve (lines 212-213). What other language learning opportunities or problems did the learner reveal as having?

The answer lies in mediation-by-language data. For instance, she suggested that she may not have many opportunities to practise her writing skills (LA-SR 00:20:21.161 – 00:20:31.729), although pronunciation concerned her more:

212 A: (starts recording) I were in *Harmon Hall* [private language school] for two  
 213 years but there was so simply that here I don't know why maybe because the  
 214 teachers were taking you to the right way and they maybe helped me with my  
 215 works and my verbal times and also with my pronunciation that is not very well. I  
 216 think that I talk worse that people who lives in India (laughs). Yes, I'm from  
 217 Mexico, I'm 21, I'm pretty I'm smart I'm rich. No, I'm not rich. But also I work a lot.  
 218 That's all. I don't have too much to say. I supposedly will be talking about  
 219 interpersonal relationships but I think that I get lose talking about another things  
 220 that comes to my mind right now. Ciao. (stops recording)

(LA-E 00:54:11.727 – 00:55:44.898)

As a small aside, her comment in line 217, although made in jest, could be interpreted as revealing some of the learner's aspirations in life (i.e., beauty, intelligence, success). This will be discussed further below. Linguagewise, she thought her pronunciation was worse than

that of Indian people (line 225). Leaving aside the possible prejudice implied, despite her pronunciation problems she did not even consider engaging with the pronunciation activity included in the task's practice section, an indication that her orientation to the task was not a language learning one but rather personal (i.e., talking about her incident with a 'friend'). Alternatively, such a negative perspective of her own ability may have made her see the prospect of improving her pronunciation as being an insurmountable task, at least independently, considering her renewed calls for support (lines 212-215) that she felt she did have at a private language school she used to attend but not in the institutional context of the study. But perhaps surprisingly, at the end of her participation in the study she concluded that this kind of fairly unsupported online task could be of learning benefit:

221 A: Yes. I try to learn from everything and I think that... this experiment was very  
222 helpful to realise two things basically: that I need... well, three things. I need to  
223 have some kind of guide to develop a topic, a good one, more specific. I need er...  
224 a higher higher higher level of English and practise more... everything. And thirdly, I  
225 need to... well I can, I have an opportunity to improve the way I speak and express  
226 myself with a technological tool.

(LA-SR 00:56:52.510 – 00:57:32.360)

Thus, despite her pleas for support from peers, others and teachers, she could see the value of individual work using this kind of technology-based task (lines 224-226). Incidentally, she

also realised that she could do with using written notes<sup>8</sup> to do presentations in future (line 223). The task also strengthened her perception of needing practice (presumably of oral skills but perhaps also of written ones) (line 224).

A final issue related to mediation by language (focus on form) will bring us even closer to the analysis of learner A's orientation. In the following excerpt learner A explained what she meant by 'writing properly':

227 T: Ah, very good. So here we're in the section where you have to write something.

228 You took quite a long time here... it's interesting.

229 A: I was trying to find the proper words.

230 T: What does 'proper' mean in this case?

231 A: (...) I have to use what I know, which is, proper words, how can I say, in the right  
232 tense, using the right grammatical structure... (...)

233 T: (...) So you are self-correcting yourself.

234 A: Yes, kind of. (...)

235 (...) T: So (...) you normally try to write properly or correctly, following rules...

236 A: Yes, exactly. Because you never know when someone might read you and might  
237 say: "Look, she's such an ignorant". (...)

(LA-SR 00:19:33.900 – 00:23:36.500)

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<sup>8</sup> The term *guide* is somewhat confusing in this context but the original word the learner used in Spanish ('guía') definitely refers to written notes in Mexico.

The learner's focus on form anticipated a possible language learning interest which was not fulfilled on two accounts. First, learner A insisted on 'finding' vocabulary and structures ('the proper words' in this case) in her head (line 231), from what she already knew, instead of 'searching' for them, that is, learning something new. Second, her proofreading and self-correcting were motivated by her desire not to appear to be an 'ignorant' person (line 237). Although legitimate, this motive seems slightly divorced from a genuine interest in language *per se*, or from the aspiration to communicate well in the L2, and rather appears to come from an interest in gaining 'social capital' by writing in a way that 'looks' good. In short, this is perhaps motivated by a need to avert mistakes (i.e., signs of failure) and achieve success in life, a somewhat utilitarian view of language. It could be argued that this is an instance of the dialectic relationship between *use value* (intrinsic value) and *exchange value* (societal value) mentioned in *Chapter 3* earlier. The importance of success for her (see line 217 in an earlier excerpt) is made clear in the following excerpt of experiment data:


238 A: (She begins recording) Hello, my name's [*name deleted*]. I'm a student in  
 239 a Universidad de Guanajuato. I want to be a er... oh, I don't know, I don't  
 240 remember the word, how do you say when you are... successful, yes, that's the  
 241 word. MBA, maybe. I study in FIMEE, Salamanca, and I like a lot my career  
 242 [degree], I like a lot my teachers... (...)

(LA-E 00:55:42.115 – 00:56:50.515)

The implication is not that her strong success drive is intrinsically 'bad' but that it may not be ideal for language learning purposes if it is not balanced out by an equally strong selfless

pursuit of learning for learning's sake. Alternatively, this situation could be viewed in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan 1985). This issue will be explored further in *Chapter 7*.

This is perhaps a good point to turn to data directly concerned with language learning orientation. In an earlier excerpt (lines 21-22 above), as soon as she saw the video feed from her own webcam, learner A admired herself on camera. Although this could be seen as playful and irrelevant, combined with her references to success (line 217; lines 238-242), her reaction may be connected to a concern with her self-image that learner A acknowledged as being at the heart of her motivation to participate in the experiment:

243 (In response to the question 'Think of some positive reasons for wanting to  
 244 introduce yourself on video'  A types: 'I want to introduce myself on video  
 245 because i wanna to examine my mods and how i am to the another point of  
 246 view')

(LA-E 00:32:14.721 – 00:33:50.400)

Her comments in the SR session only confirmed this:

247 T: At one point you say [in the experiment] "I want to make the video because I  
 248 want to see another perspective on me". And you mention 'modes'. I couldn't read  
 249 that very well...  
 250 A: The ways or...  
 251 T: Your ways...

252 A: The ways, uh-huh.

253 T: You wanted to see your ways. You said that you wanted feedback.

254 A: Feedback. Yes.

255 T: It sounds as though the purpose in doing this is...

256 A: To see me. (...) Yes. For instance, I feel that I talk in a certain way, and when I

257 hear myself on the video I say: “Blimey, is this how I speak?” For example, then

258 attitudes, I always try to have my back straight, and for instance there I was

259 concentrated and I’m like this (imitates her slouching posture on the video). And I

260 see the way I look at the screen, the way I react. (...).

(LA-SR 00:35:47.700 – 00:37:16.600)

Her main reason for taking part in the experiment is summed up in line 256: “to see myself”. She was anxious to make her video (line 50 above) all through the task because she wanted to see herself and to express herself (“I had always wanted to have a broadcast or a show”; line 270 below). This speaks of an adult voice in the making, the desire of young learner to learn about herself and develop as a person. Ultimately this process of self-discovery and personal development is the main motivator and the determining force behind her behaviour and actions. Learner A saw this as an opportunity to deal with personal development issues, such as how to improve her social relations:

261 (...)

262 T: The task required you to make a video and, what were you supposed to say in

263 the video, according to the task? Do you remember?

- 264 A: Mmm, talk about myself. And show some objects perhaps if I had them that  
265 identify me. And talk about my personality.
- 266 T: But first you decide to talk about interpersonal relations, which is like a topic,  
267 isn't it?
- 268 A: Yes.
- 269 T: It's like talking about the environment. Why did you make that decision?
- 270 A: Because I had always wanted to have a broadcast or a show to discuss topics,  
271 like... and give them my perspective. And I said, "OK, I'm going to talk about this  
272 but I'm also going to provide an introduction on who I am more or less, and talk a  
273 bit about myself". And I feel discussing a topic, when you talk and express yourself,  
274 you give a very good impression of what you're like.
- 275 T: Why did you decide to talk about interpersonal relations?
- 276 A: Because days earlier I had had... mm... a conflict with my classmates. (...)
- (LA-SR 00:38:49.400 – 00:40:58.200)

Again, in line 276 she referred to the earlier conflict with a peer. But the conflict may have only acted as a trigger that forced her to deal with concerns about the way people perceive her that may even have predated (and continued after) the incident. Learner A's position is one that, although perhaps overlooked in language learning studies, may not be too unfamiliar for young learners of a similar age in this and other contexts.



*Learner F's case*

Learner F's case differs considerably from that of learner A. To start with, learner F did not experience any significant disruption to the flow of her actions, as was the case with learner A. Secondly, learner F did rehearse and record (parts of) her video presentation a number of times. Thirdly, unlike learner A she made extensive use of mediation using private speech, written notes, *Google translate*, feedback and the video transcript. Additionally, she quite closely adhered to the task and seemed to have a genuine language learning orientation, albeit perhaps marred by her perception that the task was some kind of test. Learner F's participation was also characterised by a background of personal problems (e.g., insecurity about her image, eating disorders, issues at home and a mugging) which, for the most part, she managed to turn to her advantage by looking at them as challenges she had to rise to in this task and in life.

In this case, a good entry point to the analysis of learner F's data may be the process of mediation by language. On the face of it, learner F appeared to have a significantly lower level of ability in English, closer to a lower-intermediate level than to an intermediate level, as she could be seen (and later reported) struggling to understand questions and produce answers in the task due to her limited vocabulary:

- 1 T: (...) how did you feel during the experiment, in general? What feelings did you
- 2 experience?
- 3 F: OK, well, I liked it a lot because I felt supported. I had you on the
- 4 [videoconference] audio and I could use *Google* to check things and all that so that

5 was cool but what I found harder was the questions because as I was telling you I  
6 couldn't understand them very well. However, well perhaps there was just a word I  
7 didn't understand and the word in bold I tried to translate it and that allowed me  
8 to translate the whole question, well I mean I translated it. (...)

(LF-SR 00:00:10.251 - 00:01:20.065)

The presence of the teacher online was reassuring for her (lines 3-4). Yet, neither that nor the use of *Google translate* could make up for her difficulties understanding and producing the necessary language, as shown by the range of basic vocabulary she had to look up using *Google translate*, including words such as 'things', 'myself', 'anything', 'goes' and (significantly) 'learn'.

It is striking that in her case it was not the camera that made her nervous; it was her lack of vocabulary:

9 T: Yes, at some point [in the video] you say: "I am very very nervous", don't you?

10 F: Yes, yes (laughing).

11 T: What made you feel nervous?

12 F: Not the video, that was what surprised me, because making the video was not

13 making me nervous, it was not being able to answer [the questions]... not writing

14 [the answers] properly because that's my weakness, writing. (...) Mmm... It's

15 especially when I have to use 'to', 'at' and all that. I try to write the sentence

16 following the guidelines that they have taught me but there are things that I'm not

17 good at because using 'to' and 'at' is something I still forget to include so that's

18 what I find harder. [And] The verbs; I do understand when they have to be in the  
19 past, present continuous and all that but some are harder, [making sure] that all  
20 the composition has a sequence.

(LF-SR 00:02:39.929 – 00:03:51.954)

In lines 13-14 she introduced the notion of 'writing properly' as the source of her anxiety. She seemed to struggle when she had to use certain prepositions and follow grammatical rules (lines 14-18). She then added verb tenses (line 18-19) and discourse cohesion (line 20) to her woes. These problems mirror those of learner A (e.g., productive skills and verb tenses), including the concern with writing 'properly'. In addition, learner F reported listening problems:

21 F: Perhaps what's really hard for me is that, for instance, every word you link it  
22 with another word or letters and it has quite a few meanings, this is what I find  
23 harder because for instance with other people what we try to do is have a  
24 conversation even if it's wrong but in your head you begin to try to link. So what  
25 I've begun doing is that because I find it very hard and especially understanding  
26 when they speak fast. That's what I find hard because when I write when I write  
27 when I read or something well a word, like you taught us, I try to understand what  
28 it means together with other words. But when I speak I don't understand so well  
29 because I'm used to seeing the written word but not hearing. (...)

(LF-SR 00:06:15.937 – 00:07:17.242)

She argued that she found engaging in conversation hard (lines 25-26) presumably because of her lexical and discourse weaknesses (lines 21-22) and lack of listening comprehension practice (lines 28-29). She felt more exposed to written than to spoken English. Nonetheless, in lines 23-25 there was a first indication that she was prepared to create her own opportunities for language practice (see below for further analysis of her mediation by others in social interaction).

Her keenness on writing properly, although desirable in principle, carries with it a considerable amount of anxiety:

30 F: Ah, I was, yes as I told you I was a little nervous...

31 T: Uh-huh.

32 F: And... but this... but well, before I started looking at my notebook and writing,

33 to come prepared because I never like coming just like that, without anything... but

34 it was that I came feeling nervous and especially the fact that I didn't know if I was

35 going to answer them properly or not, and especially if I was going to write

36 properly.

(LF-SR 00:01:28.172 – 00:02:39.929)

She insisted that 'writing properly' was the source of her distress (lines 35-36). But what compelled her to feel under pressure to write properly? The first clue can be found in the way she approached questions in the task. It is not only that she used the automated feedback (unlike learner A) but also the way she used it:

- 37 F: (Reads question out loud to herself) What are you going to talk about...
- 38 (👁️ opens feedback pop-up window before attempting to answer the question;
- 39 reads question and drags pop-up window so that she can see it while she types her
- 40 answer) (👁️ She highlights and copies 'anything' from the feedback window)
- 41 (👁️ goes to *Google translate* and looks it up) (👁️ goes back to task question)

(LF-E 00:42:19:400 – 00:43:22.780)

The first striking thing about this excerpt (lines 38-41) is the amount of attention she paid to written feedback (reading most of it out loud to herself). Secondly, she opened the feedback pop-window *before* she tried to answer the question, contrary to what the teacher had expected. She then poised herself (by dragging the feedback window to a suitable space on the screen) to begin copying from the feedback to write her answer, only making slight changes to the original text, with help from *Google translate*. This segment was discussed in the following SR data excerpt:

- 42 T: In this part... mmm... the specific question is: 'What are you going to talk about
- 43 in your video? It doesn't have to be the same as in Sam's.' The first thing is trying
- 44 to understand the question. I think that you go to the feedback and the feedback
- 45 tells you: 'That's good. Anything goes as long as you tell people stuff about you.'
- 46 Here you struggled to understand the feedback. And you open [*Google translate*]
- 47 anything goes: todo vale... I have the feeling that you didn't understand this
- 48 question.

49 F: Yes, actually.

50 T: Other times you ask me: “Teacher, what does this question mean”. But there

51 you didn't ask me.

52 F: No.

53 T: You grabbed the feedback, you pasted it and just changed the wording a bit.

(LF-SR 00:14:19.878 – 00:15:33.511)

The question was “What are you going to talk about in your video?” (lines 42-43) and the proposed feedback was a cursory “That’s good. Anything goes as long as you tell people stuff about you” (line 45). Let us look at what she did next in the experiment:

54 F: (Another self-access centre user arrives and sits to work at a table nearby)

55 (Talking to herself as she reads from the feedback window) (in Spanish) what thing

56 (in English) 'goes' (👤 goes to *Google translate* and looks up 'anything goes')

57 (👤 goes to the feedback window) (👤 goes to the task window and begins typing)

58 (The other self-access centre user stands up and goes to find help to turn on a TV)

59 (Reading from feedback) That's that's... (👤 goes to task window and 🗣️ types her

60 answer) That's very nice.

61 (👤 goes back to feedback window and reads) Anything (👤 goes to task window

62 and types her answer) Anything (reads it to herself) Anything (👤 goes to feedback

63 window and reads to herself) Anything (👤 goes back to task window and talks to

64 herself as 🗣️ she types 'goes') Anything goes (👤 goes to feedback window and

65 reads to herself) as long as you tell people... ( F goes back to task window and  
66 types 'you tell pe...' as she says it out loud) you tell pe... (the other self-access  
67 centre user comes back with a helper who switches on the TV) ( F goes back to  
68 feedback window and reads to herself) as long as  
(LF-E 00:43:44.600 – 00:46:01.900)

After looking up 'anything goes' in *Google translate* (line 56) she then typed 'That's very nice' (line 60), paraphrasing the original 'That's good' provided in the feedback. In the lines that follow she proceeded to do the same with the remaining feedback text. This kind of pattern would continue for the duration of the task.

Yet, the teacher began to suspect that hers was typical exam behaviour:

69 T: At this point to be honest I had a vision of thinking it's as though she were in an  
70 exam.  
71 F: Yes, I felt like in an exam... (laughs)  
72 T: So, I don't know, you're in an exam, you don't know the question, I mean you don't  
73 understand what I'm asking you but you have to write something... You have a place  
74 where you have a suggestion and you get that and copy it to...  
75 F: Oh yes, I do that...  
76 T: And let's see what happens, right?  
77 F: Yes, it's just that I hadn't understood the...  
78 T: And why didn't you ask me... you don't remember?

79 F: No, I don't remember why...

(LF-SR 00:16:16.056 – 00:17:00.611)

Learner F acknowledged the fact that she felt as though she was doing a test (line 71). What made her feel that way? Learner F's explanation came as a complete surprise to the teacher:

80 T: And, why did you feel as though it were an exam?

81 F: No, no well whenever they ask me to do a questionnaire well especially if it's in

82 English I always feel very concerned, more than in other subjects, I don't know

83 why.

84 T: So if it's English you almost feel like in an exam by default.

85 F: Yes, well yes. Well not by default in all cases but for instance I saw the questions

86 and... I wasn't ready to answer questions.

87 T: So, you feel as though you were in an exam and you didn't know the answer...

88 F: Yes, especially thinking oh God, I'm going to come out with a low grade and

89 stuff.

(LF-SR 00:18:45.466 – 00:19:27.810)

On the one hand, the fact that she was dealing with English added extra pressure but, on the other hand, the questions in the task made her feel as though this was an exam (lines 85-86). This reaction had not been anticipated by the teacher-designer, just as the learner had not expected questions in the task (line 86). What was causing the learner's anxiety was her fear of failure as she perceived the task as a kind of exam (lines 88-89). Conversely, despite her self-reported concern with public image, public speaking and reputation (LF-SR



01:00:17.665 – 01:01:25.402), she could cope with this and was not as nervous because she was prepared for it (both mentally and physically, with her written notes).

Learner F came to the task to face a dread, namely public speaking. There is no evidence that this was the main motivation for learner F but it is clear that she felt as though she had to confront an audience and therefore speak in public in the task, as the following short excerpt shows:

90 T: Do you feel that this video... how did it affect you, watching Sam's video? Did it

91 help you? Did it intimidate you?

92 F: It helped me to greet, to think that there was an audience.

93 T: Uh-huh.

94 F: That was what motivated me: to think that I had an audience.

(LF-SR 01:08:22.611 – 01:08:31.455)

Thus, the very thing that intimidated her, that is, public speaking, also motivated her to take part in the task (line 90). This supports the hypothesis that at least part of her motivation for taking part in the study was her interest in pursuing her personal and professional development goal of becoming a more confident public speaker. At a different level, her need to think of an audience (featured strongly in learner A's case as well) also speaks of a need to establish some sort of dialogue to complete the task.

Let us now go back to learner F's proficiency-related difficulties. How did she overcome those difficulties? The answer is twofold: she relied heavily on (a) mediation by private speech and (b) mediation by tools. Let us look at the former first.

As predicted by Ellis (2003) (see *Chapter 2*), learner F's lower ability increased her use of private speech to mediate her learning. This is consistent with what was observed in the pilot study where the weakest learner, Isabella, constantly resorted to private speech, unlike the most proficient learner, Núria.

Let us analyse when and how learner F used private speech. Her use of private speech was bidirectional, in other words, she read aloud both input (e.g., questions from the task and translations from *Google translate*) and output (e.g., her answers to questions and her rehearsals for the video presentation):

- 95 (...) (Reading from feedback) That's that's... (👁️ goes to task window and 🖱️ types  
 96 her answer) That's very nice. (👁️ goes back to feedback window and reads)  
 97 Anything (👁️ goes to task window and types her answer) Anything (...)  
 (LF-E 00:43:44.600 – 00:46:01.900)

This short excerpt (lines 95-97) is typical of the way she vocalised input and output.

Occasionally, she could also be observed using private speech to focus on specific items of vocabulary that she was having difficulty with (LF-E 00:43:44.600 – 00:46:01.900).

Additionally, she rehearsed out loud by reading from notes in her notebook:

98 F: (She's poised to click on the 'Record video' button) (picks up her notebook  
99 and reads; tears off a page and reads from it; she begins to read aloud from the  
100 page to herself) Today I am talking, talking about me. No, today I am telling... Hello,  
101 today... Hello, today...today I am talking about me... little little little... Hello, today I  
102 am talking...

(LF-E 01:08:56.982 - 01:10:32.323)

She was not afraid to repeat the same word or structure many times to get the pronunciation right (lines 100-102) and even corrected herself out loud (“No, today I am telling...”; line 100). The latter correction is a sign of self-regulation (as she assessed her own work) that would appear again later:

103 F: ( moves the feedback pop-up window so that she can see it while she re-reads  
104 the question to herself) Are you going... (nodding vigorously) Ah, OK OK OK OK

(LF-E 00:49:04.315 - 00:49:27.229)

In this case she was forcefully confirming to herself with private speech and gestures (line 104) that she had understood the meaning of a piece of text, another example of her self-assessment by means of private speech.

In the following excerpt, learner F and the teacher reflected upon her use of private speech and discovered a close connection between private speech and language learning processes:

105 F: Ah, and then I make a lot of gestures, I don't know if you noticed... (laughs) (...)  
106 Yes, I'm always making a lot of gestures.

- 107 T: Mmm... Talking about which... Here it is. You see, you come back and here you  
108 begin to read [aloud]...
- 109 F: Yes, it helps me a lot to understand better when I can see it.
- 110 T: (...) What's the purpose for you of speaking aloud?
- 111 F: What happens is that when... mmm... er... when we started here at FIMEE  
112 [school] a teacher used to say to us: if you want our brain to process it better you  
113 can speak softly to yourself and aloud because that way our brain retains more, a  
114 doctor used to tell us, so I always try to do that...
- 115 T: And it works?
- 116 F: Yes, this is how I usually study.
- 117 T: (...) To memorise, although in this case it wasn't a question of memorising but  
118 rather understanding.
- 119 F: Yes, understanding. (...) Yes, it does, it helps me a lot.
- 120 T: How do you understand it? Is it as though you were talking to yourself? Or is it  
121 as though the text were talking to you? Or...
- 122 F: I think so, it's as though the text were talking to me because it's like when...  
123 when I read... when I'm learning vocabulary in English I pronounce the words and I  
124 write them in the air... (mimics writing in the air)
- 125 T: You write them in the air... Do you make a gesture?
- 126 F: Yes, first I write them... I try to understand them, I pronounce them and I write  
127 them in the air and then I do write them.
- 128 T: Tell me about writing in the air... Why do you write them in the air?

129 F: Because I'm speaking and I'm writing so, I learn to speak and I learn to write. (...)  
130 Yes, I do it a lot. In fact when I'm studying for a course I do that, first I read the  
131 text, then I remember and I say it as though I were in a conversation and er... that's  
132 how I memorise it more easily.

(LF-SR 00:08:01.550 - 00:11:37.080)

Learner F began by pointing out that she always makes gestures (line 106). She then made the connection between gestures and private speech by referring to her habit of 'writing in the air' (lines 123-124, 129). In essence, she needed to turn the text into speech (line 122) just as much as she needed to turn speech into text by 'writing in the air' new vocabulary (lines 123-124). Her words are remarkably evocative of Vygotsky's thesis developed in 'Chapter 8: The prehistory of written language' of his 1978 work. In it, Vygotsky calls speech first order symbolism and writing second order symbolism insofar as the latter is a representation of the former. Children (and perhaps second language learners) gradually develop from speech to writing until writing becomes a directly symbolic form of representation, whereby the child (or second language learner) no longer needs to resort to speech to interpret and produce written language. Vygotsky attaches great significance to gestures in this process as he sees gestures such as "writing in the air" (Vygotsky 1978: 107) as the precursors of writing. He claims that writing began with gestures that preceded drawing (using the index finger) which in turn preceded written language, which in evolutionary terms explains why children's first drawings are scribbles and gestures. A fuller interpretation of these issues has been included in *Chapter 6*. Suffice to say at this point that

learner F's account might be interpreted as evidence of the early stages of the language learning processes not of a child in this case but of a second language learner with a low level of proficiency. Movements from speech to written language and back are constant, perhaps all the more frequent given the strong component of orality arguably present in this local context.

It is now time to turn to learner F's noteworthy use of mediation by tools in the task. Let us start with the transfer of digital routines. Unlike learner A, her behaviour in this respect is not too remarkable because for the most part she worked effectively online without much difficulty. Yet, it is significant that at one point she expected interactivity from an image of a phonetic transcript in the task that had none (LF-E 00:54:32.079 – 00:54:39.114). This was discussed in the SR session:

- 133 F: (...) It's just that I remembered these [phonetic symbols] because that's how  
134 they appear in books, it's the intonation... (...) The pronunciation.
- 135 T: And now you get to this part and I feel that you're trying to copy it. And here's  
136 where you click.
- 137 F: It's just that... (points at the screen). (...) No. I just thought that a window would  
138 open, because I hadn't read all the instructions yet.
- 139 T: Were you trying to open like an exercise or a video?
- 140 F: I thought that it was a video (nods).
- (LF-SR 00:22:11.290 – 00:23:36.514)

Methodologically, the excerpt supports the value of the SR method to work out learner's intentions that otherwise could only be guessed at (the teacher did not know why she was clicking on the image) (lines 135-136). Eventually, it transpired that the learner expected the image to be linked to a video presentation (line 140). The intertextuality of the image goes beyond the digital environment as she recognised it as a phonetic transcript she had seen in her textbooks before (lines 133-134). The interactivity she expected came from her prior online experiences, as she assumed there would be media-rich content that was not available. This is significant and must be considered in future designs of online tasks.

The experiment also served the purpose of realising that digital routines do not transfer easily across borders. The video used as input in the task featured Sam, one of many American students in their early twenties who put up videos introducing themselves on *YouTube* for everyone to watch. Although this is easier for native L1 speakers such as Sam compared to L2 learners, this practice is not so common in Mexico, as learner F's apprehension indicates:

141 T: You didn't visualise who the audience was?

142 F: Only after I watched then I did want to put it up on *YouTube*. "No please!" I

143 wrote (laughs).

144 T: And, why not?

145 F: It's like because I'm still embarrassed. But it's strange because I love meeting  
 146 people and I've always liked it. Yes, meeting new people and all that, making  
 147 friends, but not with great masses [of people], no. (...)

(LF-SR 01:03:26.069 – 01:03:55.348)

Her humorous ‘willingness’ to put up her video on *YouTube* is soon followed by a clear “No please” (lines 142-143), because she does not want to make herself available to “great masses [of people]” (line 147). This might respond to her uneasiness about speaking in public, her insecurity about her image and her fear of being mugged again (see below), although admittedly it could be caused by other reasons such as (false) modesty.

Regarding the technological affordances of the tools used in the study, learner F too had to contend with connectivity issues of the local network. For instance, she panicked when she realised that the internet was not working well that day and, as a result, she could not use online dictionaries (LF-E 00:01:46.996 – 00:02:03.896). She seemed to have been predisposed to use online dictionaries (not so much physical dictionaries) during the task, unlike learner A. Eventually, she did manage to use *Google translate* instead, which she was familiar with, although the results were not very satisfactory:

148 T: (...) OK, well here unfortunately the dictionary I suggested was not available so  
 149 you had to resort to the translator. How did you feel using *Google translate*?  
 150 F: Well, what happens is I had to translate word by word because it doesn't... it  
 151 doesn't seem to link words. Just like me! (laughs) . (...) I don't feel that the  
 152 translator is terribly good...(...) but it did help me. I could, for instance (pointing at



153 the screen) I'm translating a sentence I did not understand at all.

154 T: Yes... and it looked like it did help you to understand. For instance, the

155 translation helped you a lot with that sentence in particular, I think.

156 F: Yes, yes, yes, yes it helped me. (...)

(LF-SR 00:03:52.250 - 00:04:57.730)

Although it was partly helpful (lines 152, 156), *Google translate* was not ideal because it could not go beyond providing word-for-word translations (lines 150-152). Her comment about the web application's inability to link words like her is testimony to the learner's capacity to laugh at herself (line 151) and to the limitations of the application.

Learner F did not use delaying tactics before recording her video. Instead, she rehearsed a great number of times and recorded 18 false starts and four complete versions of her presentation. Understandably, false starts frustrated her and this became manifest in fake soft crying and gestures. However, her frustration did not escalate to an outburst of tension or skipping sections (as was the case with learner A). The learner kept trying until she managed to record some full presentations of high quality (higher than that of learner A, one might argue) for a learner of such a low ability, of which the following excerpt is an example:

157 F: (🗣️ begins recording) Hello! Today I am talking little about me. I am 21 years old.

158 I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I like reading, singing, cooking, listening

159 to music. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies with my

160 boyfriend. And Sundays I go to my visit grandparents. I love Mexican food. I love to

161 drink orange juice. (Showing teddy to camera) This is *[name deleted]*. Is my

- 162 favourite teddy because my boyfriend give me to me. (Showing picture to camera)
- 163 She is my sister. Her name *[name deleted]*. She loves to play soccer. My family is
- 164 very important to me. I love them. This is my story. I hope you like it and thanks.
- 165 See you!

(LF-E 01:27:26.167 - 01:28:35.311)

As the reader may be able to appreciate, this presentation (unedited, as that of learner A) contains relatively few grammatical errors. The difference was that learner F was using notes to present whilst learner A was improvising, which probably affected the quality of the performance. This is significant not only because the final product is more accurate but also because data shows that her language was developing as she prepared using mediation by private speech and tools. It would seem that processes of mediation and preparation are key to language learning and learner development. (For information on language learning strategies, see Oxford 2011).

Let us now turn to the final part of this analysis of learner F's behaviour by looking at mediation by others in social interaction and processes of orientation and personal development.

Learner F (like learner A) looked for language-practice opportunities out of the school context. In her case, she described her habit of going to the cinema with her boyfriend to watch films in their original English version (LF-SR 00:54:17.138 – 00:57:03.700). They also engaged in conversation in English before and after the film. Learner F's data shows various ways in which language learning can be peer-mediated, illustrated by the following excerpt

where the teacher is shifting towards the role of the researcher-practitioner probing sociocultural factors affecting the learning process.

166 T: (...) And your friend, the one who said that to you about the song, does she also  
167 support you with English?

168 F: Yes, what happens is she plays... she plays the guitar, the drums... She plays  
169 several instruments, so once we had to sing in English and I like that song very  
170 much.

171 T: What's the name of the song?

172 F: Kiss me.

173 T: Kiss me.

174 F: But I've never taken the time to... what I've always wanted to do with her  
175 because we want to sing... I'm going to get it off the internet and then...

176 T: Then you can record it and put it up on *YouTube*.

177 F: Yes. Oh, no. Yes, I want to be recorded really but I'm embarrassed. Actually very  
178 few people know that I sing and that I like singing.

179 T: And why don't you share that with others?

180 F: A long time ago when I was in secondary school I started having these eating  
181 disorders; at that time I used to sing in a band...

182 T: Oh, and you left the band...

183 F: Yes (...)

(LF-SR 00:54:17.138 – 00:57:03.700)

Her excitement about singing and especially singing in English was such (lines 168-175) that she almost forgot about her fear of appearing in public (lines 177-178). She connected that to a difficult teenage period which included eating disorders (lines 180-181). Next, learner F delved into the reasons for not wanting other people to know that she can sing:

184 T: (...) Why don't you say it?

185 F: I don't know... Well, to be honest I think that it affects like my image (laughs)

186 because I've tried to... I don't know, like to be more professional and I feel that it

187 would affect that idea that I'm pursuing. (...) Yes, in fact I care about that a lot

188 because that's what I want to do, I want to do a Master's in Public Image.

189 T: Wow! So, you're aware that you have an image and you take care of it.

190 F: Uh-huh.

(LF-SR 00:54:17.138 – 00:57:03.700)

Eventually, what emerged was a concern with her public image; she wanted to 'look' professional and this professional orientation was already dictating her life choices, lest they may affect her reputation (lines 185-190). Societal conventions worthy of further investigation were playing a significant role in this.

Another opportunity to practise her English presented itself at a youth conference (LF-SR 01:02:29.253 – 01:02:57.527), where she managed to communicate with peers despite some listening comprehension difficulties.

On the other hand, issues with peers could also be observed during the task. In a repeat of Isabella's troubles with other self-access centre users (see Montoro and Hampel 2011), learner F was affected by the presence of another person working nearby (LF-E 00:43:44.600 – 00:46:01.900). The other self-access centre user's arrival and his subsequent movements went seemingly unnoticed but they were rather distracting for learner F, as she recalled in the SR session:

191 F: And then the boy distracted me a lot.

192 T: Did he?

193 F: Yes.

194 T: The one who was around there [in the self-access centre]. Yes, he can be seen

195 there at one point... so, that distracted you.

196 F: Yes, it's just that I hadn't understood and then... yes.

(LF-SR 00:15:36.459 – 00:15:49.658)

Lines 191, 193 and 196 make it clear that the newcomer's presence was disturbing learner F but the effect was a two-way one because she also feared she was the one disturbing the other self-access centre user:

197 F: (...) (as learner F is in the process of recording her video) And Sundays I go to visit

198 my grandparents. I love Mexican food (turns around to glance to the left, where

199 another self-access centre user is working nearby) I love Mexican food I love to

200 drink orange juice. I love Mexican food. I love I love drink I love to drink I love to  
201 drink I love to drink orange juice. She's my sister. Her name's *[name deleted]*.

(LF-E 01:13:06.557 – 01:15:02.869)

Learner F could be seen turning around to look at the person working nearby in the middle of her video presentation (lines 198-199). She later recalled her apprehension at the time:

202 T: You turn around (as they both watch her turn around to her left in the video).

203 F: Yes.

204 F: It's just that I kept forgetting that the guy was there and I wasn't sure whether I

205 was talking too loudly. Yes, I remember that.

206 T: It wouldn't be right to talk loudly.

207 F: Well, I didn't want to bother the guy.

(LF-SR 00:45:00.636 – 00:45:31.925)

Her problems, when considered together with those of Isabella in the pilot study and those of other participants (see 'Overview of data analysis' section below), suggest that there is a need for a private space in the self-access centre for learners to practise their pronunciation or speaking skills.

In learner F's particular case her behaviour was also connected to having been the victim of a mugging in the past:

208 T: And you turn around (as they both watch the video).

209 F: And I turn around. It's just the way I am always. I'm always on alert and I have

210 this trauma.

211 T: And, why?

212 F: I don't know. I'm very insecure but not insecure about myself, insecure about

213 being mugged or something because I was mugged.

214 T: Really?

215 F: Uh-huh. So, since then I've been like really traumatised, like very insecure about

216 everything.

217 T: How long ago was that?

218 F: It was about three years ago here (mumbles) about five years ago.

219 T: Very traumatic.

220 F: Yes it was for me, very very much, because I was walking along a street that was

221 really crowded, and I had my cheque, I had just been paid, and they took my bag

222 and everything, with a knife here in my back.

223 T: They didn't hurt you?

224 F: No, they only hurt me a bit and I was bleeding but anyway I had already paid my

225 school fees so what hurt me the most was that I was carrying the receipt to

226 register at school. (...)

(LF-SR 00:38:47.245 – 00:41:14.042)

Her commitment to school can be observed in lines 224-226 as she seemed more concerned with her school registration than with her physical wound. Still, the effects of the attack

never really subsided (lines 209-210, 212-213 and 215-216) to the date when the experiment was held.

As for problems with people other than peers or the teacher, learner F reported experiencing issues in the context of her family whilst discussing her reasons for preparing and using notes in the task:

227 F: It's just that I've never like being... I've always liked being organised and keeping  
228 some sort of... control because I've never liked arriving without anything. I like  
229 getting there prepared and knowing what I'm going to do. So, since I knew that it  
230 was going to be something in English, then I had my notes with me and my  
231 notebook to write down something if I didn't understand it and also I had prepared  
232 the video [presentation] because if... It's hard enough speaking, so I need some  
233 basis to do it properly. So, it's always like this, it's not just here, I'm always like this.

234 T: Where does that come from?

235 F: Well, I don't know, perhaps it's because since I was a little child I have had to  
236 grow up quickly and be organised and stuff and especially because I have worked  
237 already.

238 T: OK, I need to know a bit more about that. What has made you grow up?

239 F: For example, at home I've had many problems with my parents. Well, my  
240 parents have, there have been a lot of problems, so since I was a child I've had to  
241 work, well, not work a lot kind of thing... (...) For example, I began to work when I  
242 was 14 as a telephone assistant. Yes, I was the receptionist and then I kept



243 changing jobs so that has made me grow up because in my last job I was... (...)

(LF-SR 00:23:55.274 – 00:26:22.808)

When questioned about the reason for using notes, she reported her common-sense approach: “It’s hard enough speaking so I need some basis to do it properly” (line 232-233). The basis she referred to may be interpreted as tools, preparation and a certain degree of language learning orientation to the task. Upon further questioning, she revealed that her difficult upbringing and having to work from a young age made her mature and become more responsible for her actions (lines 240-243), which partly explained her behaviour in the task. The reader may wonder about the teacher’s curiosity that led him to ask the question appearing in line 234. The motivation behind it is twofold: on the one hand, it responds to readings, particularly of Vygotsky, where a strong emphasis on ‘development’ and the ‘genesis’ of the learning activity is made; on the other hand, it is also a reflection of similar personal experiences of having to grow up ‘quickly’ experienced by the teacher. This kind of questioning reflects the transition from a teacher-designer role to that of a researcher-practitioner that took place in SR sessions, resulting in a blurring of roles. Although this may seem problematic from a research perspective, it is perhaps inevitable and even desirable in the context of a research project that focuses on the researcher’s own professional practice.

Later on, further experiences the learner had with adults emerged. For instance, she reported the benefits of working with older people who acted as role models:

244 (...) From July to September I worked in the economic development unit in

245 Salamanca, I was working there. So, it's also because you work with people who

246 have an education, so you can't get there without anything. So, this has also  
247 helped me, I mean seeing people who are already professional and seeing the way  
248 they prepare and all that.

(LF-SR 00:30:10.943 – 00:31:27.457)

In her last job, she came into contact with professionals (lines 244-246) and she became more motivated to pursue success in life through education (“you can’t get there without anything”; line 246). The down side of her drive for success was fear of failure (see lines 88-89 above), as was the case with learner A, who was also concerned with “getting it wrong”.

To compound the stress caused by feeling exam-type pressure, learner F also felt (as did learner A) pressure to keep her task time to a certain time limit, which reportedly prevented her from using dictionaries (LF-SR 00:18:14.177 – 00:18:44.461). The analysis of learners feeling under time pressure to complete things as quickly as possible will be resumed in *Chapter 6* below.

To summarise, this section shows that learner F’s orientation to the task responded to her desire to succeed academically and in life, which included rising above her difficult family background, her problems with her image that led to eating disorders and a strong concern with her public image, and turning these into opportunities to grow, such as taking part in an experiment like this where she had to video record herself (against her reluctance to speak publicly) and in so doing stretch her language ability (despite her low level of proficiency). Although learner F can be said to have been pursuing a personal development objective as she engaged with the task (i.e., improving her public speaking skills), her personal interests

are not entirely divorced from her language learning orientation, as is made evident in her use of almost all the available mediation strategies and tools to achieve her objective. This stands in sharp contrast with learner A, who wanted “to see herself” and enjoy her ‘minute of fame’ on camera. Learner A lacked a language learning orientation that perhaps explains why she did not prepare or use any learning tools.

Despite the differences, one thing is certain: the two learners analysed so far were strongly motivated by personal development objectives that to a lesser or greater extent determined their behaviour and performance in this language learning task. This latter process, that is, personal development, despite probably being the fuzziest and most contentious data category of the study’s, is a rather important process.

In their pursuit of what could be seen as out-of-school objectives (i.e., personal development objectives) in the school setting of this study, learners were blending life and study in ways that point to new possibilities for school curriculum to lead their development.

Finally, earlier in this chapter the effects of the camera used in the task were clearly observable for someone who liked appearing on camera (learner A). Despite having been apparently unaffected by the presence of the camera, learner F was not indifferent to it:

249 F: And I have a better profile. There [in the video] I look awful (laughs as she points  
250 to the screen).

251 T: It's just that the take is from below. When C [another participant] came she  
252 grabbed the camera and put it up there (mimicking her actions).

253 F: Uh-huh.

254 T: And... and... she said that it looks awful so I now put the camera high up for

255 other people because they don't like it so much from below.

256 F: I look like I have double chin.

257 T: Yes, they say it doesn't make you look good.

258 F: No, it doesn't make you look good, no.

259 T: Everyone [says so]...

(LF-SR 00:41:14.578 – 00:41:46.939)

Given her background of self-image problems, learner F's comment in line 249 ("I look awful") came as no surprise. The teacher's subsequent attempts at reassuring her did little to console her as her last words in line 258 imply resignation rather than acceptance. This evidence must inform task design involving technology in the future. Young learners are struggling to come to terms with their budding identity and image in ways that our designs may not consider sufficiently. The potential effects of technology can be positive as well as negative. It would be important to make every possible attempt at harnessing them effectively.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a general analysis of all the data sets belonging to ten participants who took part in the main study, including an analysis of some of the learners' patterns of behaviour, followed by a detailed analysis of two data sets belonging to learners

A and F. A deeper interpretation of the analysis presented here is presented in the next chapter (*Chapter 6*).

## CHAPTER 6: INTERPRETATION

### 6.1 Introduction

After analysis to characterise the nature of the language learning activity of individual learners in *Chapter 5*, it is now time, in this chapter, to attempt to interpret the main findings emerging from that analysis more deeply.

In order to do this, Engeström's concept of *contradictions*, which may be defined as "historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems" (Engeström 2001: 137) will be used because "the concept of learning activity can only be constructed through a historical analysis of the inner contractions of the presently dominant forms of societally organized human learning" (Engeström 1987: 92). Ultimately, the aim is to study the activity through an analysis of the "stepwise formation and resolution of internal contradictions in activity systems" (Engeström 1999: 33).

As stated earlier (*Chapter 3*), external manifestations of contradictions (i.e., disturbances) are observable but only derivative in nature. These external manifestations can be linked to deeper, underlying contradictions, traditionally divided into four different levels or layers (see *Table 3*, p. 64 above), presented below again for ease of reference.

- **Level 1:** Primary inner contradiction (double nature) within each constituent component of the central activity.
- **Level 2:** Secondary contradictions between the constituents of the central activity.
- **Level 3:** Tertiary contradiction between the object/motive of the dominant form of the central activity and the object/motive of a culturally more advanced form of the central activity.
- **Level 4:** Quaternary contradictions between the central activity and its neighbour activities.

External manifestations of contradictions can typically take various forms (e.g., conflicts, resistance, critical incidents, turning points, dilemmas and double binds). Unfortunately, the nature of the data available in this study (not conceived as an intervention) made it all but impossible to find a wide range of external manifestations of contradictions in a reliable manner. Therefore, all manifestations have been classed generically as disturbances, that is, as deviations and variations from the norm, from established practices, likely to reveal systemic contradictions and point to new social, collective practices that may emerge as solutions or improvements to old systems.

Given the philosophical tenets of the cultural-historical activity-theoretical framework of this study, any claims of existing contradictions in the language learning activity system under investigation need to be rooted in a cultural-historical analysis of the institution where the research was conducted.

The justification for its inclusion in this part of the thesis lies in the fundamental role this analysis plays in making the transition from disturbances (potential external manifestations

of contradictions) to contradictions, in other words, from data analysis to interpretation. As Wertsch argues in relation to research within the sociocultural paradigm, “the goal of [this kind of] research is to understand the relationship between human mental functioning, on the one hand, and cultural, historical, and institutional setting, on the other” (Wertsch 1995b: 56). Engeström (2001) also emphasises the importance of the *historicity* principle of activity theory, which can be appreciated in the definition of *contradictions* referred to earlier in this section. Leontiev’s voice (1981) joins this line of argument by saying that the nature of any activity is determined by the sociohistorical context and the sociocultural history of the participants. Even though it has been argued that activity itself *is* the context (Nardi 1996, Engeström 1993), generally speaking systemic studies regard context in its own right as important (Nardi 1996), as do CALL researchers (see *Chapter 3*). Given that thus far the study has not delved into the local context much beyond some general information provided in *Chapter 4* and considering that the focus on single language learning events prevents the observation of changes over time, it is all the more important to contextualise the events (Bødker 1996; Engeström and Escalante 1996; Nardi 1996). Authors from the field of SLA such as Chapelle (2003) and Ortega (2005) have also insisted on the need to consider context in SLA research.

Methodologically speaking, this kind of cultural-historical analysis of the local institution has been challenging. There is little guidance in the literature indicating *how* it should be carried out but Bødker (1996) and Engeström and Escalante (1996) recommend that where the data available is mostly video data there is a need to include other sets of data and data



collection techniques, such as interviews and institutional documents. The expectation is that “[i]f we take a closer and prolonged look at any institution, we get a picture of a continuously constructed *activity system* that is not reducible to series or sums of individual discrete actions” (Engeström 1993: 66; emphasis in original). This picture of the activity system could not have been obtained on the basis of experiment and SR data alone. Finally, bearing in mind that contexts are dependent on “deep-seated material practices and socioeconomic structures of a given culture” (Engeström 1993: 66), access to technology, macroeconomic and socio-demographic data was also culled from several sources to broaden the scope of the analysis.

## 6.2 A cultural-historical analysis

Data for this analysis was collected in March 2011 in the form of institutional documents and interviews with a University of Guanajuato language teacher, a middle manager and a top manager of the university as well as with a former Mexican Member of Parliament and from public documents from international bodies such as the OECD and the World Bank (see *Appendix 7* for further details, p. 393).

Built upon the legacy of other educational institutions that, under different names, date back to the 18th century, the University of Guanajuato is a fairly modern university founded in 1945 (“*Reseña histórica*”), shortly after Mexico entered its modern period under the *PRI* (Revolutionary Institutional Party) government, which ruled uninterruptedly with almost absolute powers until 2000. The institution only achieved an autonomous status in 1994, the same year when an important free-trade agreement between Mexico, the US and Canada

was signed and the first self-access centre at the institution opened under the auspices of the British Council. The institution's most important structural reform began in 2007, as did the expansion of the self-access centres that resulted in 10 new self-access centres being opened in the four new campuses, which were granted a significant level of devolved powers, in 2009 (for more key historical events see *Appendix 2*, p. 282).

The state of Guanajuato is a densely populated state of close to six million inhabitants ("Censo 2010") living in an area of 30,000 sq km roughly the size of Belgium. It is the largest contributor of migrant unskilled workforce to the US of all the Mexican states (10% of the 1.1 million Mexican migrants in 2005-2010 were from the state of Guanajuato; "Censo 2010"). Education levels are low in terms of numbers of students (school enrolment in higher education in 2008 was 27% of the population in the relevant age group compared to 34% in Brazil; "World Bank Data 2011"), the quality of their performance (the latest PISA results ranging between 416 and 433 in Mexico compared to the OECD average of about 500 points; "PISA 2009") and the average number of years of education completed (7.2, one of the lowest in the country; "Censo 2010"). Historically, the state has played a crucial role during key epochs, namely the period of colonisation, the independence struggle and the revolution. Manufacturing, agriculture (see *Picture 1* below, p. 198) and commerce are the main activities in the state's economy.



***Picture 1: Factory near the research setting seen from cornfields***

Car manufacturing, led by the existing *General Motors* plant (Volkswagen, Mazda and Honda also planning to open major plants), has a strong industrial presence in the state, as do shoe making and oil-refinery. In fact, one of the largest oil refinery plants in Mexico is located in the city of Salamanca, where the study was conducted. It opened in 1950, transforming the city and paving the way for the creation of DICIS (the Engineering Division used as the study's research setting), which opened in 1964 with close links to the refinery, currently in the hands of the public company *Pemex* (see *Picture 2* below, p. 199).



*Picture 2: Pemex oil refinery's flaming chimney near the research setting seen from corn fields*

Despite being the second largest economy in Latin America (“World Bank Data 2011”), levels of inequality (where the richest 20% hold 56.4% of national income whilst the poorest 20% have 3.8%; “World Bank Data 2011” using 2008 data) and poverty (17% of the population live below the national poverty line; “World Bank Data 2011” using 2005 data) suggest that Mexico has not been able to make full use of its economic potential (especially oil revenues) to benefit its growing population (the population currently grows at a steady 1% per year, having increased from 25 million people in 1950 to 112 million in 2010, of which 55% are under 30; “Censo 2010”). Inequality is perhaps epitomised by the case of the telecommunications mogul Carlos Slim, owner of the *Telmex* telecommunications near-

monopoly, whose estimated fortune (US\$74 billion) made him, for the second year in a row, the richest man in the world in 2011 (“Forbes 2011”). In contrast, Mexico’s entire budget for 2010 was US\$185 billion and the University of Guanajuato’s budget for the same year was US\$0.2 billion. This is particularly important in the context of this study as exceptionally high broadband rates are dampening educational institutions’ efforts to provide fast and reliable internet connectivity. The average cost of broadband internet access in Mexico is by far the highest of all OECD countries at US\$ 41.99 per Mbps, compared with US\$8 in the US (“OECD Broadband Portal” using 2009 data), whilst the 2.5 Mbps average advertised broadband download speed is the slowest in the OECD, in sharp contrast with that of the US (14.6 Mbps) and the OECD average (30.5 Mbps) (“OECD Broadband Portal”). This is forcefully echoed by a top IT manager at the institution:

In terms of internet access for universities, it's complicated because we have a monopoly [*Telmex*] that offers infrastructure and Mbps at gold-like prices. We have the highest internet costs on the planet, I guess, because here we pay about US\$30,000 per month for a 34 Mbps channel. That is crazy!

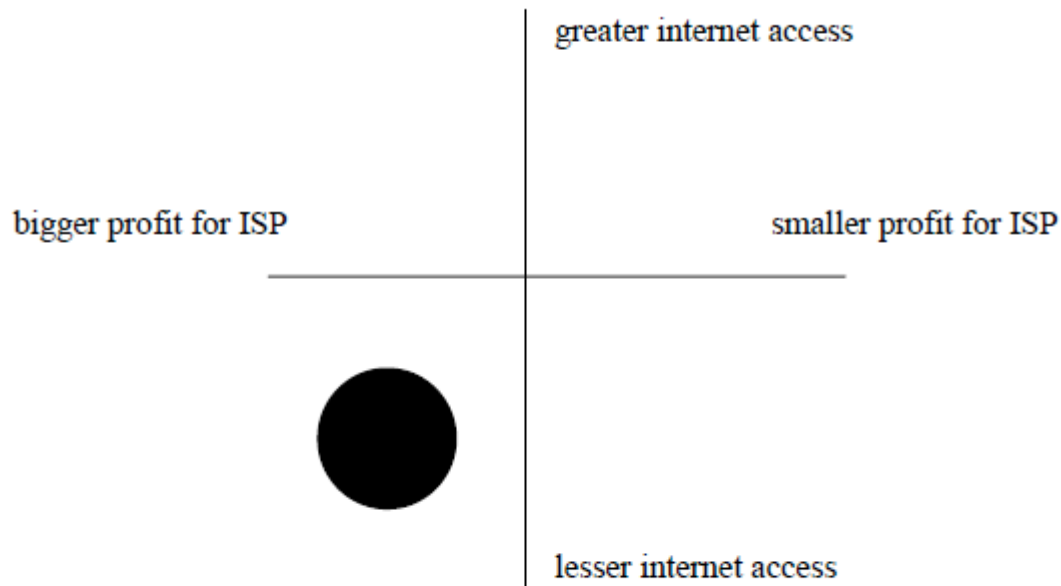
(Institutional top-level IT manager interview)

Countrywide political efforts to counteract this problem appear to run into the determination of powers-that-be to keep things as they are, as a former Member of Parliament recounts:

I was elected [as a Member of Parliament] in 2006 and my term ended in 2009. During that time, I was the President of a committee called Digital Access for Mexicans which has to do with the digital divide issue in Mexico. It was a very frustrating experience because sometimes you are not too convinced about the decisions that you are taking and they end up destroying you. That is the sad part of such public posts, because despite wanting to change things, breaking the inertia is very hard because of the interests involved, and even more so in the case of telecommunications. In all countries this is an area of economic interest where the powers that be that exist anywhere, the hegemony of the media, turn this into a controversial issue.

(Former Member of Parliament interview)

This situation may be illustrated as follows (see *Fig. 14*, p. 202):



**Figure 14: Market forces preventing greater internet access**

Monopoly-like practices on the part of the internet service provider (ISP) increase costs and reduce broadband access (and its quality) in a context where, in 2009, only 18% of households were connected to the internet (“OECD Mexico”) compared to 74% in the US (Ducate and Arnold 2011).

Huge public investment in education, reaching 22% of Mexico’s total public expenditure in 2010 compared to 10% in Italy and the 13% OECD average, makes Mexico the biggest investor of public funds in education of all the OECD countries (“Education at a Glance 2010”); regrettably, this has not produced the desired outcome, as PISA results (see above) confirm poor achievement at secondary education level. This is usually referred to in Mexico

as the ‘big problem’ of secondary education. Thus, the student population at the University of Guanajuato is academically ‘heterogeneous’ at best, whilst having something in common in that the vast majority are first generation university students. Additionally, the number of students has almost doubled in the last ten years (from about 10,000 in 2000 to 18,000 in 2010), and it is expected to double again in the next ten years (reaching 40,000 by 2020) (“PLADI 2010-2020”), which puts pressure on available resources (with a 26 students-per-teacher ratio Mexico has the biggest class sizes in higher education of all the OECD countries; “Education at a Glance 2010”). Increasing student numbers and maintaining standards is always a difficult balancing act, although it is also true that the university’s budget has almost doubled in the last few years, going from US\$0.111 billion in 2005 to US\$0.205 billion in 2011 (“Presupuesto”), in line with the growth in student numbers.

The need for technology and the determination to deploy technology to mediate most of its operations are pervasive in all the institutional documents. Although it is outside the remit of this study, the question remains as to whether the institution might be experiencing a sort of ‘technology pull’ driven by market forces and globalisation trends whereby it feels under pressure to adopt new technologies and at the same times exerts institutional pressure upon its employees and students to do so (Steel and Hudson 2001). If this were the case, it could potentially alienate some people (teachers and learners, for instance) who might feel loss of control or a lack of clear purpose when using technological tools.

A paradox adds to the complexity of technology-related issues. After deploying its own telecommunications network to curb the high rates of the internet service provider, the



university faces acute shortages of staff that can run its own complex network, as a top University of Guanajuato IT manager explains:

The human [resources] component is complex too because with the new structure of the university we are supposed to pass on responsibilities to each campus, but this is unfinished because a lot of people are not specialists. For example, the telephone system is integrated to the network, it's not like it used to be, a specialist is needed but the campuses don't have them, and we haven't been able to achieve this because of the lack of trained staff. But we also have the restriction that posts are not being authorised to cover the demand. It's hard because we are present in ten municipalities and the entire network is our own, we don't hire services from any provider.

(Institutional top-level IT manager interview)

A striking finding from the review of institutional documents is the fact that the concept 'free(dom)' is used four times in the university's mission statement. In contrast, this concept is not mentioned at all in the mission statements of other institutions, such as the Open University (UK) or the University of Helsinki (Finland). The exact meaning intended for this concept is open to further probing and interpretation, but from a dialectical perspective the insistence on the concept may be interpreted as indicative of an equally strong opposing force, namely that of 'lack of freedom'. In what ways does the institution lack freedom and why does it aim to achieve a freer status? These are questions that require a level of analysis that is beyond the remit of this study, but which may be of interest for future studies given

their potential as manifestations of deep-seated systemic contradictions (e.g., societal forces affecting the institution) that may hold the key to institutional progress.

Finally, when looking at change processes underway at the institution at the time of the study, the transition to a competence-based model of education<sup>9</sup> is of particular interest because of its top-down nature that has hardly provided practitioners and students opportunities to participate. Further, there is the juxtaposition of institutional demands for a fast-paced work environment and the perception that the administration offers a slow and inefficient service in return which has been associated with the recently completed process of restructuring and decentralisation. Practitioners (both academic and administrative staff) have voiced their concerns over having an added layer of administration (the campus), which may have caused greater rather than lesser levels of bureaucracy and inefficiency, especially in the period of transition from the old to the new structure. In the following data excerpt both the intertwining of various change processes and the frustration at the perceived inefficiency of the new administrative structure become apparent.

When I started working at FIMEE – now DICIS – [different names for the Engineering Division] I was in charge of getting the CAADI [self-access centre] started. [In the past] [i]t was, I think, to do any kind of procedure (asking for paper...) it was quicker and shorter; I just had to deal with one, two, three people, who were above me. With the recent [restructuring] process there are so many posts, and they are not clearly

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<sup>9</sup> The new model is being developed within the context of the Tuning Latin America Project, a development of its Tuning Europe counterpart.

identified, I mean the posts and the duties that each person has, so it takes longer. For example, to ask for toner for my printer, a simple thing, the procedure takes a long time, you need to ask for it in writing, then wait for somebody's reply, then go to someone else, sometimes call because what I need hasn't arrived. Compared to what we had in the beginning, there wasn't so much trouble, so much fuss [before].

(Middle manager with permanent post interview)

The perception of an administration that is inefficient when responding to requests is in sharp contrast with that of an administration that is demanding when asking things of its employees, as the following data excerpt shows.

The administration is asking us to deliver this [new curriculum] immediately. It worries me a bit that things are done 'al vapor' [at full steam], fast, because they are demanding that we meet a deadline, and it [the curriculum] may not work.

(Middle manager with permanent post interview)

When this particular middle manager shared her concern regarding the time constraints with her line manager, the idea of 'reaching perfection' was reportedly set up against that of 'polishing' to justify the 'full steam' approach.

When we shared this concern with the manager in charge of this, he said it must get done. Their vision as an academic body or as engineers, I don't know, is that things must get done anyhow, and if one wants to think too much or reach perfection,

perfection will never be achieved. This is what he told us, and when one looks for perfection and doesn't find it the result is more frustrating. So he's completely trusting the experience we have, the knowledge we have acquired and the experience that we had as students [of this programme], and from the master's we've done, to make this change.

He thinks that things must be done 'at full steam'; the result might not be optimal at first but we can keep on polishing it later. At least in this engineering division I think that their vision is based precisely on that [doing things quickly and then polishing them].

(Middle manager with permanent post interview)

The only caveat to this approach is that academic programmes at undergraduate level are only reviewed, on average, every five years, which seems a serious limitation to 'polishing' efforts.

To summarise, Mexico and the University of Guanajuato may still be in a process of consolidating their institutional structures, in pursuit of realising individual and collective aspirations to certain rights and freedoms, if we consider the relatively recent advent of 'real' democracy for the country (2000) and autonomy for the institution (1994). The university has been experiencing a period of constant changes, structural reform (2007) and expansion that has led to the creation of 10 new self-access centres within the state of Guanajuato. The state is highly populated but low levels of education and relatively high levels of poverty lead large numbers of people to migrate to the US to look for work. In turn,

the US invests heavily in Mexico on the back of the free-trade agreement that exists between the two countries and Canada. Significant investment in education has not produced the desired results as students reach higher education in comparatively small numbers and often unprepared. The Engineering Division where the study was conducted was created in 1964 as a high-achievers technical school with a vision of academic excellence and strong ties to the oil refinery that triggered the significant expansion and development of the city of Salamanca since it first opened in 1950. It was only in the recent 2008-2011 four-year period that new non-engineering programmes (business, digital arts and TESOL) have been launched at the division. The provision of IT services at this local higher-education institution is still an issue because of expensive, poor broadband access, lack of technical expertise and national political interests preventing a better provision of connectivity. Prevalent modes of top-down, bureaucratic and demanding management styles may mirror political and economic practices typical of this local context giving rise to feelings of ostracism and a desire to have a voice in institutional matters both on the part of practitioners and learners. Let us now move on to the interpretation of contradictions in the study based, in part, on this cultural-historical analysis.

### **6.3 Contradictions**

This section builds the case for the existence of a number of systemic contradictions upon evidence presented to the reader through data analysis shown thus far. Existing contradictions have been classified into the four levels (primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary; Engeström 1987) described earlier. Primary, secondary and quaternary

contradictions are described first as an argument is gradually built for a final and all-encompassing tertiary contradiction concerning the transition from traditional learning practices to a new emerging type of learning. The contradictions found in the study are outlined in overview format in *Table 5* below (p. 210).






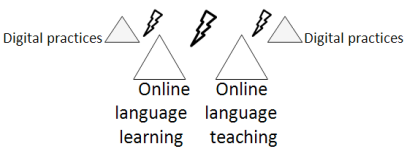

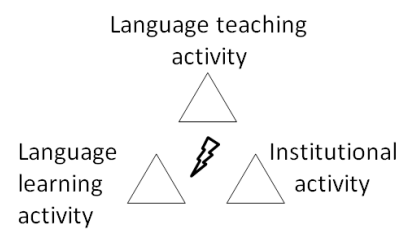
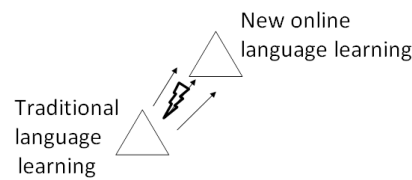
Contradictions	Elements/activity systems affected	Description
Primary		These young learners struggle to make sense of the language learning activity and actions involved in completing the task at hand. The focus of interpretation here is the individual and the double nature of their language learning activity.
Secondary		All learners understand the object of the activity is to make a video. In other words, they understand <i>what</i> they are doing. However, their understanding of <i>what</i> they are doing <i>this for</i> departs from expectations in that personal goals become the priority over language learning goals for some learners.
		Most learners adopt a tool-free approach to the task that they later regret. This reflects common learner practices reported by the learners and speaks of the existence of a particular kind of language learning culture.
		Clashes between some learners and their peers and the insistence on the need for more opportunities for oral practice with more capable speakers point to a contradiction affecting the relationship between the learner and the community at the core of the language learning activity.
		Implicit rules, such as the perception of the task as some kind of test and time pressure, reveal a prevailing contradiction connected to the educational research setting of the study.
Quaternary		The digital activity of learners (and the teacher-designer) run parallel to and intersect with the language learning activity. This phenomenon manifests itself in various ways, the most revealing of them being the transfer of digital routines.
		There is some evidence to support the claim that political and economic interests in this country are clashing with institutional efforts to provide acceptable levels of connectivity. This contradiction is compounded by the difficulties encountered in trying to run local networks without the necessary expertise. The net result is a poor and unsatisfactory teaching and learning online experience as well as significant obstacles to conduct online research.
Quaternary		A final quaternary contradiction is presented, one that brings together clashes between teaching, learning and the institutional environment and paves the way for the emergence of new ways of overcoming this overriding contradiction and expanding in new directions. Although learning is the primary concern of this study, in this context learning is tightly connected to instruction, as evidenced by the use of the <i>disturbances</i> construct in the data analysis phase. Thus, the needs and motives of learners and those of the teacher clash in pursuit of different outcomes. The impact of the institutional environment is also a factor to consider.
Tertiary		Learning online in the self-access centre, seen as a new and emerging kind of language learning activity, stands in opposition with traditional classroom-based teaching and learning practices. Combined with the growing digital life of learners, this creates a fascinating intersection of digital practices leading to movements from digital routines to digital actions and back. The fact that learners in this local context tend to have a preference for oral delivery of instruction(s), together with received wisdom about time and success, combined with the above factors, produce a rich and complex array of opposing forces vying for pre-eminence as the new type of learning activity takes shape.

Table 5: Overview of contradictions

#### 6.4 Primary contradiction



*Figure 15: Primary contradiction affecting the subject of the activity*

A number of disturbances presented in this thesis point to the existence of a **primary contradiction** affecting individual learners as they struggle to make sense of their language learning activity. The very orientation of learners to the task, often guided by personal development goals (in five out of ten cases) and significantly affected by fear of failure (in four cases), suggests both the importance of growth issues in their transition to adulthood and ways in which they respond to social and institutional pressures, generally resulting in shyness or embarrassment (six learners) and self-image problems (four learners). Hence, rather than learning the language because of the intrinsic or use value this activity may have, cases such as that of learner A reveal a utilitarian view of the language guided by concerns about losing face and gaining ‘social capital’, in other words, led by extrinsic motives and the exchange value of language. One way in which this contradiction manifests itself is in the test-like approach to the task affecting six learners, including feeling time pressure to complete the task in the shortest possible time (seven learners), which may be a manifestation of institutional expectations in this high-achievers school that not only affect practitioners but also learners (see *Section 6.2* above). Given that the self-access centre was not the most appropriate space for ‘solo’ speaking practice (five learners were disturbed by other users) and that problems also existed with the provision of online learning spaces (see



connectivity issues mentioned in relation to Dimension 9 ‘Technological affordances’ in *Chapter 5*), alternatives have to be found to provide ‘safe’ language learning spaces that do not abound in the school setting at present.

In short, young learners are subjected to a number of social and institutional pressures that affect their personal development and inevitably affect, if unaddressed, their language learning development. Potential options to alleviate these pressures have been provided in this thesis when available.

### 6.5 Secondary contradictions



*Figure 16: Secondary contradiction affecting the subject, the object and outcomes*

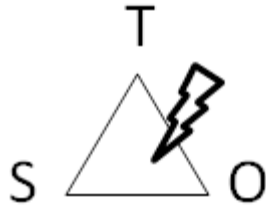
As said earlier, none of the learners had problems identifying the object of the learning activity set out by the task, namely ‘making a video’. But the same level of attention was not paid to language learning outcomes. In other words, their understanding of *what* they were doing coincided with the understanding of the teacher-designer but views differed when it came to *what* they are doing this *for*. The reader may remember (see *Fig. 13* above, p. 97) that the learning outcomes set for this task include (a) to reflect on the form and content of introductions and (b) to develop language and presentational speaking skills. Even though the nature of the task (entitled ‘Who are you?’) invited the learners to focus on themselves, it also contained a number of sections, tools and references encouraging focus on linguistic

and paralinguistic features and reflection on language learning strategies, which were not picked up on by some of the learners. For instance, five learners skipped whole sections of the task, especially those devoted to preparing, practising and reviewing the video. As learner B put it, they just 'jump into' making the video. Amongst other possible reasons, this can be attributed to the pursuit of other-than-language-learning motives (expressed by four learners), perhaps due to a certain narcissism commonly associated with teenagers or young adults in the process of maturing into adulthood, or to the fact that personal development issues are of crucial importance in this fledgling stage of their lives. The concern with 'writing well' or 'writing appropriately' shown by eight of the learners in the study seems to bear more relation to a desire to conform to social conventions (e.g., gaining social capital, in Learner A's case) or to academic expectations (e.g., learner F's case) than to genuine 'learning for learning's sake' or to achieve any 'real' language learning outcomes (those set by the task or by the learners themselves), as four learners reported focusing on form to look good or not stupid. This may be linked to the culture of 'getting things done' without much regard for the quality or the process of doing them (and learning to do them) stemming from local workplace mass-production-based practices, the academic environment where management follows a 'full-steam' approach and possibly the low income households of most of the learners, if Wertsch et al.'s (1984) findings from experiments conducted with Brazilian mothers and their children are believed to be applicable to this context too. This systemic current in favour of a 'getting things done' approach affects the transition from object to language learning outcomes and manifests itself as a disturbance, for instance, in the case of Learner A and B as satisfaction at having

been 'effective' in completing the task. But there are other contributing factors beyond orientation which will make it necessary to look at further contradictions involving mediation by tools, the community and rules. The rich literature on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation should also be considered in relation to this contradiction (see, for instance, Dörnyei 2001; Gardner 2001).

### *The role of the teacher*

Although the focus of the study is on learning and the learner, the entire analysis and interpretation is coloured by the teacher's perspective. Additionally, the various roles played by the teacher (teacher, designer and researcher) make this perspective a complex one. What is more, just as learners may be trapped by the enchantment of looking at themselves or listening to their own voice, the teacher, especially in his role as a teacher-designer, like the mythological character Pygmalion in relation to his statue, may be tempted to project his passion onto the task, admiring it in ways that could lead to short-sightedness and misjudgements about the language learners and the language learning activity being investigated. In short, this contradiction blocking the transition from the object of the activity to language learning outcomes requires both learners and the teacher to 'transcend' their self-interest or self-admiration in pursuit of a greater good, language learning and language learner development.



*Figure 17: Secondary contradiction affecting the subject, tools and the object*

Just as rarely as people make use of maps in the local area where the study was conducted, including taxi drivers and private individuals who generally rely on prior knowledge or advice from passers-by to find destinations, a significant number of participants in the study (seven) relied on knowledge ‘in their heads’ whilst only a few (three) used written notes to complete the task. In short, there exists a case of underuse of mediating tools.

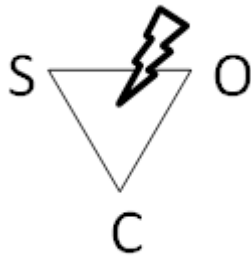
This phenomenon provides rare insights into issues such as literacy. For example, six learners used the pointer or cursor to read text from the screen and reported using their index finger to read on paper. Although further studies would be required to prove this claim conclusively, it may be argued that this practice speaks of a low level of literacy in the learners, not a surprise in a context where the average level of education is 7.2 years. The case for underdeveloped literacy is reinforced by recent PISA results. In contrast, ‘orality’ has a strong presence locally and ‘orality’ can be said to be the precursor of ‘literacy’ in the development of higher psychological functions. Consistent with this is the prevalence of private speech in private study practices referred to earlier (six learners reported using private speech generally to study not just English but all other subject matters).

However, the introduction of new online media, although reliant on less pervasive rates of internet access than in other areas of the world (only 18% of households in Mexico are connected to the internet), has not waited for literacy levels to improve; instead, new digital practices have combined with traditional literacy practices to produce unexpected results. The new media can be said to be responsible for at least three learners assuming they would be provided with immediate answers or solutions to their academic needs during the experiment and possibly suffering from what Carr (2010) calls 'scattered attention', effectively bypassing information-finding processes (only two learners actively searched for information during the experiment), such as those involved in making use of reference and learning materials, and showing poor reading skills.

This tool-free, 'in the head' approach to the task was perhaps one of the most striking features of the language learning activity observed in the study. Testimony to the scale of this kind of approach is the underuse of written resources, such as dictionaries (none of the learners used a dictionary consistently in the study and only one learner admitted to using dictionaries regularly), written feedback (used by only two learners in the task; others would have preferred face-to-face oral feedback or feared using the feedback provided would amount to 'cheating'), the video transcript (four learners found it useful) and the 'Prepare' and 'Practise' sections of the task (skipped by five learners).

These prevailing practices are epitomised by learner F's reference to her 'writing in the air' (see *Chapter 5* for details). Although she was describing her use of gestures when studying English in private as a strategy that allowed her to internalise and externalise new

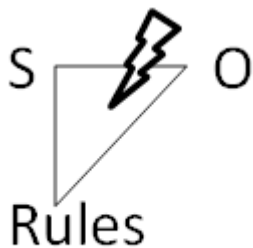
vocabulary, the metaphor can be extended to account for more generic practices observed in the study whereby learners rely on ‘orality’ rather than ‘literacy’ to learn (gestures acting as a proxy linking both representational ‘worlds’), which includes not using tools (fittingly no pen, for instance) to assist their efforts. As shown in the ‘Tertiary contradiction’ section below, the air-like quality of the digital environment fits well into this kind of ‘writing in the air’ metaphor. But for now, let us momentarily concentrate on the significance of mediation by other people in social interaction in the system.



*Figure 18: Secondary contradiction affecting the subject, the community and the object*

Another instantiation of a **secondary contradiction** found in the study concerns processes of mediation by people. The importance of mediation by peers in language learning processes becomes clear considering that four learners spoke of having regular support from peers to advance their language ability. Conversely, learner A and learner F’s ‘conflicts’ with peers when trying to organise informal conversation practice sessions with unresponsive fellow learners can be interpreted as an indication that a contradiction exists whereby these language learners require support from more capable peers (or adults), as reported by at least six learners, that is currently not sufficiently available. Opportunities for ‘solo’ practice do not fare much more favourably, at least in the self-access centre, as five learners

complained of being disturbed by other users while working on the experiment. In contrast, five learners used the SR sessions as opportunities to learn new vocabulary and reflect on their language learning strategies. During the experiment, as many learners (two) appreciated the presence of the teacher as those that found it embarrassing. The issue here seems to be one of offering options for learners to engage in work in their zone of proximal development with more capable peers or adults (to fill in the shoes of the interlocutor imagined by seven of the learners) and private spaces (physical and online) where they can not only do 'solo' work of the kind required in the study but also resort to private speech in a 'safe' environment. These developments should not hide the fact that a considerable amount of language learning work is already going on socially out of the classroom, as reported by seven learners. This will require efforts by practitioners and the institution to integrate new initiatives with existing practices in a respectful and collaborative manner.

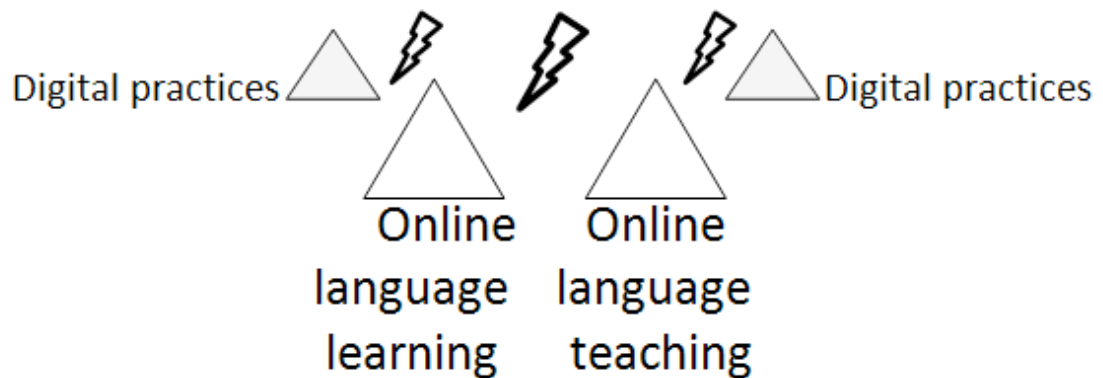


*Figure 19: Secondary contradiction affecting the subject, rules and the object*

As shown earlier in the chapter (see 'Primary contradiction' section), the fear three learners had of being caught 'cheating' during the task is linked to the tendency of six learners to feel as though this was some kind of test. Implicit to this is the assumption that in test conditions learners should not take too long (seven learners felt time pressure) and should not use any

tools or any other kind of assistance (only two learners actively looked up information), all of which runs against ideal conditions for productive learning to flourish. What is more, the interpretation being proposed here is that the academic environment (generally in traditional education settings and this particular high-achievers school) and the social environment (dictated by economic and sociocultural practices with a strong emphasis on results and success) predispose the learners in ways that clash with efforts to nurture a favourable pedagogical environment. In this regard, the recommendation put forward in the closing ‘Tertiary section’ of this chapter is to devise strategies of various kinds to foster a new culture of language learning removed from the pressures of testing, time constraints and results.

## 6.6 Quaternary contradictions



*Figure 20: Quaternary contradiction affecting the online language learning and teaching activities*

A **quaternary contradiction** is the clash of the activity under investigation with one or more neighbouring activities. For the sake of interpretation, let us represent the main activity as that of ‘online language learning’. Connected to this is the ‘online language teaching’



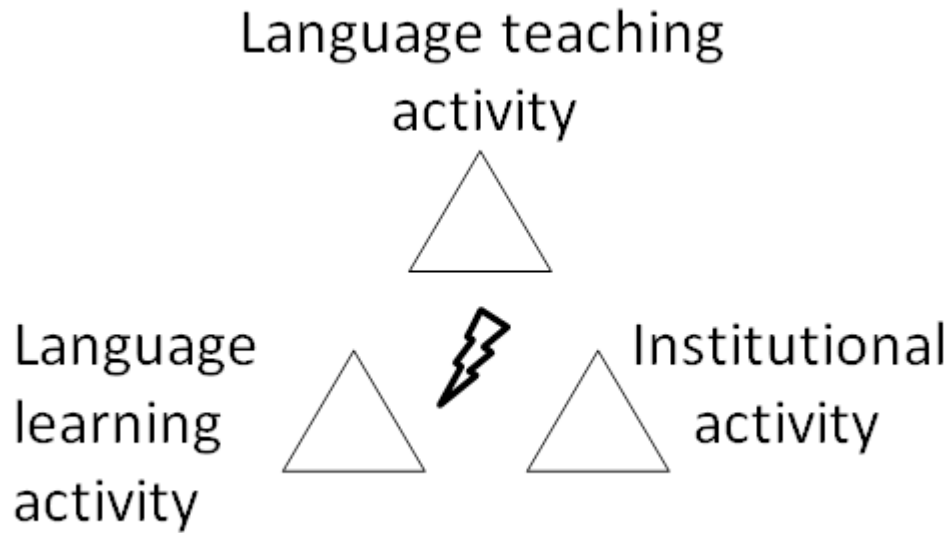
activity. A significant number of disturbances (differences between what the teacher and the learner were focusing on) manifested themselves during the study, as seen in *Chapter 5*. Within Dimension 8 (transfer of digital routines), it is possible to observe movements of convergence and divergence between the online language learning and teaching activities and digital practices of learners and the teacher for private, social and academic purposes. For instance, learner A was accustomed to certain routines on *Facebook*, such as being provided with links to immediate answers, which she expected to find in this online task. In turn, the teacher was used to accessing websites using an email address as a username and assumed that this was a routine learners would also be familiar with. When expectations are not fulfilled, the course of the language learning activity can be derailed with unexpected consequences. The case for a contradiction affecting these neighbouring activities can be made. A possible resolution of this contradiction would be to engage local practitioners, teachers and learners in efforts to identify and build shared practices involving the digital world and online learning perhaps through the use of a 'digital literacy' construct (consisting of the digital skills already mentioned but also including a social element and the ability to use digital tools critically and creatively; Hampel 2007) to bring together the needs, motives and aspirations of all the people involved.



**Figure 21: Quaternary contradiction affecting the institutional and the economic and political activities**

Another significant **quaternary contradiction** emerged in the cultural-historical analysis included in this chapter between two neighbouring activities, the institutional activity and the national economic and political activity. The reader may recall that local access to broadband is the slowest and the most expensive of all OECD countries. In the view of a former Mexican MP, this situation is caused by economic powers-that-be and defies the best political intentions. This resulted in the need to create locally-developed infrastructure to curb the expensive fees of the internet service provider, only to find an acute scarcity of trained personnel to run it. All in all, the resulting poor and unreliable internet connection caused significant disruption to both pedagogical and research efforts during the study and raises questions about what the 'real' chances of deploying online language learning of acceptable quality are. Problems were also observed involving the two VLEs used and their associated tools. Presently, the resolution to this particular contradiction appears to be beyond the scope of intervention of learners, practitioners or the institution.

A possible alternative could be found, at least while the present circumstances last, in the form of a robust local intranet (which does not exist now) where open educational resources (easily downloadable for offline use) and effective computer-mediated communication tools could be hosted and used.

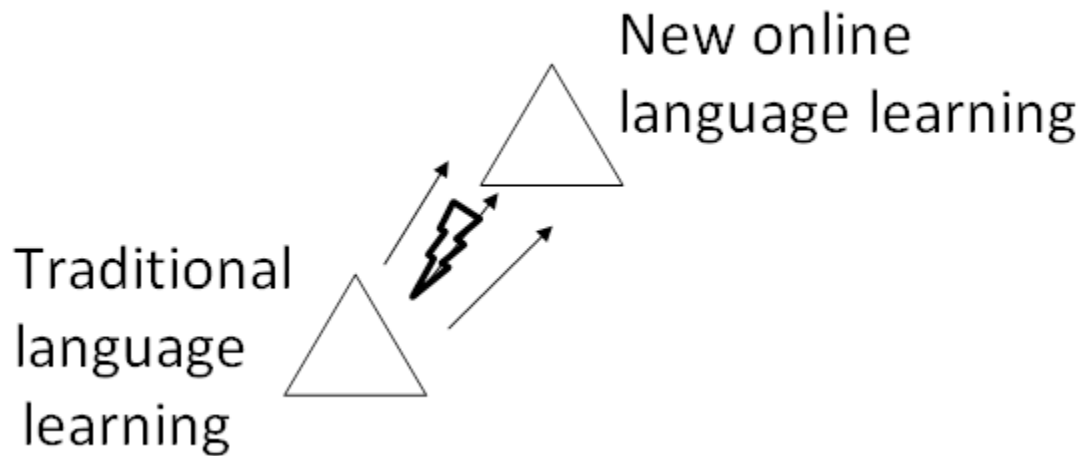


*Figure 22: Quaternary contradiction affecting the language learning, the language teaching and the institutional activities*

A further **quaternary contradiction** may exist, one that draws learners, practitioners and institutional management into a sort of ‘technological pull’, as some of the data from institutional documents analysed above suggests. This phenomenon inevitably increases the provision of technology-mediated language learning opportunities in the institution but the study has shown the gap separating current practice from the desired ‘normalisation’ or ‘transparency’ of the technology (Bax 2003; see *Chapter 7* for details). In other (more activity-theoretical) words, online language learning processes expected to be carried out as unconscious, routine-like operations, such as recovering a password (see learner A’s case), too often require labour-intensive actions as far as the technology is concerned (detracting learner energy, attention and enjoyment from higher psychological functions). In short, pedagogically and researchwise, ‘routinising’ (Rogers 2003; see *Chapter 7*) the use of

technology should guide joint educational strategies and policies involving learners, practitioners and the institution in future.

### 6.7 Conclusion: Tertiary contradiction



*Figure 23: Tertiary contradiction affecting the traditional language learning activity and the new online language learning activity*

To conclude this chapter, at the core of the language learning activity under study there seems to be a **tertiary contradiction** involving the emergence of a new form of learning, that is, online language learning, heavily reliant on written discourse at present, in a sociocultural environment where orality still plays an important role and ranks high on the learners' preferences, especially for learning and instruction purposes. This is a significant clash that becomes clear, for instance, when learner A, in the 'Links, links, links' segment analysed earlier, refuses to follow written instructions and begins to behave erratically only to accept the same instructions provided orally later on. Another example is that of learner B, who

preferred taking advantage of learning opportunities and receiving instruction face to face during the SR session to online in the experiment.

Although evidence exists to attribute, at least in part, some of this behaviour to the impatient reaction of learners when they do not see their digital expectations of immediacy and interactivity realised in the online task, in other words, to issues around 'digital skills', contradictions outlined above also point to possible root cause found in basic 'literacy' itself. This contradiction affects the mode of delivery of instruction(s): the written word as opposed to the spoken word; in other words, literacy versus orality. Oral messages are more easily accepted by learners, especially when accompanied with moving images, such as interactive presentations or videos (such as that of Sam in the task, appreciated by most participants). At any rate, the successful emergence of this new form of learning would have to consider a number of sociocultural issues, namely (a) the fact that some cultural practices online (e.g., posting videos with personal content on *YouTube*) may not be accepted in this local context because of (b) social and academic pressures currently affecting individual learners, such as those to do with a 'testing' and results-oriented mentality and reactions to societal expectations and pressure. A number of other factors would have to be considered too in order to resolve<sup>10</sup> this rather complex but all-important contradiction, particularly those described in relation to other contradictions.

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<sup>10</sup> Despite the fact that neither of the two opposing forces in a contradiction can be eliminated, activity theory attempts to find a resolution to contradictions by looking for a new 'thirdness', something that is not yet there, that is "novel and mediating models, concepts and patterns of activity that go beyond and transcend the available opposing forces or options, pushing the system into a new phase of development" (Engeström and Sannino 2011: 371).

To recall, a number of findings have emerged thus far, namely the roles of practitioners, the need to find ways to transfer practical objects of the language learning activity (such as making a video) into 'real' language learning outcomes, the need to acculturate learners (as well as practitioners and the institution's management) into a new language learning culture that encourages the use of learning tools, fosters private speech and the transition to inner speech, carefully integrates mediation by others into language learning processes, develops literacy and digital literacy skills and practices in ways that are conducive to language learner and language learning development, and brings together the concerns and expectations of learners, practitioners and the institution to harness technological potential productively.



**CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

After conducting moment-to-moment, detailed analysis of disturbance-related segments of learner behaviour data in *Chapter 5* and linking those disturbances to systemic contradictions in *Chapter 6*, this chapter goes back to some of the main issues raised thus far and discusses them. Individually, patterns of learner behaviour presented in *Chapter 5* showed significant reliance on private speech (six learners) and a preference for face-to-face support from others (ranging between four and six learners), interpreted as a sign of the prevalence of orality in the local context and connected to the need for more language practice within the zone of proximal development expressed by five participants. In addition, most learners (seven) tended to work through the language experiment preparing ‘in their heads’, aiming to ‘get the job done’ as quickly as possible (seven felt time pressure) and very few used written resources such as dictionaries (used by none) or written notes (used by three). Linked to this is the fact that two learners had difficulty finding key information in a body of text and eight never looked for information actively. Learners tended to take a tool-free approach to the task that involved using few of the support embedded features (e.g., the video transcript, used by four) and may have responded to fears of being caught ‘cheating’ (felt by three) in what most perceived as a test-like environment (as reported by six learners). Collectively, the main findings regarding systemic contradictions point to the difficulties found in the process of transferring the practical object of the language learning activity (i.e., making a video in this case) into ‘real’ language learning outcomes (e.g., manipulating and incorporating new language) and the need for a new language learning



culture that favours tool mediation and the transition from private speech to inner speech whilst respecting current reliance on private speech and widespread social mediation by others. Digital literacy is proposed as a concept that can bring together learners, practitioners and the institution by looking at their current practices and needs with a view to finding a set of common shared objectives that can facilitate language learner and language learning development, which could go some way towards harnessing the potential of technology and help to overcome current infrastructural obstacles.

Mirroring this summary of findings, this chapter goes from individual to collective issues, beginning with the learner and ending with the institution and the wider educational community. Some reflections are also included regarding the validity of the theoretical stance and methodological approach adopted. The reader will also find a review of the initial hypothesis formulated in the thesis and a set of future directions subsequent studies may follow. Finally, the initial research questions will be addressed.

## **7.1 About the learners**

One of the core activity-theoretical principles followed in this thesis is the dialectic relationship between the use value (intrinsic value) and the exchange value (societal value) of language learning. Drawing on Bateson's (1972) concept of the 'hidden curriculum' (implicit rules dictated by societal pressures) the case for a clash between learning for language development gains and learning for social advancement in this educational context can be made. Evidence shown in *Chapter 5* and *Chapter 6* suggests that the young language learners under investigation may have been affected by their belief in (and adherence to)

implicit rules pushing them to 'get things done' in the shortest possible time in perceived test-like conditions with little regard for language learning opportunities. This orientation towards achieving results may respond to (a) the institutional high-achievers, technical setting of the study, in line with Laurillard's (2002) claims regarding the relevance of the institutional environment, (b) sociocultural perceptions of intelligence and success and (c) methods of mass production pervasive in the local economic sector predominantly led by manufacturing and agriculture.

In relation to sociocultural perceptions, it is particularly relevant to revisit Wertsch et al.'s (1984) study with Brazilian mothers presented earlier. Findings from this study seem to confirm that the low-income background of most learners may have conditioned them to avoid making (or reflecting on) mistakes, just as it did with Brazilian mothers of a similar socioeconomic background. Although further research and evidence is needed, tentatively this is proof that any processes of internalisation of new knowledge and skills are dependent on sociocultural factors.

Movements from internalisation to externalisation were clearly observable in the learners' use of private speech. As a mediator between inner speech and social speech, private speech has indeed proved to be valuable (Vygotsky 1987; Piaget 1923/1962; Saville-Troike 1988) in illuminating language learning processes in action. The very fact that most learners (not only those of a low proficiency, as expected by Ellis 2003) resort to private speech regularly, not just when learning English, points to a reliance on orality and to a certain stage of (under)development of literacy skills. As seen earlier, this issue has a direct connection

with Vygotsky's (1978) notion of first order and second order symbolism epitomised by learner F's 'writing in the air' metaphor. It is also connected to Vygotsky's (1987) distinction between natural psychological functions (e.g., memory and perception), on which learners in this context depend heavily, and higher psychological functions (e.g., solving problems, using tools such as maps or dictionaries, in this case), of which learners make little use. Encouraging learners to engage in learning actions that require use of higher psychological functions in a supported environment could be the pedagogical implication of this finding.

Little doubt remains in relation to the importance of the 'agency' and 'intentionality' of learners in the study. Their pursuit of personal or general learning goals (Levy and Stockwell 2006) that sometimes respond to their own social needs rather than pedagogical needs (Montoro 1996) makes it necessary to conduct further research into learner needs and motivation. For instance, learners clearly express a preference for dialogic rather than monologic interaction (Ellis 2003; Vygotsky 1987) when reflecting upon the online task used in the experiment.

In any case, learners must be seen as complex beings shaped by and shaping external objects with which they interact, not just as an embodiment of learning identities (see critique by Firth and Wagner 1997) or personas (Heift 2002; Cooper 1999; Colpaert 2004) as authors from other theoretical paradigms may claim. In this context, learner orientation becomes a key construct. The extent and the complexity of mutually-transforming relationships affecting the learners in the study support the belief in the need to see learners

through the characterisation of the language learning activity system, followed by intervention, as argued below.

## **7.2 About mediation by others**

The study has found a pervasive need for support from others in language learning processes. Most learners have out-of-classroom support from more capable peers or adults; yet, a contradiction emerged referring to the inability of some learners to have access to this kind of support. Generally speaking, learners refer to their need for dialogue with more capable speakers. The implications of this are twofold: on the one hand, learners seem to be in need of engaging in more assisted work within their zone of proximal development, which makes it necessary to explore the Vygotskian concept of ‘obuchenie’ regarding teacher-learner interaction referred to earlier (see *Chapter 2*); on the other hand, from a technological perspective, despite connectivity difficulties at a local level, there is a clear sense of the need to move in the direction of CMC suggested by authors such as Lamy and Hampel (2007) to respond to learner needs. In this regard, this study has opened windows to other research areas, such as CAL (e.g., Moreno 2006, Pask 1975, Luckin et al. 2011), where these issues are explored through very valuable contributions. The study has documented the existing need for (and actual practices of) mediation by others, particularly peers, rather than the need for mediation by the teacher that may have been stimulated by the very prominent presence of the researcher-practitioner acting as a teacher in the study.

### 7.3 About mediation by tools

The fact that learners hardly used any effective tools to assist their learning processes (and skipped whole sections of the set online task) in the study, combined with the multiple flaws in the provision of technological tools locally and the question of the level of development of digital (and non-digital) literacy skills in some of the learners, raised the profile of tool-use significantly. Technologically speaking, an important concept is that of the 'second level digital divide' (Hargittai 2001) (lack of computer skills) compounding problems caused by the more general digital divide (lack of internet access) affecting some learners in this context who had to "engage more with the technology itself than the language they are learning" (Levy and Stockwell 2006: 214). This may explain why technology does not appear to be 'normalised' or 'transparent'<sup>11</sup> (Bax 2003) as evidenced by processes of transfer of digital routines described earlier. In activity-theoretical terms, the tendency should be one of movement from actions to routines, of 'routinising', as Rogers (2003) put it. However, let us remember that the learners were not frequent users of traditional tools such as printed dictionaries either, which suggests a greater degree of complexity in that both digital practices and traditional language learning practices need to be reviewed.

Another important concept refers to 'affordances' (Hampel 2006; Blin 2010). It has been observed that "(l)anguage teachers are very much working within a complex system of opportunity and constraint" (Levy and Stockwell 2006: 234). This has been reflected in the

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<sup>11</sup> A definition of 'transparency of technology' has been suggested by Levy and Stockwell as "when the user focus is on the task at hand rather than the technology being used to undertake the task" (Levy and Stockwell 2006: 230).

number of dimensions that include (implicitly or explicitly) opposing forces, of which ‘technological affordances’ is but one of them. In this respect, Thorne’s (2003) claim that technologies have their ‘culture of use’ has been demonstrated, for instance, by the reluctance of learners to post their videos on *YouTube*, and generally in the ways they have made use of the online task provided. It might be worth pointing out the widespread neglect in the literature of connectivity problems (aggravated by VLE issues) affecting the provision of online language learning opportunities, except for some authors (e.g., Castells 2004; van Dijk 2005; Warschauer 2003) who have acknowledged these issues.

Finally, the use of the online task in the study deserves some attention. First, the ‘modality principle’ (Moreno 2006) was useful in helping to understand the value of oral input (as opposed to text) in future designs. Second, the fact that most learners valued the task *after* completing it seems to suggest that Blin’s (2004) claim (see *Chapter 4*) that learners only learn about the actual object of the activity (in this case engaging with the language) when it has been transformed into certain outcomes holds sway because it was only towards the end of SR sessions that learners appreciated the pedagogical opportunities offered by the task. It was in the combination with SR that the online task grew in stature. This may partly justify reducing the importance sometimes attributed to tasks, the appropriateness of constraining them to ‘basic planning tools’ (Nunan 1989) to enable research and educational practice. The CALL task used in the study, despite being unique in some ways in the literature, is perhaps still trapped in the task-based premise of ‘learning by doing’, which in this case only resulted in learners being satisfied at having completed the required video

without further thought to whether any language learning development had been achieved. The alternative to this approach would be to see the task and the accompanying stimulated recall (or stimulated reflection, in Levy and Kennedy's (2004) terms) as a way of 'learning by being', that is, being young language learners, being public speakers, being socially-skilled, being literacy-skilled, being digitally-skilled, and so on. The other advantage of combining tasks with post-task SR sessions is the opportunity this combination provides for work within the zone of proximal development referred to earlier. Alternatively, these sessions can become miniature cycles of expansive learning (Engeström 1987) as described below.

#### **7.4 Budding young learners and a budding researcher**

This is perhaps a good point to refer back to the Vygotskian (1987) notion of the 'buds' and 'flowers' of development, which in his view, at the time he wrote about them, deserved more attention than the 'fruits' of development. Given the interpretation of the level of development of the learners in the study, one way of representing them is by referring to them as 'budding young learners'. 'Budding' because of the great potential they have to develop their (digital) literacy skills and (language) learning strategies, for instance by moving away from a 'writing in the air' strategy towards greater use of inner speech (which one might associate with internalisation or learning processes), higher psychological functions and tools. But let us not forget that these are 'young' learners, most of them in their early twenties, who also aspire to developing into adulthood by advancing their social and interpersonal skills, overcoming embarrassment and improving their self-confidence.

These life goals must be understood and integrated into their language learning to achieve any real success or 'fruits' in the future.

The developmental point at which learners seem to be found coincides with the incipient research skills I happen to have at this time. Despite a fairly prolonged teaching experience and having learnt a great deal in the process of completing this EdD thesis, admittedly I am still a first-time researcher, a 'budding' researcher, keen to continue developing and learning alongside the learners in the future in an 'academic as learner' capacity (Laurillard 1999).

### **7.5 About the institution**

The important role of the institution in these processes of 'growth' must not be forgotten. Laurillard's (2002) earlier claim about the institutional environment affecting learners significantly can be upheld on the basis of empirical evidence from this study. What is more, the evidence also shows how nationwide political and economic activities limit the powers of a public institution such as this when it comes, for instance, to the provision of broadband access and consequently also limits the opportunities for learning it can provide. The study also shows that low levels of education and persistent poverty prevail in the socioeconomic context where the institution was established and now exists, that is, in the wake of urban and industrial development brought about by the creation of an oil refinery in the city of Salamanca (Mexico) and in the state of Guanajuato where a heavy industrial presence coexists with agricultural dependence.



## 7.6 Initial hypothesis

The reader may recall a hypothesis presented earlier (see *Chapter 3*) based on Wertsch et al.'s (1984) study in Brazil and personal experience as a language instructor in this local setting whereby it was expected that learners in the study would see language learning as an unattainable goal because of their sociocultural background. With the benefit of hindsight, the hypothesis now seems slightly 'flat' or too 'general'. The findings have superseded this hypothesis in various ways. For instance, although it is true in some cases, such as that of learner A, that a negative self-perception can be limiting and that there is a distinct feeling of embarrassment and an aversion to mistakes, the reality for these learners is much richer and deeper, full of contradictions leading to as many possible resolutions, such as their lack of language learning strategies and orientation, which coexist with a definite hunger for personal development and learning in general. In short, some of the difficulties experienced by the learners have deeper and wider root causes than expected and the work conducted alongside the learners during admittedly short experiment sessions and SR sessions opens up promising avenues for future developments. What the study has shown instead is that language learners in this context are young learners with significant personal development interests, such as overcoming shyness, test- and success-driven, dependent on private speech and oral instruction, who often follow a tool-free 'in the head' approach, in need of language practice within their zone of proximal development with more capable persons.

## 7.7 Research questions

It is now time to go back to the research questions presented at the end of *Chapter 3* and to address them in the light of the findings of the study.

Question 1: What is the nature of the language learning activity system of individual learners using online tasks in this local context?

Comments: Evidence from the study reveals a language learning activity system characterised by competing (though occasionally complementary) language learning and non-language learning goals that determine the orientation to the online task used. It is often a 'get it done' quick, tool-free, test-like orientation heavily dependent on private speech, oral interaction and support from others that reflects social and institutional practices, such as the pre-eminence of orality over literacy and perceptions about success. Preparation, if any, is done 'in the head' because improvisation is believed to be an acceptable option. Connectivity and VLE issues suggest significant disruption caused by the local effects of the digital divide and the second-level digital divide as well as the level of development of digital literacy locally. In general, there is still some way to go to achieve the transparency of technology. New digital and self-access centre 'safe' spaces must be provided.

Question 1a: What are the main elements and processes involved in the activity?

Comments: The learners (subject) appear to be generally affected by shyness and embarrassment that they need to overcome. Analysis of six processes (mediation by self,

mediation by others, mediation by language, mediation by tools, orientation and personal development) exposes learners taking a direct orientation route going straight from the subject to the object of the activity (making a video presentation), bypassing essential tool- and language-mediation (especially in written form), averting mistakes and engaging little with language learning opportunities. Naturally, this leads to poor results in terms of language learning outcomes. In essence, data shows that learners prefer mediation by others and self-mediation to tool-mediation. The study throws up two further rich insights, namely the strong presence of a hidden curriculum in the form of implicit rules and the importance of personal development for learners, forcing a necessary reflection on the special circumstances of their young age.

Question 1b: What are the main disturbances affecting elements and processes?

Comments: 23 dimensions have been identified to categorise disturbance-related segments of data (see *Table 4*, p. 109), which in turn belong to the various processes mentioned above. The fact that it is hard to determine which dimensions are the most important supports the need for this many dimensions. Dimensions 8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 (all belonging to the mediation-by-tools process) are particularly relevant and they make up the largest group of dimensions in a single process, which reflects the significant impact the use of tools (or lack of it) has on the activity system. Dimensions 1, 2 and 4 (included in mediation-by-people processes) reveal that the amount and extent of support from other people provided or needed is far greater than initially expected. Dimension 5 (language learning opportunities – language learning problems) shows that, in terms of language-

mediation, there is a considerable need for supported speaking practice. Finally, Dimensions 19-23 establish connections between disturbances and the sociocultural and personal background of the learners, paving the way for the subsequent interpretation of societal contradictions at the root of behaviour observed during the study, such as practices involving information skills.

Question 2: What are the systemic contradictions affecting the learning activity?

Comments: Following on from the data analysis proper and the small cultural-historical analysis conducted, further scrutiny led to the discovery of nine systemic contradictions. A primary contradiction concerns the utilitarian view of the language learning activity, seen by some learners as a means to social advancement. This basic contradiction is connected to secondary contradictions involving (a) the spine of the activity (subject-object-outcomes) shaped by a 'get things done' orientation that prioritises completing the task at hand in the shortest possible time virtually without tool assistance, that is, securing the object but not quite the desired learning outcomes, and (b) the relationship of the subject and the object with tools (largely underused, especially text-based tools), the community (much needed to mediate learning in this context) and rules (particularly implicit rules or the test-like 'hidden curriculum'). Clashes with other neighbouring activities are established in the context of four quaternary contradictions involving transfer (or lack of it) of digital routines, mismatches between teacher and learner goals, institutional struggles to overcome nationwide social and political obstacles in the provision of online services and some resistance preventing boundary-crossing between the learning, the teaching and the institutional activities. To

conclude, a tertiary contradiction accounts for clashes between traditional and new online learning practices rooted in (digital) literacy development issues and the strong orality prevalent locally.

Question 2a: How are external manifestations (disturbances) linked to systemic contradictions?

Comments: Two main lessons have been learnt from the experience of this study as regards this question. Firstly, disturbances may or may not be linked to contradictions. It is only when patterns of behaviour and cultural-historical tendencies have been explored in the light of literature and theory that it is possible to establish whether disturbances are revealing deeper systemic contradictions or not. Secondly, one or more disturbances may be manifestations of any given contradiction but not exclusively because the same disturbance or disturbances may be pointing to other contradictions. Although this adds complexity to data analysis, it also provides flexibility and power to it.

Question 2b: In what ways are these contradictions the driving force determining the direction and outcome of the learning activity?

Comments: The interconnectedness of the elements in the system explains the fact that any contradiction at any level inevitably determines changes in the overall orientation and outcomes of the activity. For instance, underuse of the task support tools such as feedback and the preparation and practice sections affects attempts to attain the object and the learning outcomes of the task. On reflection, a further remark can be made: it is not only

contradictions that determine the course of the activity but also the entire system itself, as a whole, and the context and the environment where it occurs (see *Fig. 13* above, p. 97).

### **7.8 About the theory and the methodology**

Despite the known limitations of activity theory in terms of operationalising its implementation in practice (Mwanza 2002; Nardi 1996b; Engeström 1993, 2003), the use of the construct of ‘disturbances’ in the process of analysis and ‘contradictions’ to interpret data analysis has been satisfactory in this context and may be of use to researchers in other locations. A shortcoming of this research attempt has been the lack of gradation of disturbances following criteria, for instance, of ascending systemic or learning impact (Engeström, personal communication) in line with the work of Engeström and Sannino (2011). In other words, not all disturbances are the same; they could be aligned according to a hierarchy of, for instance, levels of learning (see Bateson 1972) based on additional theoretical constructs. To compensate for this deficiency, and for the fact that a more longitudinal type of study could not be conducted, a short cultural-historical analysis of the institution was presented in *Chapter 6*. Transcending the moment-to-moment analysis of the language learning activity system was always a priority and efforts have been made to achieve this goal. Technology and handling different sources of (video) data (Bødker 1996) have been key to collecting rich data, and detailed transcripts have provided invaluable insights. Modelling the language learning activity system (Blin 2010) has also contributed to perhaps a more rigorous analytical approach. The question now is how to move this knowledge on in productive ways.

## 7.9 Future directions

Future directions of further research into language learning activity should pursue two objectives, namely language learner development and language learning development. These two constructs hold enough potential to move research in this area forward by virtue of their focus on learning, learners and development following Vygotskian and activity theoretical principles. Yet, the feeling remains that new more practical applications of the theory are required to make any real impact into teaching and learning practices. Two such applications of the theory come in the form of the *theory of expansive learning* (Engeström 1987) and its associated change laboratory toolkit, an application of cultural-historical activity theory, and *dynamic assessment* (Lantolf and Poehner 2004), a development within sociocultural theory. It is perhaps no surprise that both activity theory and sociocultural theory may be developed in the direction of serving to conduct interventions in the activities they scrutinise.

Engeström's theory of expansive learning (1987) seems to provide a comprehensive and appropriate set of analytical tools to match the needs of non-traditional, hybrid spaces (Engeström and Sannino 2010) in which learning is seen as *expansive learning*, "that is, learning in which learners are involved in constructing and implementing a radically new, wider and more complex object and concept for their activity" (Engeström and Sannino 2010: 2). This is arguably the case at my institution.

The present study was not designed as a fully-fledged intervention along the lines of the theory of expansive learning but it can act as a springboard for future interventions. In fact,

the knowledge and the momentum gained in conducting the study has led the researcher and a team of colleagues at DICIS (University of Guanajuato) to engage in a year-long research project supported by the institution in 2011-2012 consisting of an application of expansive learning theory using the change laboratory methodology (developed at *CRADLE*, as reported in Engeström et al. 1996) in pursuit of triggering the emergence of new language teaching and learning practices (Montoro and Caselis *in progress*; Montoro, Caselis and Perez *in progress*).

Although expansive learning cycles tend to be associated with large-scale and lengthy formative intervention processes of no less than three years, it is also possible to pursue the notion of ‘miniature cycles’ of learning actions (of two hours, for instance) which Engeström (1999b) acknowledges as being ‘*potentially expansive*’, implying that “(...) the expansive cycle and its embedded actions may be used as a framework for analysing small-scale innovative learning processes” (Engeström 1999b: 385). This line of research is supported by Engeström and Sannino’s (2010) final remarks in which they advocate for more dialogue between collective analysis and individual subject analysis. To this effect, Engeström takes the concept of the zone of proximal development of individuals one step further and applies it to the collective activity. Thus, the zone of proximal development of the activity is defined as follows:



“It is the distance between the present everyday actions of the individuals and the historically new form of the societal activity that can be collectively generated as a solution to the double bind potentially embedded in the everyday actions.”

(Engeström 1987: 74)

Alternatively, or perhaps as a complement given that both applications are not mutually exclusive, *dynamic assessment* (Lantolf and Poehner 2004) advocates for a focus on teacher-learner interaction in the zone of proximal development of learners, with a strong emphasis on dialogue to lead learners forward in their language learning development. The authors aim to fuse instruction and assessment by means of dynamic assessment sessions in which “intervention is embedded within the assessment procedure in order to interpret individuals' abilities and lead them to higher levels of functioning” (Lidz and Gindis 2003: 99, quoted in Poehner 2008: 5). This interventionist approach is closely connected to Vygotsky's central idea of development. The value of dynamic assessment lies in the fact that “DA [dynamic assessment] procedures are crucial to teachers and learner[s] because they provide not only scores or grades, but insights into the depth of an individual's abilities, the causes of poor performance, and specific ways of supporting development” (Poehner 2008: 6). A concept from dynamic assessment research that could be of relevance to this research setting is that of the ‘washback effect’ (Cheng 2005) of conventional tests on teaching and learning, whereby “the social value placed on attaining high tests scores is sometimes so great that tests themselves actually stand in the way of instructional practice” (Poehner 2008: 10).

At any rate, any continuation of the research done in this study would have to blur boundaries between learners, teachers and the institution and promote maximum horizontal collaboration (see, for instance, Hartley's 2010 work in this respect in the area of CAL) with joint initiatives built upon powerful theoretical concepts such as the change laboratory, dynamic assessment or miniature cycles of expansive learning. Time and space boundaries should also be crossed to transcend learning objects<sup>12</sup> and transform them into language learning outcomes, borrowing concepts such as Bakhtin's (1981) chronotope or Lucklin et al.'s (2011) learner-generated contexts (LGCs) mentioned earlier. As Blin and Appel (2011: 494) mention that in their study, "the actual collaborative structure of the CA2 activity [...] influenced the transformation of the object of the activity into language learning outcomes".

In addition, Scanlon and Issroff's (2005) contribution to the advancement of understanding teacher-learner-tool interaction in pursuit of a learning object presents us with a great opportunity to view assessment in a novel way, not as formative or summative assessment but as research-oriented assessment. Blurring research and practice boundaries has become one of the most empowering lessons learnt from the work done in this thesis.

### **7.10 Pedagogical implications**

The study has brought to light a number of pedagogical insights regarding mediation, rules and orientation. Tool-mediation is largely determined by the local culture of use of learning

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<sup>12</sup> 'Learning objects' refers to the 'object' element of the language learning activity system, which in this case was recording a video presentation.

tools and materials, intertwined with local practices in areas such as literacy and digital literacy and the level of personal development according to age and background. Mediation by language depends on the way language learning, proficiency and the language itself are perceived by learners. A process of transformation of the current local language learning culture, perhaps using key concepts such as literacy and digital literacy as mediating concepts, is required to assist learners in their learning actions and in their development. Care will be needed, however, when handling these concepts. Literacy today is often construed as individual 'competence' or 'ability', especially when combined with other terms (e.g., information literacy, computer literacy), rather than as transformational practices moving "pedagogy [...] towards a more contingent culture of participation in digitally-mediated professional, occupational, and lifelong learning communities" (Goodfellow 2010: 10). Thinking of practices related to digital tools and spaces in terms of individual competences or skills is reductionist in that very significant sociocultural issues are at play beyond individuals themselves in their community of practice, clearly visible in the increasing amount of social interaction occurring 'digitally', for instance. Further to this, the intricacies involved in the relation between 'digital literacy' and language (Goodfellow 2010) would have to be considered too, such as the extent to which language use shapes and is shaped by local communication practices online.

The suspicion that local levels of literacy, the affordances of technology and a strong component of orality (reflected in extensive use of self-mediation by private speech) are limiting rather than enabling learner potential call for teacher intervention in a careful but

determined manner to build zones of proximal development with learners where actual learning can occur. Additionally, implicit rules connected to the institutional environment make learners feel exam anxiety even when they are not sitting an exam. In this regard, any efforts from individual learners or collectively at the level of curriculum, policy or teacher education must go in the direction of focusing more on the learning and less on traditional assessment. SR can be a useful teaching method to tackle both the issue of transforming the language learning culture locally and the perception of being limited by implicit rules within the institution. Finally, any pedagogical measures that can extend the learners' vision beyond the practical completion of a task (the object of the language learning activity, in activity-theoretical terms) and pursue language learning outcomes, thus changing the orientation to task from doing to learning, would be a welcome improvement.

### **7.11 Implications for my professional practice**

My various roles as teacher-designer and researcher-practitioner in the study, which may have caused confusion to the reader at times, can be attributed to the process of development that I have undergone whilst conducting and participating in the research. From being a language teacher with an interest in educational technology but virtually no research experience to becoming a first-time researcher charged with significant research duties and responsibilities, the road has been full of challenges, ups and downs, and has led to my transformation into a new 'researching professional' emerging from the EdD (including the prospect of becoming a 'profesor-investigador' (teacher-researcher) at my institution upon completion of the EdD). As mentioned earlier, I have already led a project at

my institution that is about to end in 2012 involving the completion of a change laboratory following a complete expansive learning cycle of research and intervention in order to develop a new English language programme in line with dynamic assessment principles with a small CALL component.

### **7.12 Contribution to the wider research community**

Despite its shortcomings, the research conducted in this study may contribute to the wider education community in three positive ways: (a) methodologically, (b) theoretically and (c) pedagogically. First, the methodological approach followed and the issues encountered may help other education researchers and practitioners (and researcher-practitioners) in their own research and teaching efforts. Given the technology-related nature of the study, of particular interest are the technical challenges and issues encountered in the study and described here. Theoretically, one of the criticisms levelled against activity theory is the lack of guidance offered as regards putting the theory into practice as well as the embryonic state of some of the key theoretical constructs. This thesis shows practical ways of applying the theory in educational practice; however limited or tentative, these efforts may go some way towards instrumentalising the theory for further applications in studies involving education, languages or technology. Finally, the work conducted may be of pedagogical benefit in two fundamental ways, namely (a) by providing an online task that entails a different take on what the computer can be used for, and (b) by systematically showing evidence of strong links between sociocultural issues and learner behaviour.

### 7.13 Limitations of the study

The study has been affected limitations of a theoretical, methodological and technical nature. Theoretically, more work is needed to develop intermediary concepts (such as a gradation of disturbances) to mediate the transition from theory to practice.

Methodologically, time constraints did not allow for a longitudinal study, as desired. In addition, the role of the task in constraining the learning activity cannot be ignored; from simple design choices, such as the use of images and hyperlinks, to complex issues such as the level of complexity of instructions and the kind of feedback provided, the task and its features have determined to a large extent the range of choices available and ultimately the behaviour of the learners. Finally, technically the research design involved a level of complexity full of challenges when implemented in the local context of the study. Although data collection and analysis were conducted successfully in the end, more could be done to improve these processes in future. For instance, ample time must be made available to conduct necessary tests before the experimental phase and before each experiment, funding is likely to be required (and thus must be sought early) to purchase robust software and hardware solutions as the available open-source software and existing personal and institutional equipment may not be sufficient, SR sessions can be scheduled together with experiment sessions to ensure shorter lapses between both and the researcher is well advised to set time aside to review experiment videos before the SR session with the learners (see *Appendix 6* for further details, p. 393).

## 7.14 Conclusions

### *Conclusion 1: Private speech compensates for underdeveloped literacy*

Private speech, together with gestures, triggered the initial research interest that led to this study. The potential value of private speech has been confirmed not only with empirical data (e.g., learner F) but also, unexpectedly, in connection with literacy development issues affecting the learners (e.g., at least five learners admitted to using private speech during private study time). Ultimately, widespread use of private speech in this context is a sign of strong orality remaining in the local culture and underdeveloped literacy. These issues are well worth pursuing in future studies.

### *Conclusion 2: CALL tasks as boundary-crossing tools*

The value of the CALL task used in the study for learning, teaching and research purposes has become clear. Despite its flaws and implementation difficulties, the task was considered useful by both learners and the researcher-practitioner. CALL tasks can combine technology, pedagogy and research in productive ways, especially when they contribute to boundary-crossing between different activities such as teaching, learning and research in novel ways within the institutional context. From this perspective, tasks are only workplans; what matters is ensuring that the resulting activity of all the participants involved merges and flourishes in productive ways.

*Conclusion 3: SR as a pedagogical tool*

Valuable as the CALL task was in the study, the follow-up SR sessions provided even more insights into the activity system under investigation, such as the potential of SR as pedagogical tool in this context. Learners transformed these sessions into language learning opportunities in unexpected ways, showing not only learner preferences but also yet again a space where learning, teaching and research can meet in future.

*Conclusion 4: The potential of activity theory*

Despite its shortcomings (e.g., difficulties defining the activity system and some of its elements, particularly the object and the community, lack of guidance on how to conduct a cultural-historical analysis), activity theory and some of the theory's associated concepts, such as disturbances and contradictions, have shown considerable potential in the analysis of language learning data. For instance, this theoretical framework allowed the crucial two-tier (micro and macro) analysis of the language learning activity system. For instance, it facilitated the transition from the most common type of disturbance (the tool-free, prepare 'in your head' approach) to claims about a historically-accumulating, sociocultural contradiction involving high levels of orality and low levels of literacy that explains the aversion to text-based resources. Other theoretical approaches could have reached the same conclusion; what makes activity theory stand out is not only that it provides a common language to conduct research but also theoretically-robust concepts and the possibility of further theory-building ahead.



### 7.15 Recommendations for future research

As the study is coming to a close, there is a strong sense of purpose in the pursuit of development to guide teaching, learning and research efforts advocated by Vygotsky with the 'buds' and 'flowers' metaphor. Development can be encouraged, for instance, through theory (e.g., activity theory and the theory of expansive learning), through concepts (e.g., 'obuchenie', the zone of proximal development, internalisation-externalisation, higher psychological functions), through research focus on the language learning activity system (including modelling the activity system) and through mediation (e.g., by self, others, teacher, tools). The challenge is how to combine all of these developmental strategies. One thing is clear, though: language learning and language learner development must lead our research efforts. At this stage, future research into language learning will have to consider the option of choosing the language learning activity system as the unit of analysis and plan, at some point, for activity-theory-based interventions, such as those conducted by means of the *change laboratory* methodology (Engeström 1987). In that spirit, this study is seen as a springboard to be used to make real changes to theoretical and practical paradigms within the context of second language education research and practice, both locally and elsewhere.

As usual, a qualitative study of this nature poses as many questions as it addressed in the first place. The thesis will close with some of the most pressing ones, as follows:

1. Can language learning disturbances be graded according to a conceptual scale measuring their significance in terms of the overall activity system?

2. In what ways can the individual and the collective zones of proximal development be combined in research and practice?
  
3. How could the deviations of task design or teacher behaviour from the learner's expectations be accounted for?
  
4. What is the actual state of literacy development in this local context?



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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORMS (English version)

## A. PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM: LEARNERS

## THE LANGUAGE LEARNING ACTIVITY OF INDIVIDUALS USING ONLINE TASKS

**About the Research Project**

My name is Carlos R. Montoro Sanjosé. I'm a Lecturer at the Engineering Division, Irapuato-Salamanca Campus (University of Guanajuato). My main duty within the University is to support the self-access centres on campus. That's why I would like to invite you to take part in a research project I'm involved in as part of my doctoral studies with the UK's Open University in the 2009-2012 period, under Dr. Regine Hampel's supervision. We are looking into how individual language learners interact with online tasks in the self-access centre (CAADI, in Spanish).

**What will I have to do if I accept to take part?**

I'm planning to observe you as you work at the computer in the self-access centre by recording what you do on video and capturing your screen activity. Later on I will interview you to ask you about your experience. If you accept to take part, I'll ask you to do an online task at the self-access centre on dates that are convenient to you in the last term of 2009, which will be followed by one or several personal interviews. It is likely that I'll ask you to complete an online task and be interviewed again in the first few months of 2010.

**Why was I chosen to do this?**

You have been chosen to take part in the project because you are a beginner-level learner of English. I'm interested in people with that level of proficiency because they are representative of the level most learners in our context possess.

**Why are you doing research on this?**

The interest and possible value of this study lies in the small number of studies in the area of individual language learner interaction with online tasks, as well as in my own interest in designing online tasks. I want to gather real data on how learners interact with tasks and why.

**And how do I benefit from taking part?**

Even though your participation is on a voluntary basis and will not be paid, it can help you to reflect and understand how you learn languages and discover ways to learn more effectively and efficiently in the future.

**Who's paying for this project?**

This project is funded by the Engineering Division of the Irapuato-Salamanca Campus of the University of Guanajuato, as well as with funds from the Mexican Federal Government.

**And what do I do if I have a comment or complaint about the project?**

I'm available to listen and deal with your complaints and comments. You can email me at [cmontoro@salamanca.ugto.mx](mailto:cmontoro@salamanca.ugto.mx). However, if you prefer to speak to someone else, you can talk to the Director of the Engineering Division, Dr. Óscar G. Ibarra Manzano, ([ibarrao@salamanca.ugto.mx](mailto:ibarrao@salamanca.ugto.mx)).

I would like it very much if you could take part in the project. Should you be willing to do so, you are asked to read and sign the Consent and Ethical Approval Form for Participants below:

## CONSENT AND ETHICAL APPROVAL FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS: LEARNERS

I, the Undersigned, understand and accept what this project is about as well as what my participation in it involves, according to the following terms and conditions:

I accept that by taking part in this project data\* about me will be collected, which will remain anonymous and private, and can be used in any form, oral or written (articles, conferences, seminars...) only for research and academic dissemination purposes.

I understand that the results of this study constitute personal data under the terms of the *Data Protection Act (1998)* of the United Kingdom, and that it will be protected according to the guidelines contained in the said law. It will be preserved using the strictest safety measures available and it will never be made available to third parties, with the exception of the researcher, his supervisor and trustworthy research assistants.

I understand that should it become necessary in the future to make my identity public I will be asked for written consent again, which I will have the right to refuse.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this project completely or in part at any point and that my data will be completely destroyed if I wish to.

I understand that I will not be entitled to any payment for taking part, which I will do on a voluntary basis.

I understand that my participation will not affect my rights as a self-access centre user, nor will it interfere with my grades in any courses I take or may take in the future at the University.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [full name], give my full consent to taking part in the project under the above-mentioned terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_ [signature]  
\_\_\_\_\_ [e-mail address]

Salamanca, \_\_\_\_\_ [date]

\* The ethical use and management of the data collected is subject to the *British Educational Research Association Revised Ethical Guidelines (2004)*.

**B. PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM: INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES****THE LANGUAGE LEARNING ACTIVITY OF INDIVIDUALS USING ONLINE TASKS****About the Research Project**

My name is Carlos R. Montoro Sanjosé. I'm a Lecturer at the Engineering Division, Irapuato-Salamanca Campus (DICIS, in Spanish) of the University of Guanajuato. My main duty within the University is to support the development of self-access centres (CAADIs, in Spanish) on campus. I would like to invite you to take part in a research project I'm involved in as part of my doctoral studies with the Open University (UK) in the 2009-2012 period, under Dr. Regine Hampel's supervision. We are looking into how individual language learners interact with online tasks in the self-access centre (CAADI, in Spanish).

**What will I have to do if I accept to take part?**

I'm planning to interview you as a representative of the institution (University of Guanajuato) to ask you general and specific questions about the present, past and future of language learning at DICIS, especially in relation to new ways of learning and teaching languages. The interview will be conducted via Skype or the telephone at a time and on a date that are convenient to you no later than 15 March 2011. It will be recorded and later transcribed. It will take 30 minutes, approximately.

**Why was I chosen to do this?**

You have been chosen to take part in the project because you are in a managerial position at the institution (University of Guanajuato). I'm interested in your institutional perspective.

**Why are you doing research on this?**

The interest and possible value of this study lies in exploring new ways of learning and teaching languages within the possibilities afforded by the institutional context.

**And how do I benefit from taking part?**

Your participation is on a voluntary basis and you will not be paid. However, it can help you to reflect on your own decision-making processes.

**Who's paying for this project?**

This project is funded by the Engineering Division of the Irapuato-Salamanca Campus (DICIS) of the University of Guanajuato, as well as with funds from the Mexican Federal Government.

**And what do I do if I have a comment or complaint about the project?**

I'm available to listen and deal with your complaints and comments. You can email me at [cmontoro@salamanca.ugto.mx](mailto:cmontoro@salamanca.ugto.mx). However, if you prefer to speak to someone else, you can talk to the Director of the Engineering Division, Dr. Óscar G. Ibarra Manzano, ([ibarrao@salamanca.ugto.mx](mailto:ibarrao@salamanca.ugto.mx)).

I would like it very much if you could take part in the project. Should you be willing to do so, you are asked to read and sign the Consent and Ethical Approval Form for Participants below:

**CONSENT AND ETHICAL APPROVAL FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS: INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES**

I, the Undersigned, understand and accept what this project is about as well as what my participation in it involves, according to the following terms and conditions:

I accept that by taking part in this project data\* about me will be collected, which will remain anonymous and private, and can be used in any form, oral or written (articles, conferences, seminars...) only for research and academic dissemination purposes.

I understand that the results of this study constitute personal data under the terms of the *Data Protection Act (1998)* of the United Kingdom, and that it will be protected according to the guidelines contained in the said law. It will be preserved using the strictest safety measures available and it will never be made available to third parties, with the exception of the researcher, his supervisor and trustworthy research assistants.

I understand that should it become necessary in the future to make my identity public I will be asked for written consent again, which I will have the right to refuse.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this project completely or in part at any point and that my data will be completely destroyed if I wish to.

I understand that I will not be entitled to any payment for taking part, which I will do on a voluntary basis.

I understand that my participation will not affect my rights and authority as an institutional representative of the University of Guanajuato.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [full name], give my full consent to taking part in the project under the above-mentioned terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_ [signature]

Salamanca, \_\_\_\_\_ [date]

\_\_\_\_\_ [e-mail address]

\* The ethical use and management of the data collected is subject to the *British Educational Research Association Revised Ethical Guidelines (2004)*.

## APPENDIX 2: CULTURAL-HISTORICAL TIMELINE

HISTORY OF MEXICO	DATES	HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GUANAJUATO
Pre-Hispanic period. Indigenous civilisations (e.g., Aztec, Maya, Olmec) flourish.	2500 bC – 1521 AD	
Colonial period of Spanish rule begins.	1521	
	1732	<i>Colegio de la Santísima Trinidad</i> is founded under the leadership of a woman and with support from powerful members of society. One of its original buildings was located where the University's current headquarters is now.
	1744	<i>Colegio</i> becomes a Jesuit institution. Funding obtained from local mining industrialists. Legend of the bees and the hive (symbols of the present-day University) originates as <i>Colegio</i> expands.
Jesuits expelled from Spanish colonies.	1767	<i>Colegio</i> closed down.
	1785	<i>Colegio</i> reopens as <i>Real Colegio de la Purísima Concepción</i> governed by another religious order. Political support allows the development of the new <i>Colegio</i> .
Pro-independence movement takes control of Guanajuato. Mexican struggle for independence begins.	1810	Religious leadership curbs political attempts from new independent rule to close down <i>Colegio</i> .
Mexico becomes independent.	1821	
Decree rules that education is to be funded publicly in the State of Guanajuato.	1827	<i>Colegio</i> expands with public support. Libraries improved.
	1828	New curriculum and first higher education programmes are introduced.
Mexico loses 2 M sq km (50%) of its territory following defeat in war with the US.	1848	
Reformation separates powers of the State and the Catholic Church.	1861	
	1870	The institution becomes <i>Colegio del Estado</i> . Great academic achievements in various disciplines (e.g., mineralogy, natural history, climatology).
Mexican revolution period.	1910-1924	
PRI party rule with absolute power begins.	1929	
Modern Mexico founded.	1940	
	1945	<i>Colegio del Estado</i> becomes the <i>University of Guanajuato</i> . Social service established institutionally. University press begins. Institution expands to other cities in the state.
	1950	Cultural interventions by institution: new drama school (precursor of the renowned <i>Cervantino Festival</i> ) and philharmonic orchestra established. Later, cinema club and university radio established.
Mexico joins OECD. Free-trade agreement signed (Mexico-US-Canada). Mexican politics driven by free market beliefs (no longer by revolutionary ideals).	1994	The University of Guanajuato becomes an autonomous institution. The first self-access language centre is created in the main headquarters with support from the British council.
PRI party rule with absolute power ends.	2000	
	2007	Largest institution-wide structural reform begins. Expansion of self-access language centres begins.
	2009	Reform ends resulting in four campuses endowed with significant levels of devolved administrative powers. Academic life revolves around <i>departments</i> , whilst <i>divisions</i> act as in-betweeners in charge of day-to-day operations, such as school records and timetabling. Expansion of self-access language centres ends with the creation of 10 additional centres in decentralized locations.

### APPENDIX 3: LEARNER PROFILES

In this appendix the reader can find an overview of the 12 learners (two in the pilot; 10 in the main study) who participated in the study followed by short individual profiles of the two learners analysed as case studies in *Chapter 5*.

#### Overview\*

	No	Learner	Gender	Age	BA programme	Background details
Pilot study	1	Núria <sup>#</sup>	Female	20	Digital Arts	Technophile; pre-intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad (but would love to study in the UK).
	2	Isabella <sup>#</sup>	Female	20	Digital Arts	Technophile; used to spend too long online; pre-intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
Main study	1	Learner A	Female	21	Business	Sportsperson; intermediate level of English; local resident; has travelled abroad.
	2	Learner B	Female	21	Digital Arts	Creative; intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
	3	Learner C	Female	21	Business	Top student; intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
	4	Learner D	Female	21	Digital Arts	Loves photography; intermediate level of English; comes from a southern state of Mexico; has never travelled abroad.
	5	Learner F	Female	21	Business	Entrepreneur (has her own small business); in and out of part-time work during her studies; pre-intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
	6	Learner G	Female	23	Engineering	Computer expert (e.g., software developer and web designer); intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
	7	Learner J	Male	26	Engineering	Keen self-access centre user; intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
	8	Learner M	Female	21	Engineering	Introvert; upper-intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
	9	Learner S	Female	21	Engineering	Public-speaking averse; intermediate level of English; local resident; has never travelled abroad.
	10	Learner T	Male	21	Engineering	Student leader; intermediate level of English; local resident; has travelled abroad.

\* Information correct at the time of data collection (pilot: 2009; main study: 2010)

<sup>#</sup> Pseudonyms, instead of initials, were used in the pilot study to refer to participants.



Individual profiles

Learner A		
Processes	Dimensions	Comments
Mediation by self through private speech	1. Inner speech – private speech	Virtually no private speech was used. Only one exception: to remember a password when switching tabs in the browser.
Mediation by others in social interaction	2. Peer support – peer problems	Two instances of problems with peers (prior to the task): (a) she was not accepted in a group of peers because of her personality, (b) her failure to engage her peers in student-led activities to practise their English. The former incident was so upsetting that she felt the need to talk about it in the experiment (instead of following the set instructions and introducing herself). She values feedback she gets from her American cousins when chatting in English online.
	3. Teacher support – teacher problems	Online presence of the teacher reassuring for the learner. Support provided by language teachers at school not enough. Lack of preparation by teacher caused initial sound problems.
	4. Support from others – problems with others	Visit at home by members of a religious group going door-to-door offering English practice opportunities as a way to lure new members to their congregation. This is a common social practice in countries like Mexico and Belize.
Mediation by language	5. Language learning opportunities – language learning problems	Learner A: “My pronunciation is worse than that of an Indian person.” Prejudice implied? Despite her perceived weakness, she does not even consider completing a section of the task devoted to pronunciation. Possible reason 1: her orientation to the task. Possible reason 2: her pessimistic self-perception may make her see improving her pronunciation as unattainable. She felt well supported at a private language school she attended in the past. Her need 1: oral practice with more proficient peers or teachers to gain fluency. Her need 2: to be somewhat forced to learn otherwise she will not do it. Her conclusion: the computer and this kind of task provide useful learning opportunities to improve her English.
	6. Focus on meaning – focus on form	She shows concern for form because she does not want to look like an ‘ignorant’.
	7. L1 – L2	She used Spanish when asking the teacher questions (online and face to face) but this was probably caused by the teacher’s initial use of Spanish.

Mediation by tools	8. Transfer of digital routines	<p>She did not transfer certain digital routines (eg, using email address as username, retrieving a lost password, finding the password in a body of email text...).</p> <p>She almost demanded that other routines be present in the task (eg, links instead of written instructions, live language support...).</p> <p>A thumbnail of a video triggers her urge to watch the video in question.</p> <p>She uses the pointer to read text on the screen (as an extension of her index finger).</p> <p>Erratic behaviour (eg, clicks on links twice, clicks on non-hyperlinked text, types before selecting the field, can't use shortcuts such as ctrl + v...).</p>
	9. Technological affordances	<p>Problems with instability of <i>FlashMeeting</i>.</p> <p><i>OpenLearn</i> environment did not allow right-click to paste.</p> <p><i>OpenLearn</i> kept asking learner to join the unit when changing sections in the task.</p> <p>A window could not be closed in <i>FlashVlog</i> and the videos recorded could not be watched (slow internet connection?).</p>
	10. Listening to music while speaking to camera	She did not listen to music while speaking to camera.
	11. Delaying tactics	None observed.
	12. Being camera-shy	She reports feeling nervous and her mind going blank when she was recording but feeling calm.
	13. False starts	She did not make any false starts; she simply recorded what she had to say in three 'instalments'.
	14. Mental notes – written notes	She did not use any written notes (she claimed to have prepared 'in her head').
	15. Using a dictionary	She did not use a dictionary at all for the duration of the task. She claims to dislike dictionaries (because of bad experiences in primary school) but has liked using a monolingual dictionary in an English course she recently took.
	16. Using feedback	She only opens a feedback link once as it did not seem useful to her.
	17. Using the video transcript	She did not use the video transcript at all.
18. Adhering to the task	She skipped whole sections of the task and did not follow crucial written instructions.	
Orientation	19. Language learning orientation	She seemed to have her own agenda (watching a video; watching herself on video) rather than a language learning orientation.
	20. Success – failure	Success is her motivation to come to school and to proofread her English because she does not want to be a failure.
	21. Time pressure	Although she claims not to have been under any kind of time pressure, she also reflects on her experience and argues that she should have complete the task more efficiently (faster).
	22. Searching - finding	She acknowledges that she would rather 'find' things (in her head or on <i>Google translate</i> ) than 'search' for things (in a dictionary, grammar book...), such as vocabulary. If she doesn't 'find' things, she would rather drop the whole structure or word than 'search' for it elsewhere.

Personal development	23. Personal development opportunities – personal development issues	<p>She took this opportunity to reflect on her social interaction strategies and negative experiences.</p> <p>She is in the process of maturing and learning to operate in the adult world.</p> <p>She wants to be different (her role model at the moment seems to be Lady Gaga).</p> <p>She consciously tries to boost her self-esteem by avoiding negative comments about herself.</p>
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Learner F		
Processes	Dimensions	Comments
Mediation by self through private speech	1. Inner speech – private speech	<p>She was constantly using private speech: to read text on the screen (questions, feedback, translations...), to read from her notes, to rehearse her presentation, to say what she was typing (before, during and after typing it), to translate words to herself and focus on new vocabulary...</p> <p>She needs to hear things, say them out loud, to establish a kind of dialogue with the material to be learnt that will help her understand it.</p> <p>She also writes new words ‘in the air’ using gestures. So she needs to give the text movement and a voice to deal with it.</p>
Mediation by others in social interaction	2. Peer support – peer problems	The presence of another self-access centre user affected her. She has peer support to learn English out of school (e.g., with her boyfriend at the cinema, with a friend in a band, with international students at an event...)
	3. Teacher support – teacher problems	<p>A teacher encouraged her to speak aloud to understand learning materials.</p> <p>She is willing to ask the teacher for help when she gets stuck (e.g., she cannot understand a question, technology-related issues).</p> <p>She also asks the teacher for assessment of her performance. She also asks for permission or clarification of rules.</p>
	4. Support from others – problems with others	<p>Problems with her parents at home are affecting her performance at school; their neglect is motivating her to do well, to want to please them.</p> <p>She has matured and become more autonomous due to her problems at home and an episode of an eating disorder.</p> <p>Older, professional work colleagues are acting as role models. She was mugged and has been scared ever since; this affected her behaviour in the task.</p>
Mediation by language	5. Language learning opportunities – language learning problems	<p>Her vocabulary is quite limited – she could not understand some questions.</p> <p>Problems with grammar and writing (she cannot link things). She found listening hard because she lacks practice.</p> <p>Is her writing strategy (heavily reliant on feedback) ineffective?</p> <p>Her exam-like approach affected her behaviour.</p>
	6. Focus on meaning – focus on form	She is concerned with writing ‘properly’.
	7. L1 – L2	<p>She makes a conscious effort to use Spanish throughout the task, including in her online communications with the teacher.</p> <p>She only resorts to Spanish when she has to provide very specific or technical details, and only briefly.</p>
Mediation by tools	8. Transfer of digital routines	<p>She expected interactivity from an image that was static.</p> <p>She could not follow simple instructions to find the sound recorder on the computer.</p> <p>She was not prepared to use social media in the way it is used in the US (fear of crime? insecure about her image?)</p>

	<b>9. Technological affordances</b>	Learner panics as she learns that the internet is not working well (e.g., no access to online dictionary). She used <i>Google translate</i> instead. Restrictions in <i>Moodle</i> (i.e., not being allowed to hide feedback and help items in the task's menu, not being allowed to save text in textboxes) caused confusion affecting the learner.
	<b>10. Listening to music while speaking to camera</b>	No evidence of this in this case.
	<b>11. Delaying tactics</b>	No evidence of this in this case.
	<b>12. Being camera-shy</b>	She was not afraid of the camera. She claimed to have sufficient privacy working at her workstation, although she was quite concerned about disturbing a nearby user. She needed to think of an audience to be able to make her video presentation.
	<b>13. False starts</b>	She planned on recording several videos. She made 18 false starts and recorded several complete videos.
	<b>14. Mental notes – written notes</b>	She used written notes that she had prepared beforehand. She rehearsed extensively using the notes.
	<b>15. Using a dictionary</b>	She asked for a dictionary from the very beginning. She tried using the <i>OALD</i> online but local network problems prevented access. She then decided to use only <i>Google translate</i> . She sometimes used <i>Google translate</i> to translate whole chunks of text. She looks up basic vocabulary ('things', 'myself', 'anything', 'goes'). She did not use physical dictionaries because she felt time pressure.
	<b>16. Using feedback</b>	She read feedback before answering questions. In fact, she used feedback extensively to answer questions. Feedback becomes her tool: she tweaks it slightly to form her answers. She perhaps used the feedback to 'cheat' as she approached the task as though it were an exam.
	<b>17. Using the video transcript</b>	She paid considerable attention to the transcript.
	<b>18. Adhering to the task</b>	She tried to adhere to the task but sometimes could not because her vocabulary limitations prevented understanding. She tried to complete the practice section after asking the teacher from some support but could not find the sound recorder.
Orientation	<b>19. Language learning orientation</b>	She seems to have a genuine language language learning orientation. She takes the task seriously and gives it her best.
	<b>20. Success – failure</b>	She is hard driven to achieve success. She felt the task was an exam and feared failure. She is very conscious of her reputation and public image.
	<b>21. Time pressure</b>	Time constraints are reported as being the cause of not using physical dictionaries and not completing the practice section, where she experienced problems with the technology.
	<b>22. Searching - finding</b>	She spent a significant amount of time searching for translations to complete the task.

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Personal development</p>	<p><b>23. Personal development opportunities – personal development issues</b></p>	<p>Problems at home made the learner mature and become more autonomous more quickly.  This is partly responsible for her behaviour in the task.  Working has also influenced her behaviour (role models).  She suggests blending hobbies with income-generating work.  She is a self-made person with a lot of initiative.  She has undergone therapy to overcome an eating disorder.  Her concern with her public image and reputation mark her choices of personal and professional development paths.  She conceals her passion for singing.  She would like to overcome her insecurity regarding her public image and turn this into her professional career.</p>
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**APPENDIX 4: OVERVIEW OF DATA ANALYSIS**

This appendix includes an overview of data analysis from all the 10 data sets collected for the study in relation to the 23 dimensions considered.

<b>Dimension</b> Question	<b>Answer</b> Number of learners (learner initials)
<b>1. Inner speech-private speech</b> How many learners used private speech? How many learners reported using private speech generally to study?	5 (C, D, F, G, S) 6 (C, D, F, G, M, S)
<b>2. Peer support-peer problems</b> How many learners reported having peer support? How many reported peer problems?	4 (A, F, S, T) 7 (A, C, D, F, J, M, S)
<b>3. Teacher support-teacher problems</b> How many learners asked for teacher support? How many did not ask for teacher support? How many learners were reassured by the (online) presence of the teacher? How many were embarrassed by it?	6 (A, B, D, F, G, J) 4 (C, M, S, T) 2 (A, F) 2 (C, S)
<b>4. Support from others-problems with others</b> How many learners reported having support from others? How many reported having problems with others? How many learners pictured an imaginary audience in their minds?	5 (A, F, J, M, T) 5 (B, D, F, S, T) 7 (A, B, C, D, F, S, T)
<b>5. Language learning opportunities-language learning problems</b> What kinds of language learning problems were reported?  How many learners reported language learning opportunities?	Listening comprehension: 6 (C, D, F, J, S, T) Productive skills (esp. speaking): 6 (A, B, C, J, M, S) Writing: 7 (B, C, F, G, J, S, T) General shyness: 8 (B, C, D, F, J, M, S, T) Spelling: 5 (A, B, J, S, T) Pronunciation: 6 (A, B, D, F, J, T) Out of class: 7 (A, B, F, J, M, S, T) During SR: 5 (A, B, G, M, T)
<b>6. Focus on meaning-focus on form</b> How many learners focused on form?	8 (all except B, T) To look good or not stupid: 4 (A, C, F, T) Attempted to increase complexity of language: 1 (S)
<b>7. L1-L2</b> How many learners had code-switching problems?	2 (A, B)
<b>8. Transfer of digital routines</b> How many learners showed signs of low-average digital skills? How many used the pointer to follow text as they read? How many showed signs of adequate-advanced digital skills? How many used the browser's spellchecker? How many clicked on images expecting interactivity? How many expected finding immediate answers and solutions? How many could not find key information in a text?	3 (A, F, J) 6 (A, F, J, M, S, T) 7 (B, C, D, G, M, S, T) 3 (J, S, T) 3 (A, C, F) 3 (A, B, T) 2 (A, T)
<b>9. Technological affordances</b> How many learners were unwilling to post their videos online?	8 (all except A, T)
<b>10. Listening to music while speaking to camera</b> How many learners listened to music while speaking to camera?	1 (B)
<b>11. Delaying tactics</b> How many learners used delaying tactics before recording? How many used the delay to prepare 'in their heads'? How many used the delay to prepare in writing?	3 (B, C, S) 2 (B, C) 1 (S)

<b>12. Being camera-shy</b> How many learners admitted to feeling camera-shy? How many were motivated by a desire to overcome shyness? How many female learners felt uncomfortable with their appearance on camera? How many learners objected to the monologue video presentation format?	5 (B, C, D, M, S) 6 (B, D, F, J, S, T) 4 (B, F, G, S) 3 (B, J, S)
<b>13. False starts</b> How many learners made false starts before recording? How many of those who made false starts also wrote and used notes?	4 (C, D, F, S) 3 (D, F, S)
<b>14. Mental notes-written notes</b> How many learners wrote and used written notes? How many reported preparing 'in the head' (mental notes)? How many thought that improvising would result in a better video? How many thought in hindsight that they should have used written notes?	3 (D, F, S) 7 (A, B, C, G, J, M, T) 5 (A, B, G, J, T) 4 (B, C, G, J)
<b>15. Using a dictionary</b> How many learners did not use any dictionaries? How many used dictionaries once or twice? How many used dictionaries consistently? How many used physical dictionaries? How many reported using dictionaries regularly? How many used online translation services ( <i>Google translate</i> or <i>Reverso</i> )? How many were satisfied with online translation services?	6 (A, B, C, D, F, J) 4 (G, M, S, T) 0 0 1 (S) 3 (C, F, S) 0
<b>16. Using feedback</b> How many learners used the written feedback provided? How many reported not seeing the feedback links? How many reported not needing the written feedback?	2 (C, F) 2 (S, T) 4 (B, G, J, M)
<b>17. Using the video transcript</b> How many learners used the video transcript?	4 (F, G, M, T)
<b>18. Adhering to the task</b> How many learners completed all the sections of the task? How many skipped key parts of the preparation and practice sections? How many found the written instructions confusing? How many found the written instructions clear and easy to follow? How many reported finding the task fit for the purpose? How many valued having Sam's video as input? How many talked about their families in the video presentation?	5 (D, F, J, M, S) 5 (A, B, C, G, T) 6 (A, B, C, D, F, S) 4 (G, J, M, T) 6 (A, B, G, J, M, S) 4 (A, B, D, G) 9 (all except A)
<b>19. Language learning orientation</b> How many learners showed a language learning orientation? How many did not show a language learning orientation? How many were motivated by a need to talk about themselves or to see themselves?	6 (C, D, F, J, M, S) 4 (A, B, G, T) 3 (A, G, T)
<b>20. Success-failure</b> How many learners tried to ignore their fear of failure or showed bravado? How many suffered paralysing fear of failure? How many saw the task as a kind of test? How many were afraid of being caught 'cheating'?	4 (A, B, G, T) 4 (C, D, F, S) 6 (C, D, F, J, M, T) 3 (F, C, S)
<b>21. Time pressure</b> How many learners felt under time pressure? How many were concerned about encroaching on the teacher's time?	7 (A, B, C, F, M, S, T) 4 (A, B, C, F)
<b>22. Searching-finding</b> How many learners searched for information? How many learners got by with what they already knew?	2 (F, S) 8 (A, B, C, D, G, J, M, T)
<b>23. Personal development opportunities-personal development problems</b> How many learners had acted greatly influenced by personal development concerns?	5 (A, B, F, S, T)

**APPENDIX 5: DATA TRANSCRIPTS**

These are the complete data transcripts of learners A and F.

Learner-participant: A  
 Experiment date (duration): 14.10.2010 (01:24:50)  
 SR date (duration): 02.11.2010 (01:00:33)






Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Inner speech – private speech		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>A ( Goes to the password-protected <i>FlashVlog</i> tab and types her Login name) ( goes to another browser tab to find the password in an email message she opened earlier; reads and repeats it softly as she tries to go back to the <i>FlashVlog</i> tab where she was before; instead she goes to a different tab and when she types without looking at the screen first the page disappears when she presses the delete button - the browser probably went to the previous page shown in that tab; She then goes to three tabs before she manages to find the tab she needed)</p> <p>(LA-E 01:02:10.804 - 01:02:41.714)</p>		<p><b>10.11.2011</b>                      Mumbles as she reads a password and types it in a different window.</p>


Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Peer support – peer problems		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>A (Learner A opens the feedback to Q1 in the Before you start section and looks at it for 15 seconds before she closes it)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:28:54.924 – 00:29:10.654)</p>	<p>A (...) I'm not used to writing so so much in English, and if I do write it's like translating and stuff like that, with my cousins, so it's different. Besides here there's nobody correcting you. For instance, when I'm on the chat with someone else they correct the words and that's it, and there I learn. But here, I didn't have any feedback, so if I was wrong it was like, let's see, let me check it again just in case, right?</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:19:50.400 – 00:20:45.790)</p>	<p><b>08.02.2012</b>                      She mentions her cousins with whom she chats online in English. She values immediate feedback and corrections on her English, which she missed in the experiment. This is perhaps why she didn't use the automated feedback links.</p>
<p>A (recording her first video) But I want to talk about it about the interpersonal relationships. Once a friend told me that I was not required (chuckles) in the kind of project because I was like a kind of annoying or something like that but I didn't like it because I said that hey you, you can tell me but relax, you know, you can use another words to tell me that.</p>	<p>T In the video itself you mention some anecdotes. Like an unpleasant one, when you were once not allowed to be part of a group because she was saying that, that... I don't know, something...                      A ... that I was too loud...                      T Yes, maybe, that you talked too much or, I don't know.                      A Yes, and that on top of it I was arrogant and</p>	<p><b>26.01.2012</b>                      This incident has affected the learner to the point of needing to talk about it and taking this opportunity to do so. This is an instance of the influence of peer</p>






<p>(LA-E 00:51:31.200 – 00:52:19.515)</p>	<p>authoritarian or something like that. And I, 'bah' (pulls a face of disgust).</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:25:59.800 – 00:26:24.790)</p>	<p>problems in learner behaviour.</p>
	<p>A Something that is distinctive. Well, I think that feeling that you belong to a group. For instance, the university. I commented on this too, saying that I always asked 'and you, where do you study?', 'and you, where to you study?' because on looks for, mm... well, I seek to feel identified with a group, and in this case I always [ask] 'and what did you study?'. And 'what do you study or what do you do'.</p> <p>T And if I tell you: "I didn't study anything".</p> <p>A What can you do?</p> <p>T What's your reaction? What can you do, right?</p> <p>A Yes, it's like, ah...</p> <p>T You want to look for my value...</p> <p>A Uh-huh.</p> <p>T ... which is either in what I study or...</p> <p>A ... or in what you do...</p> <p>T ... in what I do...</p> <p>A Uh-huh.</p> <p>T I don't do anything. I don't do anything.</p> <p>A And I [say] "So, what?" Then it's like "aah".</p> <p>And what will you talk to me about.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:30:02.200 – 00:31:00.600)</p>	<p><b>08.02.2012</b></p> <p>On her need to belong to a peer group, which explains her upset when she was excluded from one at school, and on how she excludes other peers on the basis of what they study or do in life.</p>
<p>A (In response to the question 'How do you feel about introducing yourself on video?', learner A types: 'good, i'm happy i like to make video eaven i'm not as good as my [Digital] art[s] friends' and then deletes 'eaven I'm not as good as my [Digital] art[s] friends')</p> <p>(LA-E 00:30:50.470 – 00:32:00.920)</p>	<p>T Listen, in the previous section before we go further, because this is going very fast, you talk about... at one point you wrote 'I'm going to make a video, it's exciting, it's cool, but I'm not as good as those from Arts.</p> <p>A At making videos.</p> <p>T And then you delete that.</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T Why did you delete it?</p> <p>A Because, when you write that, that... I'm not, not so good, it's because you're underrating yourself.</p> <p>T Exactly.</p> <p>A And I said, "No, I'm underrating myself, I can't do that". And I deleted it. And I said, next.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:34.50.200 – 00:35.22.247)</p>	<p><b>08.02.2012</b></p> <p>This is an interesting segment where learner A makes a conscious decision not to compare herself negatively with peers, who are possibly more capable of making videos than her.</p>
	<p>T Why did you decide to talk about interpersonal relations?</p> <p>A Because days earlier I had had... mm... a conflict with my classmates. I decided to speak about interpersonal relations because it's a topic that was hot (draws an ascending curve in the air with her hand). And I said, "I'll talk about this".</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:40:03.700 – 00:40:45.200)</p>	<p><b>26.01.2012</b></p> <p>This is further evidence that the choice of topic (contrary to the topic set by the teacher) is motivated by an earlier incident with a peer. Peer problems can steer the course of action of the learner to suit their most immediate needs.</p>
	<p>A Yes, for example, I see my classmates and I tell them that we should have speaking afternoons and everything in English and I feel that I'm the</p>	<p><b>26.01.2012</b></p> <p>Another instance of peer problems in that</p>

	<p>most advanced one and still I feel that there so so much I need to learn and I would need to talk to people who could [say] "No, it's this and that..." and correcting, for example, "No, you don't say it like that, you say it like this". "Ah, OK". And begin to practise. They should kind of force me to some extent, to keep practising practising practising. Because I do it on my own but it's not the same.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:52:37.208 – 00:53:13.953)</p>	<p>her attempts to engage her peers in organised activities where they can practise their English are met with resistance.</p>
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<b>Learner-Participant: A Dimension:</b> <b>Teacher support – teacher problems</b>		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>(Teacher helps learner A to find the Sign up page following a different route)                      A (hums anxiously)                      T Look, you click here (pointing at a spot on the screen).                      A Then...                      T Here (pointing at another spot on the screen).                      A (Listening carefully and navigating to the required page)                      T Let's click on 'Sign in'.                      A It's here, isn't it? (  using the pointer to show a link on the page).                      T This one is to create a one [account] and this one... the username, do you remember it?                      A No.                      T Then let's create a new one [account], it's quicker.</p> <p>(LA-E 00:03:43:188 – 00:04:41.862)</p>		<p><b>15.02.2012</b>                      The feeling at this point is that the learner would not have been able to access FlashMeeting without teacher support.</p>
<p>A Teacher, I can't create a new account! (shouting to be heard at the self-access reception area where T is) because my email address is already in use.                      T (Arriving at A's workstation) Ah, then it's better if we recover the password, isn't it?                      A But I can't even remember my username. I thought it was [name deleted] (  typing [name deleted] on the videoconference page). Unless I put my third name... [name deleted] (  as she deletes [name deleted] and types [name deleted];  clicks on 'Continue').                      T If you like, ask for the password to be sent to you and they may give you your username.                      A But that option is not here (showing the teacher the request password error window).                      T Let's see, go back here (pointing at a spot on the screen)...                      A Here? (  opening the task's window)                      T No, this one (pointing at the request</p>		<p><b>08.02.2012</b>                      This is a major disturbance partly related to teacher support as the learner would not have been able to overcome her problem (not remembering her username and password and not knowing how to retrieve them online from the OpenLearn system). It's worth noting that the teacher support was face to face on this occasion (she shouted to get help in person, instead of using the videoconference).</p>


password error window tab;  A clicks on it).

A Ah, here? ( clicking on the 'Back' button in the browser). Let's see.

T Uh-huh. Again ( A clicks on the 'Back' button several times). And here let's click on 'reset it here' ( A clicks on the relevant link).

T (Both look at the screen that requests a username before it can send the password) Mmm...

A My username? ( types [name deleted] in the username textbox and  clicks on 'Continue'; receives an error message saying that the username is incorrect) Mmm... ( types 'erandeni' in the username field and  clicks on 'Continue'; the same error message appears)


T Type your email address. That might be your username. ( A types her full email address in the username field)


A (A message asking the user for confirmation of the password request appears on the screen) Yes! (excited, raising her fist)


T And now it'll send it [the password] to you by email. Exactly. (A goes to her email inbox window). It'll take a short while. (A goes to the task page but it's password protected so she can't access it yet; goes back to her email inbox) Let's look at this. Ah, no, you can't get in here either because you weren't...

A No.


T When you receive it [the password] I'm going to ask you to get in here and in here too (pointing at the screen).

A So, I'm going to get in here and then here ( clicking on the task page and the videoconference page).

T Uh-huh. Exactly. Yes. ( A maximises a redundant videoconference window used earlier) You can close this one now if you like.

And you can close this one too (as  A maximises a redundant task sign-in page used earlier).

A I have so many windows open.

T Yes, and with the temporary password you'll be able to get in (as  A is deleting her incorrect username and password from the videoconference password-protected page). And your username, do you know what it's going to be? Your full email address.


A Yes.

T It's just that, more and more often, that is the username almost by default.

A Here it is! (Very excited at realising that the email message with the required password

<p>appears in her inbox) Mmm... ( Opens the message and reads from the screen) ... “we're visiting whatever”... ( clicks on an irrelevant link included in the message) And then, ‘sing in’ (sic)? (resting her chin on her hand, she looks and sounds fairly frustrated)</p> <p>T Let’s have a look at what the message said... ( T opens the email message window)</p> <p>A (Reading from the screen) ‘You have requested a change...’ Ah, it’s this one [link] instead (highlights and copies the password).</p> <p>T And I think that with this [password] and your email address you’ll be able to get in.</p> <p>A ( Types her username and password on the videoconference password-protected page) Uh-huh. (Tries to paste her password onto the relevant field but she can’t)</p> <p>No, I should type it [the password] ( goes to the email message window and reads the password out loud). [password deleted] ( types and says the password out loud)</p> <p>[password deleted] ( goes back to the email message and reads the password out loud)</p> <p>[password deleted] ( types the password in the relevant field and clicks on ‘Continue’) I’m in! (excited)</p> <p>T There you type your name and ‘enter’. And we can communicate through there [the videoconference].</p> <p>A Yep! Oh, I’m in! (smiles and admires herself on camera) Mmm... mmm... mmm... (cheeky, casting a sidelong glance at the camera)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:08:44.300 – 00.13.56.600)</p>		
	<p>T Look, here we’re at minute 13. We’ve lost quite a lot of time. But you’re still calm, you haven’t become anxious.</p> <p>A It’s just that I also felt safe because my teacher was there with me. Perhaps if he hadn’t I would have taken longer. And I may have been... I don’t know.</p> <p>T Quite desperate perhaps.</p> <p>A Yes. I said, ‘well, between the two of us we’ll see how it turns out’.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:09:34.500 – 00:10:05.230)</p>	<p><b>26.01.2012</b> Learner A expresses he reassurance at knowing that the teacher was present online (through a videoconference link, namely FlashMeeting in this case).</p>
<p>(speaking through videoconference)</p> <p>T [Teacher audio not available]</p> <p>A Yes, teacher. A little softly, but yes [I can hear you].</p> <p>T [Teacher audio not available]</p> <p>A OK. I adjusted the sound here [at my workstation] but it's still very soft (hums).</p> <p>T (arriving at workstation to fix problem) Yes, because it's getting the sound from there, from the little camera.</p> <p>A Ah, from the camera...</p>		<p><b>15.02.2012</b> Microphone feed is poor because it's coming from the camera in-built microphone (instead of the one attached to the student). Teacher's fault for not checking this before the experiment</p>

<p>T And I want the sound to come from the microphone now.                  A And from this microphone here.                  T This one is fine (checking the configuration of the camera) but this one we are going to change it (changing the selection of microphone in the configuration of Adobe Flash Player).                  A The little microphone right?                  (T finishes helping A at workstation and leaves; A puts on her headphones and hums)                  T [Teacher audio not available]                  A No teacher, it is still as soft.                  T [Teacher audio not available]                  A I couldn't hear anything again.                  T [Teacher audio not available]                  A Yes, a little better.</p> <p>(LA-E 00:15:31.686 - 00:18:32.057)</p>		<p>started. Besides, learner can't hear teacher well enough. Another technical problem caused by lack of preparation on the part of the teacher. When technology is involved, plenty of time must be allowed before starting a task as this problems only delay things and cause great amounts of frustration and stress.</p>
	<p>T Very good. Yes, so you're trying to get back into the videoconference. It looks that way, did you feel that the videoconference was useful or did you feel it more like an obligation?                  A No. It was my tool. It's like anything I knew the videoconference was the way out, kind of like the answer.                  T So it made you feel like more confident, more supported...                  A Yes.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:17:08.200 – 00:17:37.900)</p>	<p><b>26.01.2012</b>                  She claims that the teacher's presence online was like a 'way out', 'the answer', which made her feel more confident.</p>
<p>(👤 goes back to the Quick Start page and 👤 clicks on an irrelevant link; frowns and 👤 tries to close the window repeatedly but the 'Close this window' button doesn't seem to be working)                  (👤 She goes back to the videoconference window and 👤 clicks on 'Open test application'; 👤 she quickly closes the window when she realises it's irrelevant; 👤 goes back to the videoconference window)                  A: Teacher! I can't access FlashVlog.                  (👤 goes to the irrelevant FlashVlog window that she opened earlier and 👤 tries to close it again, to no avail; reads the Quick Start page again)                  T: [Teacher videoconference audio not available]                  A: I can't get into FlashVlog.                  T: [Teacher response not available]                  A: (hums) OK (👤 goes back to Quick Start page; 👤 clicks on a FlashVlog link in the main VLE menu; reads main FlashVlog page) Where does it say click, teacher?                  T: [Teacher response not available]                  A: (👤 Clicks on the right 'Vlog now' link and the password-protected Flash Vlog main page</p>		<p><b>28.09.2011</b>                  Asks for teacher support again. Teacher gave too many instructions in one go earlier; she couldn't take it all in. She then finally clicks on the right link, 'Vlog now', when instructed by the teacher.</p> <p><b>08.02.2012</b>                  It's unfortunate that the teacher audio is not available as it would have been useful to see all the steps that the teacher said in one go that became impossible for the learner to follow. This is a disturbance related to bad teaching practice online.</p>

<p>opens) Yes, now it's asking me for my password and... to get in. Is it the same that I used a while ago?                  T: [Teacher response not available]                  A: (  Types in her username and password and is granted access to the FlashVlog application) Yes, I managed to get connected. Thank you, teacher (hums and begins recording her presentation).                  (LA-E 00:47:05.376 – 0049:49.591)</p>		
<p>A I were in Harmon Hall [private language school] for two years but there was so simply that here I don't know why maybe because the teachers were taking you to the right way and they maybe helped me with my works and my verbal times and also with my pronunciation that is not very well. I think that I talk worse that people who lives in India (laughs). Yes, I'm from Mexico, I'm 21, I'm pretty I'm smart I'm rich. No, I'm not rich. But also I work a lot. That's all. I don't have too much to say. I supposedly will be talking about interpersonal relationships but I think that I get lose talking about another things that comes to my mind right now. Ciao. (stops recording)                  (LA-E 00:54:11.727 – 00:55:44.898)</p>	<p>T Then it's very interesting that when you talk about difficulties to speak English then you talk about English classes. And you say, well, I don't know, there's also a connection. You talk about <i>Harmon Hall</i>, about how you liked it better, that the experience there was good because they supported you a lot. It sounds like what you liked about that place is that they supported you.                  A Yes.                  T And here you haven't felt the same support, right?                  A Yes, for example, I see my classmates and I tell them that we should have speaking afternoons and everything in English and I feel that I'm the most advanced one and still I feel that there so so so much I need to learn and I would need to talk to people who could [say] "No, it's this and that..." and correcting, for example, "No, you don't say it like that, you say it like this". "Ah, OK". And begin to practise. They should kind of force me to some extent, to keep practising practising practising. Because I do it on my own but it's not the same.                  (LA-SR 00:52:10.000 – 00:53:13.900)</p>	<p><b>06.02.2012</b>                  The implication is that language teachers at the school where the study was conducted are not supportive enough, although learner A then mentions lack of peer collaboration and her need for being forced to practise her English as contributing factors to the lack of opportunities to practise English. Her comment "I do it on my own but it's not the same" is very revealing of the need for social learning as opposed to individual learning.</p>

**Learner-Participant: A**  
**Dimension: Support from others – problems with others**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>A And, I don't know. Another day, a sister took [knocked on] my door tac-tac-tac (mimicks knocking) and told me hey there is somebody that speaks English? and I said yes, I am, but in Spanish you know, ah yeah, and she told me she gave me a little of paper, piece of paper that talks about God and all of that. But was nice to talk with her. And I asked they because there was two girls, that if they were how do you say? her native language was the English and they tell me no it's Spanish and I said why do you talk with me in English and she said no, I don't know because we're trying to get the people that talk English and I came to explain my ideas in English but not very well because I need to practise more.                  (LA-E 00:52:38.048 – 00:54:11.727)</p>	<p>T Then you talk about a nun...                  A Oh, yes. They came to knock [at my door] and I thought it was cool because as I was saying it's hard to speak in English... The nuns came and [said] "Does anyone speak English at home?" And I [said], "Yes, I do". And then, oh, they start talking about God in English and reading the Bible to me in English. And I went... (makes gestures to indicate she was in trouble). I saw a chance to practise the language. They invited me to go to Bible readings and I thought it would be interesting because it's all about past events and I have problems using the past [tense], sometimes, because I'm used to just speaking in the present and in the future, in present and in future, it's like I stop like... "Yeah, whatever, that happened".</p>	<p><b>06.02.2012</b>                  She mentions seeing this religious group as an opportunity to improve her spoken English.</p>

	<p>And I need to expand my knowledge. So I said, yes, I may go along.  T And the parallelism with this situation is that when making the video it was hard for you to talk, to express your ideas in English. And in that situation too.  A It happened to me too.  T So that's the connection, I think, right?  A Yep.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:50:58.283 – 00:52:08.700)</p>	
	<p>A Yes.  T Like Sam talks about Cade, her friend, you talk about [your friend] Nancy. That's normal. You don't talk about your family in this case. Is it a... was it a conscious decision or it just came out that way?  A No, it's unconscious. I hardly talk about my family, normally. I don't talk about my family. But later it's like, when there is trust, then I do. It's a part of me that is not like, like...  T You don't talk about it openly. It's like you said earlier, you don't expose...  A Yes, I don't go out there at FIMEE saying "Perita's daughter [not her real name]", no.  T It's because you mum is Perita and she works here, or is for another reason.  A Oh, well no... look, for example, not saying it here at FIMEE is because of that, because I don't want any privileges or any... any rejection for being so-and-so's daughter. If I'm going to achieve something it's because of me. Not for any other reason. Not because of my name or last name. So it's basically for that reason. And then, also, it's because... again, not because you belong to a family you should be considered better or worse.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:58:00.887 – 00:59:10.577)</p>	<p><b>08.02.2012</b>  She perceives her being the daughter of a school secretary as a problem and conceals the fact as much as she can, even in the experiment.</p>

**Learner-Participant:** A      **Dimension:**  
**Language learning opportunities – language learning problems**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>A (...) So, as I'm not used to writing so so much in English, and if I do write it's like translating and stuff like that, with my cousins, so it's different.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:20:21.161 – 00:20:31.729)</p>	<p><b>13.02.2012</b>  She acknowledges that she doesn't write in English very much. The implication is that she could do with more writing practice.</p>
<p>A And, I don't know. Another day, a sister took [knocked on] my door tac-tac-tac (mimicks knocking) and told me hey there is somebody that speaks English? and I said yes, I am, but in Spanish you know, ah yeah, and she told me she gave me a little of paper, piece of paper that talks about God and all of that. But was nice to talk with her. And I asked they because there</p>	<p>T Then you talk about a nun...  A Oh, yes. They came to knock [at my door] and I thought it was cool because as I was saying it's hard to speak in English... The nuns came and [said] "Does anyone speak English at home?"  And I [said], "Yes, I do". And then, oh, they start talking about God in English and reading the Bible to me in English. And I went... (makes</p>	<p><b>13.02.2012</b>  She realises that she needs more oral practice (and this religious group is a place where she can get it). Her comment regarding verb tenses</p>

<p>was two girls, that if they were how do you say? her native language was the English and they tell me no it's Spanish and I said why do you talk with me in English and she said no, I don't know because we're trying to get the people that talk English and I came to explain my ideas in English but not very well because I need to practise more. I were in Harmon Hall [private language school] for two years but there was so simply that here I don't know why maybe because the teachers were taking you to the right way and they maybe helped me with my works and my verbal times and also with my pronunciation that is not very well. I think that I talk worse that people who lives in India (laughs).</p> <p>(LA-E 00:52:38.048 – 00:54:58.223)</p>	<p>gestures to indicate she was in trouble). I saw a chance to practise the language. They invited me to go to the Bible readings and I thought it would be interesting because it's all about past events and I have problems using the past [tense], sometimes, because I'm used to just speaking in the present and in the future, in present and in future, it's like I stop like... "Yeah, whatever, that happened". And I need to expand my knowledge. So I said, yes, I may go along.</p> <p>T And the parallelism with this situation is that when making the video it was hard for you to talk, to express your ideas in English. And in that situation too.</p> <p>A It happened to me too.</p> <p>T So that's the connection, I think, right?</p> <p>A Yep.</p> <p>(LA-SR 50:58.283 – 00:52:08.700)</p>	<p>is interesting too – she thinks that she mostly uses present and future tenses when she speaks in English and that's why she's not very good at using past tenses. This may require some grammar instruction as well.</p> <p>Considering these comments and the ones under the various support dimensions above, she seems to need oral and written practice and support with pronunciation and grammar.</p>
	<p>A Yes. I try to learn from everything and I think that... this experiment was very helpful to realise two things basically: that I need... well, three things. I need to have some kind of guide to develop a topic, a good one, more specific. I need er... a higher higher higher level of English and practise more... everything. And thirdly, I need to... well I can, I have an opportunity to improve the way I speak and express myself with a technological tool.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:56:52.510 – 00:57:32.360)</p>	<p><b>13.02.2012</b></p> <p>As she's about to complete the experiment and the SR session she reflects on the experience and realises that she needs to learn more English and practise the language more.</p>

Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Focus on meaning – focus on form

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>T Ah, very good. So here we're in the section where you have to write something. You took quite a long time here... it's interesting.</p> <p>A I was trying to find the proper words.</p> <p>T What does 'proper' mean in this case?</p> <p>A Mmm. For example, I was thinking, I said: 'OK, this is for an experiment for someone with an intermediate level of English. So, I have to use what I know, which is, proper words, how can I say, in the right tense, using the right grammatical structure... So, as I'm not used to writing so so much in English, and if I do write it's like translating and stuff like that, with my cousins, so it's different. Besides here there's nobody correcting you. For instance, when I'm on the chat with someone else they correct the words and that's it, and there I learn. But here, I didn't have any feedback, so if I was wrong it was like, let's see, let me check it again just in case, right?</p> <p>T So you are self-correcting yourself.</p> <p>A Yes, kind of. So it's like, let's see. And that's it, I try to self-correct myself.</p> <p>T In fact, I noticed that. It's a good sign that you're self-correcting. But, let me see if I</p>	<p><b>12.02.2012</b></p> <p>This segment has been included in its complete form to follow the whole narrative that accounts for her concern with linguistic form and appropriateness. She seems to find a focus on form important but not so much for learning purposes; rather, she doesn't want to look 'stupid' if read by other people who may find mistakes in her writing and because she thinks writing properly is a social convention that one must conform to. She claims to do this in her</p>












	<p>understand this, you wanted to use proper English like you say because you were doing an experiment.</p> <p>A No. Because I'm used to writing properly, in Spanish. For example, when I write text messages, many use abbreviations, and I don't like it because I feel that if words were created, that was for a reason and to use them properly. So I try to write them, although I don't speak equally properly, right? But I try in writing to write the sentences completely and with no spelling mistakes. The same happens to me with English.</p> <p>T So it's not necessarily because you were doing the experiment but because you normally try to write properly or correctly, following rules...</p> <p>A Yes, exactly. Because you never know when someone might read you and might say 'look, she's such an ignorant'. For example, on <i>Facebook</i>, too, on the biggest social network, I sometimes write comments and all in English, and I try to check that they are well written.</p> <p>T How do you check? You just read them again and look carefully?</p> <p>A I read it again, I look carefully and I try to remember, perhaps, I try to remember if it's OK or not, and if I'm not sure at all, I go to <i>Google translate</i> and there I check the word, and if I'm still in doubt because many words are a bad translation and don't work, then what I do is I'd rather not put anything.</p> <p>T And you don't use other tools, for example a good dictionary, here in the task I put them as links down there, but you didn't use them.</p> <p>A No, I'm not really used to using dictionaries because I have the idea of the primary school dictionary; we had to take it and start looking up words. But for example I find using the internet easier, <i>Google translate</i> like this bam-bam-bam (mimes typing on a keyboard) then it gives you the meaning. But I started to use the Oxford dictionary in the Toefl course we had and I liked it because there they give you even the sound and all. And... but I'm not really used to looking up words there. I'd rather look them up... well, not look them up but find them in songs or in articles...</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:19:33.900 – 00:23:36.500)</p>	<p>native Spanish language. However, virtually not using any tools to help her proofread and self-correct (such as the spell-checker embedded in textboxes on the task's platform that highlights mistakes) means that her texts are still largely inaccurate after she has checked them.</p>
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Learner-Participant: A Dimension: L1 – L2

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>T In the beginning, did you feel nervous at all?</p> <p>A Not in the beginning. Not so much nervous but I felt fear. I said, "Oh, what if I mess up!" because I couldn't understand the page the way it was. I was like, 'So, where do I get into now?'</p> <p>T You mean the page of the task, right?</p> <p>A Yes, the page of the task, that one. I was like, "Oh, no", and like... well I kind of said, maybe I would understand this better if it were in Spanish, and I said, and then I said, "No, it would</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b></p> <p>She considers the possibility that problems with L2 are to blame for her anxiety and lack of understanding of sections of the task but she rejects it almost immediately.</p>

	<p>have been the same". So I was like "Where do I click? What's next? How do I do this?" I hadn't used it before, you see, so it was like "Let's see".</p> <p>T So, as this was an environment that you were not familiar with it made you feel insecure, right?</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T And anxious?</p> <p>A Yes, yes.</p> <p>T Perhaps anxious because you don't know what it is about, what's next, right?</p> <p>A Yes. I was like I didn't even know very well what it was about. I said, 'let's see'.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:00:19.400 – 00:01:51.800)</p>	
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Learner-Participant: A      Dimension: Transfer of digital routines	Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>Learner-Participant A (henceforth A) starts the process of accessing the password-protected FlashMeeting (FM) videoconference website that will provide videoconference support if needed. The teacher (henceforth T) is still there with her giving her some initial instructions.</p> <p>A      Testing, testing, testing (speaking into the microphone). Ah, it's this one (pointing to one of the microphones), right? Or both?</p> <p>T      Ready. Yes.</p> <p>A      Good.</p> <p>T      So, there in your email I sent you a message and it has both links: the one for the task, which I have already opened for you here (pointing at a spot on the screen)</p> <p>A      Ah! OK.</p> <p>T      ... and you also have the one [link] for the videoconference.</p> <p>A      (  Opening her email inbox) Here it is (  double-clicks on relevant message to open it).</p> <p>T You can leave this [email window] open if you like in case something happens at any point: the task gets closed...</p> <p>A      OK, so, this is this link and this one, is it for the videoconference?</p> <p>T      Yes, you can open the videoconference if you like... (  A clicks on the relevant link). And let's try to get in[to the videoconference website]. Let's see if it lets us, [click] where it says 'Go to meeting'... Do you remember your username and password?</p> <p>A      I think so (  typing her username and password). (  A clicks on 'Continue' to access the website) Oh no! (  types her username and password again and  clicks on 'Continue') No, I'm going to create a new one [videoconference website account].</p>	<p>T At the beginning, did you feel nervous in any... A Not at the beginning. Not so much nervous but rather like scared. I said: "Ah, what if I mess up, oh no!" Because I didn't understand the page. I was like "And now, where do I go?" T You mean the task page, don't you? A Yes, the task page, that one. I was like "Oh, no" like... like, I said, well perhaps if it had been in Spanish I would have understood more, and I say, then I said: "No, it would have been the same." I was like, like... "Where do I click? What's next? How do I do this?" It's because I hadn't used it before, so it was like "Let's see!" T So, as this was an environment you were not familiar with you felt insecure, didn't you? A Yes. T And nervous. A Yes, yes. T Possibly anxious, because you don't even know what it is about, nor what comes next, right? A Yes. It was like I didn't even know what it was about properly. I said: "Let's see." T Look, now we're going to... (mumbles). Yes, this was a small problem we had at first because you couldn't get in[to the videoconference website]. That delayed us a bit. And here... Well, that was really my fault because a long time had gone by from the time of the induction. So, it's really my fault. And, yes, that delayed us a lot, eh? Then we move on to minute six (fastforwarding the video) and you're still stuck with this, aren't you? How did all this delay at the beginning make you feel... having to open the account and then all the time lost before you can even begin to work. A Well, I didn't despair. T Uh-huh. A I said: "Oh well, I'll get in soon, there will be a way." But there it's like I tried to relax and say "Oh well, don't worry." T Exactly. A Uh-huh. T OK, very good. It's interesting because at around minute seven... in fact, when you can't</p>	<p><b>15.10.2010</b></p> <p>She seemed a little nervy at first. 3:33 She had to open a new <i>OpenLearn</i> account - she forgot her username and password. Must have shorter delay between induction and experiment. 6:19 She realises her email is already in use at OpenLearn. That's her username. She tries to get in by remembering password, but fails to remember. 7:44 She tries again and again to no avail. Goes back to sign up page. Goes to her email - I think she's trying to retrieve her original password. Uses search box feature to find email - good. Asks me for help. 9:02 I tell her, in person, that she can retrieve her password or get a new one by clicking on the right link on the sign in page. She thought it was not possible. Strange, this is a common thing to have on a sign in page: reset it here (OU) or forgot password. She clicks too soon when I</p>

<p>T Just wait. Oh yes, it looks like it's working (mumbles)...</p> <p>A Mmm...</p> <p>T Meanwhile let's get this connected (connecting a cable in the back of the computer). This computer is going to overheat a lot. Don't be scared.</p> <p>A Yes, no problem.</p> <p>T It's just that the poor thing struggles a bit.</p> <p>A Poor thing. I don't think it's working, teacher (sighs).</p> <p>T It isn't, is it? Would you like to try again?</p> <p>A (  Clicking on 'Apply for a new 'Sign in' account') I'll open another one [website account]!</p> <p>T Really?</p> <p>A (Hums, rests her chin on her hand, looks frustrated) It's just that it's been a long time since I last opened it.</p> <p>T And you can't remember [your password], can you?</p> <p>A No. (Reading and error message from the website on the screen) What happened? (humming).</p> <p>T Look, you click here (pointing at a spot on the screen).</p> <p>A Then...</p> <p>T Here (pointing at another spot on the screen).</p> <p>A (Listening carefully and navigating to the required page) It's here, isn't it? (pointing with the cursor to a link on the page).</p> <p>T This one is to create a one [account] and this one... the username, do you remember it?</p> <p>A No.</p> <p>T Then let's create a new one [account], it's quicker.</p> <p>A Mmm...</p> <p>(  clicks on the relevant link and  types in her details to create a new account)</p> <p>(T leaves while  A is typing)</p> <p>(A receives an error message saying that there is already an account associated with her email address)</p> <p>(A tries to apply for a new account and then tries to access the website using a different username— not her email address;  types in a new password and new username;  clicks on 'Continue' twice; waits)</p> <p>Mmm...</p> <p>(  tries to access with a different username: this time the first part of her email address; tries to access with a new password)</p> <p>Mm mmmmm</p> <p>(goes back to previous error message window; goes to her email inbox window and searches for a message; goes to inbox search textbox,</p>	<p>access [the Open University website] using your account, you try to get in again and again, I didn't count the exact number of times you tried to get in, but it was several [times].</p> <p>A It's just that I did not remember if my username was right or if it was wrong or if it [the problem] was the password. And I went, "Oh no, I don't know, really".</p> <p>T (Mumbles) Yes, but as I say that was more my responsibility than yours. It looks as though before you open a new account you try and try several times to access using the original one. In fact, at one point you go to your email.</p> <p>A Uh-huh.</p> <p>T I get the feeling that you're looking for some email message from the time when we did the induction to see if you can find there...</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T ... your...</p> <p>A Yes, I said: "I'm going to try to look for, to see if I can find a message saying 'this is your account or this is your password' and open it."</p> <p>T Notice what you're going to do now. It's very interesting. You have a lot of messages, so you go to the search textbox, don't you?</p> <p>A Uh-huh.</p> <p>T And you do a search for 'OpenLearn'. And there is nothing. And you say "OK, oh well".</p> <p>A Oh well, anyway. Yes.</p> <p>T I'm not going to be able to recover [the missing username and password]... Somehow you go there, you go there, and you are reluctant to create [a new account], well you say "I can't". (A and T hear A shouting in the experiment video: "Teacher, I can't create a new account because my email address has already been used.")</p> <p>T Aaah, yes, it's true. So when you saw that it [the email address] already existed [on the website's database], and that that was your username, you say: "Hang on, let's see if I can recover the password," right?</p> <p>A But...</p> <p>T But you don't realise that the email and the username are the same.</p> <p>A No, I don't. Exactly.</p> <p>T Until now I come and I think I tell you...</p> <p>A To recover the password... by using your email address.</p> <p>T Exactly.</p> <p>A Then, oh yes, yes it works.</p> <p>T Here I tell you to go back and you click somewhere else, not in the 'Back' button.</p> <p>A And I go, "oh, yes, it's true".</p> <p>T And now yes, you do go back. And I think that it's here somewhere that it says 'recover', like 'reset', like to reset your password.</p> <p>A Uh-huh.</p> <p>T ... because you still don't realise that...</p> <p>A It [the username] was my email address.</p> <p>T ... that it is your email address.</p> <p>A And I go: "My name, my name... No!"</p> <p>T And I think that this is where I tell you that it [the username] is your email address.</p> <p>A But, it was... well, now I can see it, it was</p>	<p>give her an instruction.</p> <p>9:47 She can't remember/think that her username is her email address.</p> <p>10:41 She manages to get a new password sent to her email. She lost five minutes already. ? How does she feel?</p> <p>11:22 Has too many windows open ("tengo tantas ventanas abiertas"). This is a common problem that can create anxiety.</p> <p>11:42 Gets excited about getting email with her new password.</p> <p>12:03 Receives OpenLearn email and doesn't even read - goes straight to first link (wrong link). Only when I tell her she finds password in email message. Link catches her attention more than anything else.</p> <p>12:55 Can't copy paste password. Why?</p> <p>13:23 eventually manages to get into FlashMeeting. She says password out loud to help her type it into textbox (although I was there, so she was not completely alone; probably can't count as private speech).</p> <p>13:46 Fancies herself on camera. :)</p> <p><b>14.09.2011</b></p> <p>It's important to note that she was not engaged in language learning here (although she had to read and interact with websites that were in English). This segment can be seen as an action whose goal is accessing the task website and the videoconference website, both on the</p>
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<p> types "open learn" and  clicks on 'search'; goes to error message window; goes to the videoconference password-protected page; switches from the videoconference page to the error message window).</p> <p>A Teacher, I can't create a new account! (shouting to be heard at the self-access reception area where T is) because my email address is already in use.</p> <p>T (Arriving at A's workstation) Ah, then it's better if we recover the password, isn't it?</p> <p>A But I can't even remember my username. I thought it was [name deleted]</p> <p>( typing [name deleted] on the videoconference page). Unless I put my third name... [name deleted] ( as she deletes [name deleted] and types '[name deleted];  clicks on 'Continue').</p> <p>T If you like, ask for the password to be sent to you and they may give you your username.</p> <p>A But that option is not here (showing the teacher the request password error window).</p> <p>T Let's see, go back here (pointing at a spot on the screen)...</p> <p>A Here? ( opening the task's window)</p> <p>T No, this one (pointing at the request password error window tab;  A clicks on it).</p> <p>A Ah, here? ( clicking on the 'Back' button in the browser). Let's see.</p> <p>T Uh-huh. Again ( A clicks on the 'Back' button several times). And here let's click on 'reset it here' ( A clicks on the relevant link).</p> <p>T (Both look at the screen that requests a username before it can send the password) Mmm...</p> <p>A My username? ( types '[name deleted] in the username textbox and  clicks on 'Continue'; receives an error message saying that the username is incorrect) Mmm... ( types 'erandeni' in the username field and  clicks on 'Continue'; the same error message appears)</p> <p>T Type your email address. That might be your username. ( A types her full email address in the username field)</p> <p>A (A message asking the user for confirmation of the password request appears on the screen) Yes! (excited, raising her fist)</p> <p>T And now it'll send it [the password] to you by email. Exactly. (A goes to her email inbox window). It'll take a short while. (A goes to the task page but it's password protected so she can't access it yet; goes back to her email inbox)</p>	<p>obvious, if they were only asking me for one thing [in order for me to recover my password], where would the password be sent to? Well, obviously to my email account.</p> <p>T Look, I wanted to ask you about that because recovering your password is something common with [web] services, isn't it? And having your email address as your username is becoming increasingly common. However, at that point you didn't think of any of those two options. Why didn't you think of it?</p> <p>A Well, I don't know. Well it's because whenever I choose the username it's not usually my email address. I don't like using my email address as my username. I prefer to use my name, a pseudonym... yes.</p> <p>T And you didn't think of recovering the password either...</p> <p>A I hardly ever recover passwords because I do remember them.</p> <p>T I see. So, in this case, why did you forget?</p> <p>A My password?</p> <p>T Your password.</p> <p>A Because I couldn't even remember my username.</p> <p>T That's the problem.</p> <p>A Perhaps if I had remembered the username I would have associated it with and remembered the password.</p> <p>T Uh-huh.</p> <p>A Because there are many passwords that I know. The ones for school, I've got like two different ones, the ones for the grant and then the ones for the [university] system. And then on top of that I have the one for my password, the one for Facebook, because they're all different, because if they hack into one they hack into all of them. So I try to have like each password different but using some characters that remind me of...</p> <p>T But, to recover these passwords you depend 100% upon your memory. So, it's not written down anywhere or anything like that.</p> <p>A I have, er, I always try to remember and try and remember remember, and when I definitely can't, then I do have them there in my email inbox, the password for the school and I go and get it. The ones that are definitely too hard for me to learn I check them in my email inbox. Those that are just numbers.</p> <p>T And you have them there in your email inbox.</p> <p>A Uh-huh. And for example I repeated that password [to access the task] three or four times and I learnt it. It was [password deleted].</p> <p>T Which is the one that the system sent us, isn't it?</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T ... when we recovered it.</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T Yes, and here you're typing it, in fact. We're at minute 13. Look, this is minute 13 already. We've lost quite a lot of time. But you stay calm, you're not anxious.</p> <p>A It's also because I felt sure because my teacher was there with me. It may have taken me longer</p>	<p>OpenLearn VLE environment. The obstacle is not being able to remember her username and password. The way the situation is resolved is by means of teacher intervention. As A admits, it would have taken her longer to access the websites if she had been alone.</p> <p><b>16.09.2011</b> This disturbance seems to be affecting the S-tool-O triangle. Suddenly, a routine operation becomes a labour-intensive action. The goal becomes getting into the website. This requires performing several other actions (such as recovering the password) which should have been operations.</p>
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Let's look at this. Ah, no, you can't get in here either because you weren't...

A No.

T When you receive it [the password] I'm going to ask you to get in here and in here too (pointing at the screen).

A So, I'm going to get in here and then here ( clicking on the task page and the videoconference page).

T Uh-huh. Exactly. Yes. ( A maximises a redundant videoconference window used earlier) You can close this one now if you like.

And you can close this one too (as A maximises a redundant task sign-in page used earlier).

A I have so many windows open.

T Yes, and with the temporary password you'll be able to get in (as A is deleting her incorrect username and password from the videoconference password-protected page). And your username, do you know what it's going to be? Your full email address.

A Yes.

T It's just that, more and more often, that is the username almost by default.

A Here it is! (Very excited at realising that the email message with the required password appears in her inbox) Mmm... ( Opens the message and reads from the screen) ... "we're visiting whatever"... ( clicks on an irrelevant link included in the message) And then, 'sing in' (sic)? (resting her chin on her hand, she looks and sounds fairly frustrated)

T Let's have a look at what the message said... ( T opens the email message window)

A (Reading from the screen) 'You have requested a change...' Ah, it's this one [link] instead (highlights and copies the password).

T And I think that with this [password] and your email address you'll be able to get in.

A ( Types her username and password on the videoconference password-protected page) Uh-huh. (Tries to paste her password onto the relevant field but she can't)

No, I should type it [the password] ( goes to the email message window and reads the password out loud). [password deleted] ( types and says the password out loud)

[password deleted] ( goes back to the email message and reads the password out loud)

[password deleted] ( types the password in the relevant field and clicks on 'Continue') I'm in! (excited)

T There you type your name and 'enter'. And we can communicate through there [the videoconference].

if he hadn't been there, I don't know.

T You'd have been quite desperate, perhaps.

A Yes. I said: "Well, between both of us we'll find a way."

A Well, yes, that's right, isn't it?

T I wanted to ask you about something. I'm going to rewind a bit. 12'03". Look, here you get the message from the Open University with your new password. And there is a lot of text. But the interesting thing is that you receive the message and... let's see what happens, eh?

A No, that password was super long.

T Yes. Here it is. I just want you to watch. Did you notice?

A I immediately go to the link.

T You immediately go to the link. And you didn't even see that there you had...

A ... there was the password.

T The link opens, it takes you to a weird page, which has nothing to do...

A ... it does not correspond, uh-huh.

T And there you realise. What happens there? I want you to comment on that.

A What it is... it's visual. I'm like very visual. Besides, the first thing you see, you associate it. For example, the messages from Facebook, they all tell you "so-and-so has commented on such a photo. Click to see the comment." Then, you go, bam, to the link. And normally the link sends you to the comment, the answer that you're looking for.








T So, a link is always going to catch your attention more...





A I'd say... yes.

T ... than something else.

A Or, unless it is underlined in colour because visually colours do catch people's attention a lot. It was blue and underlined, and everything else was in black. So you do have to see that important stuff is highlighted.

(LA- SR 00:00:00.000 – 00:12:40.660)

<p>A Yep! Oh, I'm in! (smiles and admired herself on camera) Mmm... mmm... mmm... (cheeky, casting a sidelong glance at the camera)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:00:00.000 – 00:13.56.600)</p>		
<p>A (A is about to click on the 'Start broadcasting button' on the videoconference tab she's looking at but instead  she clicks on the task tab and leans forward and begins to read the Introduction section of the task, where a thumbnail of Sam's video appears)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:18:38.800 – 00:19:46.392)</p>	<p>T Here you're reading the introduction, and in the introduction I tried to put things that would help you feel more comfortable, more... with more confidence, knowing what you were going to do, what it was about, here I tell you that you have the menu, that there are some dictionaries, I give you the tip that you can use the dictionaries if you like... When you read this part you took some time. But, what did you feel? I don't know if you remember. [Did you think] this has nothing to do, or it does help me or...?</p> <p>A I felt anxiety like to watch the video (laughing). I said 'I want to watch, I want to watch....' I want to watch to see what happens, I want to make my own video. I was like a little anxious.</p> <p>T Exactly and this has happened before. I did a pilot test and a student also expressed the same. She wanted to do the video, she didn't want to be distracted, let's say, with other things, right? So what you say, I understand it.</p> <p>A It's just that... I don't know, it's kind of exciting.</p> <p>T Did you know that you were going to watch a video?</p> <p>A Well, I imagined so, because of the picture.</p> <p>T It anticipated...</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T You recognise that that image is typical of <i>YouTube</i> or something like that, right?</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:14.50.000 – 00:16:12.600)</p>	<p><b>13.02.2012</b> This is where she's reading the Introduction section and she sees the thumbnail of Sam's video and begins to get anxious in anticipation of the video it represents (which she wants to watch as soon as possible).</p>
<p>(She is asked to sign in to the OU and  types her temporary password;  clicks on 'Sign in'; she's asked to set a new password; she looks at the screen with raised eyebrows;  goes to the <i>Hotmail</i> tab;  comes back to the new password tab and  clicks on the browser's back button twice to go back to the task where she begins work as a 'guest', not signed in)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:21:27.900 – 00:22:06.600)</p>		<p><b>14.09.2011</b> When the system asks her to enter her new password (because she was probably sent only a temporary one) she refuses to do that and goes back in the browser instead to keep working in the task as a guest (i.e., not signed in).</p> <p><b>21.12.2011</b> This might be the reason why she kept being asked to join the learning unit every time she moved from one section to the next.</p>
<p>(A begins reading the Introduction section;  she uses the mouse and the pointer to follow</p>	<p>T Well, yes, that was the idea for the videoconference. Imagine, there's a moment here, minute 22. We're very close. We're going to get to a point where you're reading from the</p>	<p><b>15.02.2012</b> She normally uses the mouse and the pointer to read text</p>





















<p>the text she's reading;  clicks to move on to the next section after reading the Introduction for about 30 seconds; a pop-up window appears asking her if she wants to join the learning unit;  she clicks on 'No' and the next section of the task appears; reads the learning outcomes section  using her pointer to follow the text)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:22:08.500 - 00:23:13.700)</p>	<p>screen and I want you to pay attention to how you do it. We're almost there. It's 22'29". Here, here... Can you see what you're doing? This was very annoying too, wasn't it? Every time a message popped up [asking] if you wanted to join the unit or not... I'm not sure why it appears. Every time you changed section... but I don't know if you noticed at that moment what you were doing to read.</p> <p>A I was moving the mouse.</p> <p>T Is that something you usually do?</p> <p>A Mmm... Yes, when there are many letters and they're small, so I don't get lost in the paragraph, I try to point to see where I am.</p> <p>T It's as though it were your finger, isn't it?</p> <p>A Yes. Otherwise, I lose... I lose the idea and I can't... then I don't know where I'm reading. But for example when I read on sheets of paper like these (points to the sheets I have in my hand) I find it easier because the paper looks different from the screen.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:17:37.900 – 00:19:08.700)</p>	<p>from the screen, as though the pointer were her finger. As for the annoying pop-up, now I know that it came up every time she changed section because she was not logged in.</p> <p><b>24.02.2012</b></p> <p>No, this is wrong. She was logged in, but the pop-up still appeared between sections.</p>
	<p>T Ah, very good. So here we're in the section where you have to write something. You took quite a long time here... it's interesting.</p> <p>A I was trying to find the proper words.</p> <p>T What does 'proper' mean in this case?</p> <p>A Mmm. For example, I was thinking, I said: "OK, this is for an experiment for someone with an intermediate level of English. So, I have to use what I know, which is, proper words, how can I say, in the right tense, using the right grammatical structure..." So, as I'm not used to writing so so much in English, and if I do write it's like translating and stuff like that, with my cousins, so it's different. Besides here there's nobody correcting you. For instance, when I'm on the chat with someone else they correct the words and that's it, and there I learn. But here, I didn't have any feedback, so if I was wrong it was like, let's see, let me check it again just in case, right?</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>T So it's not necessarily because you were doing the experiment but because you normally try to write properly or correctly, following rules...</p> <p>A Yes, exactly. Because you never know when someone might read you and might say 'look, she's such an ignorant'. For example, on <i>Facebook</i>, too, on the biggest social network, I sometimes write comments and all in English, and I try to check that they are well written.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:19:33.400 – 00:22:09.800)</p>	<p><b>15.02.2012</b></p> <p>A couple of things stand out here. She seems to be expecting the same she gets from chatting online with her cousins and friends in the task's environment – ie, immediate feedback on her English. Not getting it might be a disappointment, as might be getting it in a different format (eg, as written text in pop-up feedback windows). The fact that it's not the same may have consequences for her – frustration? Feeling of abandonment? Secondly, she seems to be transferring her <i>Facebook</i> routines to this environment too quite naturally – ie, she checks her texts the same way in both places.</p>
<p> A moves on to the Stage 2: Practise section of the task and begins to read, her chin resting on her hand, looking uninterested) (A frowns and shifts in her chair) (takes off her headphones) (throws her hands up in the air in desperation after reading the instructions in the section for</p>	<p>T: Yes. We're at 44'. Ah, I want to go back to 43' because there's something interesting. I want you to help me remember. Here you took off the headphones, you're reading this part for a long time and notice what you're going to do now, OK? (both watching A throwing her hands up in the air on the video).</p> <p>A: So it's like 'what'? (A repeats the gesture we</p>	<p><b>15.10.2010</b></p> <p>40:26 She skips the last two questions in the quiz and moves on to State 2: Prepare. This is important. The two questions deal with preparation</p>

<p>about 3'30")</p> <p>( moves on to the next section without having done any of the practice suggested in the previous section)</p> <p>( clicks on the word 'Next' at the bottom of the page twice to try to go on to the next section, but the word is hyperlinked; the text that follows is, but A doesn't notice)</p> <p>( goes to the videoconference page)</p> <p>( goes to the task page; clicks on the back button in the browser; reads the instructions in the Stage 2: Practise section again)</p> <p>( clicks on the FlashVlog link provided on the page in the main VLE menu; when the FlashVlog page opens she then clicks on the Quick Start link provided; A scrolls quickly through the FlashVlog Quick Start page and then goes to the videoconference window; goes back to the Quick Start page and clicks on an irrelevant link; frowns and tries to close the window repeatedly but the 'Close this window' button doesn't seem to be working)</p> <p>( She goes back to the videoconference window and clicks on 'Open test application'; she quickly closes the window when she realises it's irrelevant; goes back to the videoconference window)</p> <p>A: Teacher! I can't access FlashVlog.</p> <p>( goes to the irrelevant FlashVlog window that she opened earlier and tries to close it again, to no avail; reads the Quick Start page again)</p> <p>T: [Teacher videoconference audio not available]</p> <p>A: I can't get into FlashVlog.</p> <p>T: [Teacher response not available]</p> <p>A: (hums) OK ( goes back to Quick Start page; clicks on the only icon in the taskbar twice as though wanting to maximise the window but the window is already active and showing on the screen; clicks on a FlashVlog link in the main VLE menu; reads main FlashVlog page) Where does it say click, teacher?</p> <p>T: [Teacher response not available]</p> <p>A: ( Clicks on the right 'Vlog now' link and the password-protected Flash Vlog main page opens) Yes, now it's asking me for my password and... to get in. Is it the same that I used a while ago?</p> <p>T: [Teacher response not available]</p> <p>A: ( Types in her username and password</p>	<p>just watched on the video).</p> <p>T: What? And what does it mean... what happened...? Tell me because this seemed very interesting to me.</p> <p>A: I didn't understand. It's like I didn't concentrate, or I don't know. It's saying 'OK, I have to then... go to the... menu of whatever and then click and click...' I said: "why didn't they give me a link to say 'I click here and I go straight and make my video'?" Yes. And this is when I just said: "Oh God, I don't understand anything". And it's like I didn't try to find out more and I just said: "OK, what's next".</p> <p>T: Here you realise that you were supposed to have recorded the video already.</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p>T: So you go back to look at the instructions, I think, don't you?</p> <p>A: No, this is already when...</p> <p>T: Or you ask...</p> <p>A: No, this is when I asked. Yes.</p> <p>T: But we were logged out again. And here you go back and look for something at the bottom I think...</p> <p>A: And I went: "the link? Where is it...?"</p> <p>T: And now, OK, [you thought] "I have to get in here"; because the instructions were already telling you that you had to go to FlashVlog. And here the problem...</p> <p>A: I should have gone into the second [link]...</p> <p>T: Exactly.</p> <p>A: And I went into the first one.</p> <p>T: And there we lose some time... what happened there? Why did you go into the first one?</p> <p>A: No, I don't remember. Ah, because it said 'Quickstart'. And I said: "Start quick..."</p> <p>T: (Finishing her sentence) ... that's what I want".</p> <p>A: Yes. And I [said]: 'Quickstart' (mimes clicking with the mouse).</p> <p>T: What happens is that this term is used in English to refer to learning or induction guides.</p> <p>A: Ah, OK. And that's what I didn't know, then.</p> <p>T: And here you go into another link... And we get lost.</p> <p>A: But, if you notice I always go into links. It's like links, links, links...</p> <p>T: Links are your saviours.</p> <p>A: They are my saviours, yes. Links, links...</p> <p>T: It's really interesting. Yes, eventually here you click to do the test and say yes, yes, yes... But instead of saying do the test, you'd rather close it. So, you don't want the test, you want to make it [the video], right?</p> <p>A: Yes. But I said: "Perhaps this is where I record the video". Then I said: "no, it had to be on FlashVlog".</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>T: Very good. I feel that you have a very good level of maturity. Well, there you ask me for help, you say that you can't access and I help you... Here it's interesting because I tell you do this and this and this and I give you, oh my God, such long instructions, and then I say: "Oh, no.</p>	<p>ahead of doing the video. Looking up words and thinking about the format of the video. She skips them both. This is very typical (check number of occurrences): preparing vocab ahead of doing presentation seems completely foreign to them. In fact, the whole idea of preparing seems foreign - it was for the two participants in the pilot study too.</p> <p>Moves on to next section: practice!</p> <p>41:20 She's not checking video or script to see how Sam pronounces pronunciation section sentence. Takes some time to read through section on intonation.</p> <p>43:00 takes her headphones off</p> <p>43:30 takes a long time to read. Throws her hands (in desperation?). Is she struggling to understand the instructions for these two activities, or is just overwhelmed by their complexity? I suspect she's considering skipping all this. And she does skip it.</p> <p>44:10 On to Stage 3: Review. But she hasn't recorded her video. This happened to many learners (count) - they didn't realise the activities on this page were actually asking them to record now! She has to go back to that page when she realises she has to record now.</p> <p>44:30 Goes back to previous section to look for instructions on how to record her video</p> <p>44:50 Opens Flash</p>
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<p>and is granted access to the FlashVlog application) Yes, I managed to get connected. Thank you, teacher (hums and begins recording her presentation).</p> <p>(LA-E 00:40:16.909 – 00:50:05.620)</p>	<p>Wait". And then you ask me: 'OK, I did step one... and, now?'" (A smiles). So, you can't, you can't...</p> <p>A: (Finishing T's sentence) ... hold so much information.</p> <p>T: No, that was crazy, wasn't it? So I start giving you the instructions little by little. The first one was that you had to go into the second link...</p> <p>A: ... into the second one, yes.</p> <p>T: Which is something... and there I tell you, step by step that's how we eventually manage to get you in.</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p>T: Unfortunately, you have to type in your password again. You ask me: 'Is it the same one?' [And I reply] "Yes, it's the same one you used for OpenLearn", right?</p> <p>A: Uh-huh.</p> <p>T: And finally you get in at 49'.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:41:00.600 – 00:46:41.756)</p>	<p>Vlog</p> <p>44:53 Clicks on wrong link to open FlashVlog (Quickstart)</p> <p>45:13 Goes to <i>Flashmeeting</i> (to ask me for help?)</p> <p>45:26 Clicks on FlashVlog link but it's just the entry from the glossary explaining what FlashVlog is. tries to close glossary window but she can't (not responding) - 4-5 clicks.</p> <p>45:46 Now goes to FlashMeeting and wrongly clicks on Open Test application. She might be getting confused with so many applications that she has to use. She's testing FlashMeeting.</p> <p>46:00 Goes into Flashmeeting (she didn't test FlashMeeting in the end)</p> <p>46:10 Asks for help via flashmeeting. She can't access flash vlog - I help her. She was in the Quickstart guide. Now she goes to the actual application. I tell her where to click. I think it's here that I give her long instructions but she can't follow such a long chunk. I have to give her new instructions step by step.</p> <p>46:55 She's humming: TUT-TU-TUT... Stressed?</p> <p>47:32 Says OK and now clicks on <i>FlashVlog</i> link on left menu from Quickstart page.</p> <p>47:48 She asks me where to click.</p> <p>48:28 Clicks on 'Vlog now'. Goes to Vlog log in page and tells me she's there. She asks me if password is same she used earlier for other applications/sites.</p> <p>49:06 She's typing her</p>
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		<p>details to go into <i>FlashVlog</i>. She asks me if it's the same password she used in <i>OpenLearn</i>. 49:41 She gets in. And tells me.</p> <p><b>14.09.2011</b> At 44:10 Stress-induced erratic behaviour as she tries to click on a non-hyperlinked word twice. At 47:04 Clicks on the task bar icon that is active twice (stress? erratic behaviour?).</p> <p><b>15.02.2012</b> She expects to get links in the task just as she does in <i>Facebook</i> notifications (see above in this dimension). This kind of digital routine makes it impossible for her to perform the action of following some written instructions. She is not using ctrl+click to open things in new tabs either, which could give her more control over the learning material and help her follow instructions more easily.</p>
<p>( Learner A goes to the password-protected FlashVlog tab and types her Login name)</p> <p>( goes to another browser tab to find the password in an email message she opened earlier; reads and repeats it softly as she tries to go back to the FlashVlog tab where she was before; instead she goes to a different tab and when she types without looking at the screen first the page disappears when she presses the delete button - the browser probably went to the previous page shown in that tab; she goes to three tabs before she manages to find the tab she needed)</p> <p>(LA-E 01:02:10.804 - 01:02:41.714)</p>		<p><b>14.09.2011</b> She has a tendency to begin typing in a new tab or window before looking at where she is on the page; she probably assumes that it's the right page and that the field she needs is active by default.</p>
<p>( She goes to the task window, Publish your</p>		<p><b>14.09.2011</b> She keeps using right-</p>

<p>video section, and  tries to paste the video web link in the textbox by using right-click 'Paste' on her mouse repeatedly, but it doesn't work)</p> <p>A (speaking to herself once as she right-clicks on 'Paste') Paste.</p> <p>(  selects video web link from the subject textbox;  copies link using right-click;  goes to the main textbox and  right-clicks to paste in vain twice) (  goes to videoconference tab) (  goes to video page and  selects web link from address box and  copies it using right-click) (  goes back to task page and  tries to paste link in main textbox by right-clicking on 'Paste' once but it doesn't work)</p> <p>A (  goes to videoconference window and talks to the teacher) You won't believe this, teacher, but I can't paste it T [Teacher audio not available]</p> <p>(  goes to task window and  pastes video web link in the Subject textbox)</p> <p>A (speaking to teacher through videoconference) I can paste it in the upper part [subject textbox] but I can't paste it in the lower part in the [main] textbox. I put 'Paste' and 'Paste' and 'Paste' but nothing doing (  as she right-clicks on Paste several times unsuccessfully)</p> <p>T [Teacher audio not available]</p> <p>(  goes to videoconference tab and  stops her push-to-talk transmission) (  goes back to the task page and  right-clicks on paste in the textbox again twice to no effect) (  types ctrl + v following the teacher's instructions provided through the videoconference audio and manages to paste the link)</p> <p>A (speaking to herself) Oh, got it, got it.</p> <p>(  goes to videoconference tab and talks to teacher) Yes, I managed now. I was trying to paste using the right-click. It's there now. So now, shall I send it? (  stops the videoconference transmission and  goes back to task page, where  she types [name deleted] speech' in the subject textbox)</p> <p>(LA-E 01:21:34.800 - 01:23:44.100)</p>		<p>click on her mouse to paste but it's not working. She then asks the teacher for help and is told to try ctrl + v, which does work. She doesn't seem to be familiar with other ways of pasting (eg, using shortcuts such as ctrl + v). This seems to be an example of single-bias behaviour or non-advanced digital skills.</p>
	<p>T: And you don't use other tools, for example a good dictionary, here in the task I put them as</p>	<p><b>08.02.2012</b> She didn't use links to</p>

	<p>links down there, but you didn't use them. A: No (...).  (LA-SR 00:22:39.729 – 00:22:50.629)</p>	<p>dictionaries provided in the task despite being as attractive as other less helpful links she couldn't help clicking on.</p>
<p>A (Learner A opens the feedback to Q1 in the Before you start section and looks at it for 15 seconds before she closes it)  (LA-E 00:28:54.924 – 00:29:10.654)</p>	<p>T: Very good. Yes, I imagined so. Look, in the quiz questions and in earlier questions there was a little part that said 'show feedback' and if you clicked there it... a little window appeared with feedback I gave you for that question that you were answering. A: Oh, yes: I used it once. T: You did? A: Yes. I checked it and then I realized it was about the text and I said 'OK' and that's it, I moved on. T: And you didn't use them anymore. You didn't use them much. What was the reason for not... you weren't in that part called feedback. A: Because I supposed that it was feed... I mean, like an example of what... T: Like a model. A: Like a model. T: And you didn't need it. A: No. T: What you wanted was to do... A: What I... no, because the first one I checked, the first feedback was the model, so I guessed that all the other ones would be the same, models for the questions that were there, I mean related to that.  (LA-SR 00:37:16.600 – 00:38:21.400)</p>	<p><b>08.02.2012</b> She only used feedback links once. She felt they were not useful. She claimed to prefer immediate feedback (see <i>Peer support</i> dimension above). She also seemed to prefer oral feedback judging from her not using the text chat feature of the videoconference and always opting for audiovisual or face-to-face contact when in need of teacher support.</p>

<b>Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Technological affordances</b>		
<b>Experiment data</b>	<b>SR data</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>( Learner A clicks on the 'Apply' button on the <i>FlashMeeting</i> tab to open a new <i>FlashMeeting</i> account because she can't remember her current username and password; she hums, possibly due to anxiety; the browser returns an error message) T And you can't remember [your password], can you? A No. (The learner's second attempt to access the Sign up page – possibly  by pressing F5 to reload it - fails too as a new error message appears, this time coming from <i>FlashMeeting</i>) A (Reading and error message from the website on the screen) What happened?  (LA-E 00:03:29.297 – 00:03:43.097)</p>		<p><b>15.02.2012</b> This segment shows how <i>FlashMeeting</i> problems cause confusion and possibly anxiety in the learner.</p>
<p>(Teacher helps learner A to find the Sign up page following a different route) A (hums anxiously) T Look, you click here (pointing at a spot on the screen).</p>		<p><b>15.02.2012</b> The teacher has to step in to find a different route to access <i>FlashMeeting</i>.</p>

<p>A Then...  T Here (pointing at another spot on the screen).  A (Listening carefully and navigating to the required page)  T Let's click on 'Sign in'.  A It's here, isn't it? ( using the pointer to show a link on the page).  T This one is to create a one [account] and this one... the username, do you remember it?  A No.  T Then let's create a new one [account], it's quicker.    (LA-E 00:03:43:188 – 00:04:41.862)</p>		
<p>A In the <i>FlashMeeting</i> Sign in page, A types her username and password on the videoconference password-protected page) Uh-huh. ( Tries to right-click to paste her password onto the relevant field but she can't)  No, I should type it [the password] ( goes to the email message window and reads the password out loud). [password deleted] ( types and says the password out loud)  [password deleted] ( goes back to the email message and reads the password out loud)  [password deleted] ( types the password in the relevant field and clicks on 'Continue') I'm in! (excited)    (LA-E 00:12:18.986 – 00:13:16.855)</p>	<p>T Very well. It's interesting because here we tried to copy and paste but we couldn't. We don't really know why. Well, I'm going to fastforward a bit to 14'45". Here, you talk to me, don't you? You have a problem and you talk to me.  A Yes.  T And I'm not there. How do you feel when you look for me here and I'm not there?  A Nothing, because I said, 'I have to sort it out on my own'.  T Uh-huh.  A And that's it.  T And you leave [that page] and you try to do it.  A I think that I had a problem with the sound and then I adjusted my headphones.  T To be more comfortable, right?  A Yes.  T Yes, look. In a little while I managed to get in. And then we talk there through the videoconference and we both have to adjust the sound because there are problems. Mine was very low, yours was too high.  A Yes.  T That should have been ready in advance. It's my fault. I must do a test beforehand. But this makes us lose more time. And then we go to 18'50".    (LA-SR 00:12:40.800 – 00:14:09.500)</p>	<p><b>15.02.2012</b>  Later on we discovered that the OpenLearn environment and tools did not allow using a right-click to paste, but pasting was possible using the shortcut ctrl + v. Here T recognises that he was responsible for the sound-related technical problems that also contributed to delays in the task.</p>
<p>(speaking through videoconference)  T [Teacher audio not available]  A Yes, teacher. A little softly, but yes [I can hear you].  T [Teacher audio not available]  A OK. I adjusted the sound here [at my workstation] but it's still very soft (hums).  T (arriving at workstation to fix problem) Yes, because it's getting the sound from there, from the little camera.  A Ah, from the camera...  T And I want the sound to come from the microphone now.  A And from this microphone here.  T This one is fine (checking the configuration of the camera) but this one we are going to change it (changing the selection of microphone in the configuration of Adobe Plash Player).</p>		<p><b>15.02.2012</b>  Microphone feed is poor because it's coming from the camera in-built microphone (instead of the one attached to the student).  Teacher's fault for not checking this before the experiment started. Besides, learner can't hear teacher well enough.  Another technical problem caused by lack of preparation on the part of the</p>

<p>A The little microphone right? (T finishes helping A at workstation and leaves; A puts on her headphones and hums) T [Teacher audio not available] A No teacher, it is still as soft. T [Teacher audio not available] A I couldn't hear anything again. T [Teacher audio not available] A Yes, a little better.</p> <p>(LA-E 00:15:31.686 - 00:18:32.057)</p>		<p>teacher. This is clear evidence of how technical issues can affect the online learning experience as her constant humming shows anxiety.</p>
<p>(A stops reading the Introduction section of the task, goes to videoconference tab; then closes the email inbox tab on the browser and <i>FlashMeeting</i> crashes; returns to task tab and clicks on 'Sign in'; types in her details to be signed in in the task rather than working as a 'guest'; opens a new tab window in the browser to reopen her email)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:17:18.609 – 00:20:18.107)</p>	<p>T There was a little problem there, wasn't there? What happened? I think that at one point you closed your email... A It... no, it's like the internet went down and I got disconnected. Then I said, well, I'm going to load [the page] again. And I didn't remember the password anymore so I learnt it by heart because I had to look for it twice before. T And you learnt it so that it wouldn't happen again. A Yes. T We were constantly taken out of the videoconference. Me too. A Uh-huh. T And you had to access again, and type the password... that, didn't it make you...? A It's like, no. I said 'well, take it easy'. I understood. It's the internet here at the school. T You know. A It happens at home too... but I try not to go mad. Only when I'm under pressure. And I didn't feel under pressure, really. T You were calm. A I was calm.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:16:13.100 – 00:17:07.900)</p>	<p><b>15.02.2012</b> This seems to be a problem with the stability of <i>FlashMeeting</i>. The learner didn't seem to mind this that much, but it took her some valuable seconds to read the message every time it appeared.</p> <p><b>23.02.2012</b> SR data confirms that she was not too concerned about the fact that we were constantly taken out of the <i>FlashMeeting</i> videoconference application. It's also interesting to see how resigned she is to having a bad internet connection at school (and possibly at home, for that matter).</p>
<p>A (After reading the Introductions section, Learner A moves on to the next section; a screen appears asking her if she wants to join this <i>OpenLearn</i> unit or just browse it; she clicks 'No' and the next section of the task appears)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:22:09.400 – 00:22:55.572)</p>	<p>T Well, yes, that was the idea for the videoconference. Imagine, there's a moment here, minute 22. We're very close. We're going to get to a point where you're reading from the screen and I want you to pay attention to how you do it. We're almost there. It's 22'29". Here, here... Can you see what you're doing? This was very annoying too, wasn't it? Every time a message popped up [asking] if you wanted to join the unit or not... I'm not sure why it appears. Every time you changed section... (...).</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:17:37.930 – 00:18:35.250)</p>	<p><b>16.02.2012</b> The LMS keeps asking her whether she wants to join the learning unit every time she goes to another section of the task. Initially I thought this was because she's working as a Guest, but when I checked I realised that this was happening even though she was logged in to the system.</p>
<p>A ( clicks on the <i>FlashVlog</i> link provided on the page in the main VLE menu; when the <i>FlashVlog</i> page opens she then clicks on the 'Quick Start' link provided; A scrolls quickly through the <i>FlashVlog</i> Quick Start page and then goes to the videoconference window;</p>		<p><b>17.02.2012</b> This seems to be a web page design problem which increases levels of frustration at a particularly critical moment in the task.</p>

<p>  goes back to the Quick Start page and   clicks on an irrelevant link; frowns and   tries to close the window repeatedly but the 'Close this window' button doesn't seem to be working)                      (LA-E 00:45:23.500 – 00:45:42.056)                 </p>		
<p>                     A (  Goes to the <i>FlashVlog</i> edit tab and   clicks on video clip 1 to watch it; it doesn't work;  she double-clicks on it;  she then clicks on the 'Play/pause' button several times;  she then tries to open clip 2 in the same manner;  she does the same with clip three, this time  clicking repeatedly on the 'Play/pause' button) (  she clicks on other irrelevant links on the page;  clicks on the 'Play/pause' button again; eventually her picture appears on the preview window, but it's not playing yet;  she uses the time to close some of redundant tabs of the eight tabs she has open) (  goes back to the video preview tab;  clicks on 'Play/pause' several times to no effect) (the video starts playing now and she watches it, but it gets stuck) (  she goes to another tab - irrelevant -,  and then to another, which  she closes;  goes back to the irrelevant tab and  then back to the preview tab, where the video is still not responding;  she clicks on the 'Play/pause' button repeatedly and  on the interactive video time line, but the video is not responding;  she begins clicking everywhere in desperation)                      (LA-E 01:04:04.782 – 01:05:52.455)                 </p>		<p> <b>17.02.2012</b>                      It is all but impossible for her to watch a preview of the videos she recorded because of the slow internet connection. This was a very important feature of the task – learners had to be able to watch the video they recorded easily to assess their performance.                 </p>
<p>                     A (  She goes to the task window, Publish your video section, and  tries to right-click to paste the video web link in the textbox repeatedly, but it doesn't work) (speaking to herself once  as she right-clicks to 'Paste')                      Paste (  selects video web link from the subject textbox;  copies link using right-click;  goes to the main textbox and right-clicks to paste in vain twice) (  goes to                 </p>		<p> <b>17.02.2012</b>                      It's interesting to see how a small technical issue such as not being allowed to right-click to paste on a textbox can cause so much trouble and delay.                 </p>

<p>videoconference tab) (👤 goes to video page and 👤 selects web link from address box and 👤 copies it using right-click) 👤 (goes back to task page and tries to paste link in main textbox 👤 by right-clicking on 'Paste' once but it doesn't work) (👤 goes to videoconference window and talks to the teacher) You won't believe this, teacher, but I can't paste it T [Teacher audio not available]</p> <p>A (👤 goes to task window and 👤 pastes video web link in the Subject textbox) (speaking to teacher through videoconference) I can paste it in the upper part [subject textbox] but I can't paste it in the lower part in the [main] textbox. I put 'Paste' and 'Paste' and 'Paste' but nothing doing (👤 as she right-clicks on Paste several times unsuccessfully) (👤 goes to videoconference tab and 👤 stops her push-to-talk transmission) T [Teacher audio not available]</p> <p>A (👤 goes back to the task page and right-clicks to paste in the textbox again twice to no effect) (👤 presses ctrl + v following the teacher's instructions provided through the videoconference audio and manages to paste the link) (speaking to herself) Oh, got it, got it. (👤 goes to videoconference tab and talks to teacher) Yes, I managed now. I was trying to paste using the right-click. It's there now. So now, shall I send it? (👤 stops the videoconference transmission and 👤 goes back to task page, where 👤 she types '[name deleted]'s speech' in the subject textbox).</p> <p>(LA-E 01:21:34.800 – 01:23:44.100)</p>		
	<p>A Yes. I try to learn from everything and I think that... this experiment was very helpful to realise two things basically: that I need... well, three things. I need to have some kind of guide to develop a topic, a good one, more specific. I need er... a higher higher higher level of English and practise more... everything. And thirdly, I need to... well I can, I have an opportunity to improve the way I speak and express myself with a technological tool.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:56:52.510 – 00:57:32.360)</p>	<p><b>24.02.2012</b> Her comment shows that despite the technical issues involved, this kind of use of the computer for learning purposes can be beneficial.</p>



Learner-Participant: A Dimension:		
Mental notes – written notes		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>T And you begin recording, at around 50'. It's interesting because you improvise, 100%. You didn't prepare, not vocabulary, not the topic. It's a complete improvisation.</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T Why? What made you decide "I'm going to improvise"?</p> <p>A No, it's just that I had the topic structured in my head, I said: "I'm going to talk about this and this" but then it was like I became nervous because... My mind went blank. I said, "what am I going to say?" And I [said]: "what if I don't use the right words for my speech?" And I said: "let's see how it turns out" and I was recording and said: "OK, let's see. Let's see how it turns out."</p> <p>T Now the videos come. You have already, you have... well, at least one of them you watched.</p> <p>A Yes, and...</p> <p>T ... which I think is the first one, the longest. You recorded three. Three segments, let's say.</p> <p>A I was like my three opportunities.</p> <p>T Ah, OK.</p> <p>A Yes.</p> <p>T So you gave yourself three opportunities. The first one is the longest and it's the one that you managed to watch, I think. It's coming now; in this one you talk about interpersonal relations.</p> <p>A I forgot, there I forgot, it's like... what was I going to talk about...</p> <p>T Now, with hindsight, do you think that your strategy was effective or would you do it differently if you did it again?</p> <p>A It was effective but not efficient, because I succeeded in talking and providing information and completing the experiment, but it would have taken me less time if I had, for example, prepared a written text and read it when "oh, I forgot" (mimes reading from a piece of paper). Fast.</p> <p>T Did you at any point in the task read that suggestion or not?</p> <p>A At...</p> <p>T Did you at any point read the suggestion that...</p> <p>A ... of writing things down, yes. I read that it said write down your... if you like some notes that you have and below write the... oh, yes, and here is the... vocabulary if you like or... pronounce the words that you may use. I said: "I don't need this."</p> <p>T Why?</p> <p>A Because I felt confident. At the beginning, but when I was recording it was like "What happened? Oh, no." I didn't feel sure anymore.</p> <p>T Yes, there are two moments when you're lacking vocabulary: such as knock on the door, at that time you lacked vocabulary...</p> <p>A Yes, but I'm also very much like poof and pah</p>	<p><b>17.02.2012</b></p> <p>She argues that she did prepare for her video presentation 'in her head'; she didn't prepare or use any notes. The results were not ideal, as she acknowledges – she forgot vocabulary items and even lost her thread completely in the middle of the presentation. Her argument is summarised in a catch-phrase she often repeats: "Let see how it turns out", which might be indicative of a degree of improvisation in her way of approaching the task. Interestingly, her only regret is not having been efficient, ie having wasted time, not so much having been effective, as she seems satisfied with her final product. So, her concern is completing the task and doing so in the most efficient way. It is also interesting to see her reaction at the suggestion that she could prepare her vocabulary and pronunciation before recording: "I don't need this". Both not preparing notes, vocabulary and pronunciation and not rehearsing are an indication of a certain disregard for preparation that seems to match a certain disregard for the quality of the product of the learning task and perhaps little interest in the learning process</p>

	<p>and pah, like... I don't know, I like talking with that passion.  T With [onomatopoeic] sounds.  A And also when I speak I also try to gesture a lot with my hands. It's like part of the way I express myself.  T Yes, we can see it here. You have a raised hand...  A Oh, yes.  T And at another point you use your other hand, yes, I noticed, to express certain things, right?  A Yes. Also facial expressions. My eyes.  T Yes, we can see it there.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:46:49.100 – 00:50:31.800)</p>	<p>itself, as she never sees the preparatory stages as valuable learning opportunities. Finally, her comments about her impassionate speaking seem to reinforce her preference for oral and mental means (speaking from ideas in her head) as opposed to written ones (e.g., dictionaries, notes...). In short, a disregard for learning tools and learning itself that flies in the face of what the teacher expected.</p>
	<p>T: So in a way you saw the positive side of doing this, didn't you?  A: Yes. I try to learn from everything and I think that... this experiment was very helpful to realise two things basically: that I need... well, three things. I need to have some kind of guide to develop a topic, a good one, more specific. I need er... a higher higher higher level of English and practise more... everything. And thirdly, I need to... well I can, I have an opportunity to improve the way I speak and express myself with a technological tool.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:56:47.100 – 00:57:32.400)</p>	<p><b>20.02.2012</b>  She seems to be acknowledging that she could benefit from having some kind of written outline when presenting to camera.</p>

<b>Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Using a dictionary</b>		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>T So you are self-correcting yourself.  A Yes, kind of. So it's like, let's see. And that's it, I try to self-correct myself.  T In fact, I noticed that. It's a good sign that you're self-correcting. But, let me see if I understand this, you wanted to use proper English like you say because you were doing an experiment.  A No. Because I'm used to writing properly, in Spanish. For example, when I write text messages, many use abbreviations, and I don't like it because I feel that if words were created, that was for a reason and to use them properly. So I try to write them, although I don't speak equally properly, right? But I try in writing to write the sentences completely and with no spelling mistakes. The same happens to me with English.  T So it's not necessarily because you were doing the experiment but because you normally try to write properly or correctly, following rules...  A Yes, exactly. Because you never know when</p>	<p><b>13.02.2012</b>  Proofreading is an important language learning skill. The way she proofreads her work doesn't seem to be effective as she relies on memory and <i>Google translate</i> only. If these tools don't help, she gets rid of the whole linguistic structure she was trying to use. Learning to use other tools, such as dictionaries, grammar books and corpora, might help her to become more productive. And in using the tools she'll be learning English as</p>

	<p>someone might read you and might say ‘look, she’s such an ignorant’. For example, on <i>Facebook</i>, too, on the biggest social network, I sometimes write comments and all in English, and I try to check that they are well written.</p> <p>T How do you check? You just read them again and look carefully?</p> <p>A I read it again, I look carefully and I try to remember, perhaps, I try to remember if it’s OK or not, and if I’m not sure at all, I go to Google translate and there I check the word, and if I’m still in doubt because many words are a bad translation and don’t work, then what I do is I’d rather not put anything.</p> <p>T And you don’t use other tools, for example a good dictionary, here in the task I put them as links down there, but you didn’t use them.</p> <p>A No, I’m not really used to using dictionaries because I have the idea of the primary school dictionary; we had to take it and start looking up words. But for example I find using the internet easier, <i>Google translate</i> like this bam-bam-bam (mimes typing on a keyboard) then it gives you the meaning. But I started to use the Oxford dictionary in the Toefl course we had and I liked it because there they give you even the sound and all. And... but I’m not really used to looking up words there. I’d rather look them up... well, not look them up but find them in songs or in articles...</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:20:45.800 – 00:23:36.539)</p>	<p>well, as some of the tools for her level are built entirely in English. Although she mentions historical reasons for not liking dictionaries, she also refers to a recent experience where she was required to use a dictionary in a course and liked it. Therefore, there is still the possibility of introducing her to the use of new tools.</p>
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<b>Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Using feedback</b>		
<b>Experiment data</b>	<b>SR data</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>A (Learner A opens the feedback to Q1 in the Before you start section and looks at it for 15 seconds before she closes it)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:28:54.924 – 00:29:10.654)</p>	<p>A Besides here there’s nobody correcting you. For instance, when I’m on the chat with someone else they correct the words and that’s it, and there I learn. But here, I didn’t have any feedback, so if I was wrong it was like, let’s see, let me check it again just in case, right?</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:20:31.197 – 00:20:50.217)</p>	<p><b>20.02.2012</b>                      This is the only time she opens a feedback window in the task. The fact that she doesn’t have immediate feedback in the form of oral or instant written chat comments as she writes, from her perspective, involves (a) that she’s alone (and possibly feeling abandoned) during the task and (b) that she’s not learning much. Written feedback that has been prepared before the task and embedded in the task as pop-ups doesn’t seem to be of any use to the learner.</p>
	<p>T Very good. Yes, I imagined so. Look, in the quiz questions and in earlier questions there was a</p>	<p><b>20.02.2012</b>                      She seems to be a</p>

	<p>little part that said 'show feedback' and if you clicked there it... a little window appeared with feedback I gave you for that question that you were answering.                  A Oh, yes: I used it once.                  T Did you?                  A Yes. I checked it and then I realized it was about the text and I said: "OK"; and that's it, I moved on.                  T And you didn't use them anymore. You didn't use them much. What was the reason for not... you weren't in that part called feedback.                  A Because I supposed that it was feed... I mean, like an example of what...                  T Like a model.                  A Like a model.                  T And you didn't need it.                  A No.                  T What you wanted was to do...                  A What I... no, because the first one I checked, the first feedback was the model, so I guessed that all the other ones would be the same, models for the questions that were there, I mean related to that.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:37:16.600 – 00:38:21.400)</p>	<p>little confused about the purpose of the feedback provided in the task but even when she was told what it was for she didn't find it useful.</p>
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Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Adhering to the task		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>T In the beginning, did you feel nervous at all?                  A Not in the beginning. Not so much nervous but I felt fear. I said, "Oh, what if I mess up!" because I couldn't understand the page the way it was. I was like, 'So, where do I get into now?'                  T You mean the page of the task, right?                  A Yes, the page of the task, that one. I was like, "Oh, no", and like... well I kind of said, maybe I would understand this better if it were in Spanish, and I said, and then I said, "No, it would have been the same". So I was like "Where do I click? What's next? How do I do this?" I hadn't used it before, you see, so it was like "Let's see".                  T So, as this was an environment that you were not familiar with it made you feel insecure, right?                  A Yes.                  T And anxious?                  A Yes, yes.                  T Perhaps anxious because you don't know what it is about, what's next, right?                  A Yes. I was like I didn't even know very well what it was about. I said, 'let's see'.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:00:19.400 – 00:01:51.800)</p>	<p><b>21.02.2012</b>                      Her comments are revealing – as soon as she started working with the task she felt two things: (a) fear of failure and (b) anxiety caused by her unfamiliarity with the task. In a way, she was predisposed not to understand what to do in the task, and surely enough this is what happens when she gets to, for instance, the practice section, where she says she wasn't understanding anything for no particular reason. The reasons could be related to poor design of the task and her negative predisposition towards the task.</p>
<p>A (In the section called Sam's Quiz she answers the first two questions with one-line answers</p>		<p><b>21.02.2012</b>                      Is it a coincidence that</p>


<p>and skips the last two questions, which asked her if she was going to prepare vocabulary or pronunciation before recording and about some features of the video she intended to record; she spent a little under four minutes in this section)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:39:21.125 – 00:40:14.687)</p>		<p>she skips questions that have to do with planning and preparation? Perhaps this is further evidence of her avoidance of written preparation and her interest in recording straight away and seeing 'how it turns out'.</p>
<p>( A moves on to the Stage 2: Practise section of the task and begins to read, her chin resting on her hand, looking uninterested) (A frowns and shifts in her chair) (takes off her headphones) (throws her hands up in the air in desperation after reading the instructions in the section for about 3'30")</p> <p>( moves on to the next section without having done any of the practice suggested in the previous section)</p> <p>( clicks on the word 'Next' at the bottom of the page twice to try to go on to the next section, but the word is not hyperlinked; the text that follows is, but A doesn't notice)</p> <p>( goes to the videoconference page)</p> <p>( goes to the task page; clicks on the back button in the browser; reads the instructions in the Stage 2: Practise section again)</p> <p>( clicks on the FlashVlog link provided on the page in the main VLE menu; when the FlashVlog page opens she then clicks on the Quick Start link provided; A scrolls quickly through the FlashVlog Quick Start page and then goes to the videoconference window; goes back to the Quick Start page and clicks on an irrelevant link; frowns and tries to close the window repeatedly but the 'Close this window' button doesn't seem to be working)</p> <p>( She goes back to the videoconference window and clicks on 'Open test application'; she quickly closes the window when she realises it's irrelevant; goes back to the videoconference window)</p> <p>A: Teacher! I can't access FlashVlog.</p> <p>( goes to the irrelevant FlashVlog window that she opened earlier and tries to close it again, to no avail; reads the Quick Start page again)</p> <p>T: [Teacher videoconference audio not available]</p>	<p>Yes. We're at 44'. Ah, I want to go back to 43' because there's something interesting. I want you to help me remember. Here you took off the headphones, you're reading this part for a long time and notice what you're going to do now, OK? (both watching A throwing her hands up in the air on the video).</p> <p>A: So it's like 'what'? (A repeats the gesture we just watched on the video).</p> <p>T: What? And what does it mean... what happened...? Tell me because this seemed very interesting to me.</p> <p>A: I didn't understand. It's like I didn't concentrate, or I don't know. It's saying 'OK, I have to then... go to the... menu of whatever and then click and click...' I said: "why didn't they give me a link to say 'I click here and I go straight and make my video?'" Yes. And this is when I just said: "Oh God, I don't understand anything". And it's like I didn't try to find out more and I just said: "OK, what's next".</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:41:00.600 – 00:42:31.840)</p>	<p><b>21.02.2012</b></p> <p>Again just under four minutes seems to be her maximum attention span given to any section (see above) before she skips it (having completed none of it, in this case). Her body language is clearly showing her frustration. Despite possible flaws in the design of the instructions to record video and the technical problem preventing her from closing a window, she is not even remotely interested in engaging with the pronunciation content and practice provided in this section. Much to blame is her orientation towards recording the video rather than towards learning English, even when it comes to skills she's aware she needs help with (eg, pronunciation). So, she refuses to complete the sections of the task that do not appeal to her personal interest, ie recording the video. This might be a case of her doing what she wants and not what she needs, as she acknowledged that she needed speaking and pronunciation (although she prefers live feedback, not so much asynchronous pre- or post-task feedback). Lastly, we</p>

<p>A: I can't get into FlashVlog. T: [Teacher response not available]</p> <p>A: (hums) OK ( goes back to Quick Start page; clicks on the only icon in the taskbar twice as though wanting to maximise the window but the window is already active and showing o</p> <p>n the screen ; clicks on a FlashVlog link in the main VLE menu; reads main FlashVlog page) Where does it say click, teacher? T: [Teacher response not available]</p> <p>A: ( Clicks on the right 'Vlog now' link and the password-protected Flash Vlog main page opens) Yes, now it's asking me for my password and... to get in. Is it the same that I used a while ago? T: [Teacher response not available]</p> <p>A: ( Types in her username and password and is granted access to the FlashVlog application) Yes, I managed to get connected. Thank you, teacher (hums and begins recording her presentation).</p> <p>(LA-E 00:40:16.909 – 00:50:05.620)</p>		<p>must not forget that the transfer of digital routines (she needs links, not instructions) also accounts for her behaviour.</p>
	<p>A I forgot, there I forgot, it's like... what was I going to talk about... T Now, with hindsight, do you think that your strategy was effective or would you do it differently if you did it again? A It was effective but not efficient, because I succeeded in talking and providing information and completing the experiment, but it would have taken me less time if I had, for example, prepared a written text and read it when "Oh, I forgot" (mimes reading from a piece of paper). Fast. T Did you at any point in the task read that suggestion or not? A At... T Did you at any point read the suggestion that... A ... of writing things down, yes. I read that it said write down your... if you like some notes that you have and below write the... oh, yes, and here is the... vocabulary if you like or... pronounce the words that you may use. I said, "I don't need this". T Why? A Because I felt confident at the beginning, but when I was recording it was like "What happened? Oh, no". I didn't feel sure anymore. T Yes, there are two moments when you're lacking vocabulary: such as knock on the door, at that time you lacked vocabulary... A Yes, but I'm also very much like poof and pah and pah, like... I don't know, I like talking with that passion.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:48:16.000 – 00:50:00.900)</p>	<p><b>21.02.2012</b> She's being very clear about her reasons for not completing preparatory questions in the Sam's Quiz section: "I don't need this," she says. She was perhaps slightly overconfident in the beginning. But she also associates her personality trait (ie, talking passionately) with improvisation, although this might not necessarily be the case. She could have prepared and then not have used any script at all. Or she could have prepared and still have spoken with spontaneity. My impression is that this is rather related to the local learning culture whereby language learning is perceived as not being an activity that requires much use of tools such as dictionaries, notes, etc and also to the generalised reliance on oral and</p>

		mental means over written-based ones.
	<p>A Yes. I try to learn from everything and I think that... this experiment was very helpful to realise two things basically: that I need... well, three things. I need to have some kind of guide to develop a topic, a good one, more specific. I need er... a higher higher higher level of English and practise more... everything. And thirdly, I need to... well I can, I have an opportunity to improve the way I speak and express myself with a technological tool.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:56:52.510 – 00:57:32.360)</p>	<p><b>21.02.2012</b> Her realisation that she should have prepared written notes might be a sort of acknowledgement that she should have adhered to the task more, especially by not skipping the preparatory questions in the Sam's Quiz section.</p>


**Learner-Participant: A Dimension: Language learning orientation**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>T There you type your name and 'enter'. T And we can communicate through there [the videoconference]. A Yep! Oh, I'm in! (smiles and admires herself on camera) Mmm... mmm... mmm... (cheeky, casting a sidelong glance at the camera).</p> <p>(LA-E 00.13.16.855 – 00.13.56.648)</p>		<p><b>10.11.2011 / 21.02.2012</b> She admires herself on camera as soon as she can see her video feed. This may reveal her true motives: she wants to see herself on camera; that's her reason for taking part in the experiment.</p>
<p>(T is helping A at workstation with fix a problem with one of her microphones) (T leaves; A puts on her headphones and hums) (...) A: (Through videoconference) Teacher, can I start now? T: [Teacher audio not available] (A leans forward and reads Introduction section of the task)  (A stops reading,  goes to videoconference window; then  closes email inbox tab on the browser;  returns to task window and  clicks on 'Sign in';  types in her details to be signed in to the task window rather than working as a 'guest';  opens a new tab window in the browser)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:17:18.609 – 00:20:18.107)</p>	<p>A: The task didn't actually take any time at all. T: (Laughing) No. A: It took longer to set things up, to get in[to the websites] and all that. T: Look, we lost almost 20 minutes before we could start. A: And I felt that it [the task] took longer. T: You felt it took a long time. A: Yes. T: All that time waiting? A: No, the whole task. It felt longer than it was, really. T: Yes, it was actually 40 minutes. But very soon we'll see why it was shorter. I think that you can perhaps remember what you did. Here you're reading the introduction, and in the introduction I tried to include things that would help you feel more comfortable, more... with more confidence, knowing what you were going to do, what it was about... (...) When you read this part you took some time. But, what did you feel? I don't know if you remember. [Did you think] this is irrelevant, or it does help me or...? A: I felt anxiety like to watch the video (laughing). I said: "I want to watch, I want to watch.... I want to watch to see what happens, I want to make my own video." I was like a little anxious. T: Exactly and this has happened before. I did a pilot test and a student also expressed the same. She wanted to do the video, she didn't want to</p>	<p><b>15.10.2010</b> 15:56 We adjust sound on both ends. Interesting: sound feed was being taken from camera - microphone was not plugged in, I found out later. Must prepare hardware more carefully. My sound was too soft, hers too loud. This should have been ready in advance. Must do test and leave settings ready before experiment starts. I went to fix her sound to her computer. 18:00 But it didn't work. Eventually it works. 18:50 She asks for permission to get started. Experiment starts. Too long for us to get started. Must do better in future. She reads intro</p>














	<p>be distracted, let's say, with other things, right?                  So what you say, I understand it.                  A: It's just that... I don't know, it's kind of exciting.                  T: Did you know that you were going to watch a video?                  A: Well, I imagined so, because of the picture [on the Introduction section].                  T: It anticipated...                  A: Yes.                  T: You recognise that that image is typical of YouTube or something like that, right?                  A: Yes.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00.14.13.400 – 00.14.50.000)</p>	<p>attentively.                  20:00 closes email (I told her not to). Now she has to open it again to retrieve link to activity.                  20:06 She clicks on sign in on the openlearn unit page. Why? This forces her to open email and get password from there to get back into unit.</p> <p><b>14.09.2011</b>                  In this data excerpt the learner reveals her excitement, her need or urge to see the video and to make her own video. So, this is not really a motivation to learn English, but she seems to be driven by a motivation to make the video. Elsewhere, we see that she had a pre-conceived idea of what she wanted to do during the experiment.</p>
<p>(In response to the question 'Think of some positive reasons for wanting to introduce yourself on video'  A types: "I want to introduce myself on video because i wanna to examine my mods and how i am to the another point of view")</p> <p>(LA-E 00:32:14.721 – 00:33:50.400)</p>	<p>T: At one point you say [in the experiment] "I want to make the video because I want to see another perspective on me". And you mention 'modes'. I couldn't read that very well...                  A: The ways or...                  T: Your ways...                  A: The ways, uh-huh.                  T: You wanted to see your ways. You said that you wanted feedback.                  A: Feedback. Yes.                  T: It sounds as though the purpose in doing this is...                  A: To see me.                  T: ... what you're going to gain, let's say, is seeing you, and having another person see you, from another perspective, right?                  A: Yes. For instance, I feel that I talk in a certain way, and when I hear myself on the video I say: "Blimey, is this how I speak?" For example, then attitudes, I always try to have my back straight, and for instance there I was concentrated and I'm like this (imitates her slouching posture on the video). And I see the way I look at the screen, the way I react.                  T: So, you're learning about you from watching yourself...                  A: Yes.                  T: ... as you take part in this, right?                  A: And I don't think we normally do this very much. I for one don't. For example, when I record myself dancing, I say: "I dance very badly". And at the time I felt that I danced well and I say: "No, I have to improve this and this</p>	<p><b>15.10.2010</b>                  32:49 She uses the word "examine" when she says why she'd like to make her video. Exam mentality? I think she means she'd like to observe herself, rather than do a kind of exam. It's more a kind of self-discovery, wanting to find out who she is, how she behaves... Just like when she admired herself on camera earlier. She says what wants to see herself from another point of view - from the outside. Again possible evidence that what is needed is internalization-externalization-internalization again.                  V. interesting.                  33:39 'mode'? She wants to get feedback? Is that only reason to do this task?</p> <p><b>14.09.2011</b></p>



	<p>and this”.</p> <p>T: So that’s positive.</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p>T: Here you moved on to another section and you skipped several questions, you didn’t answer them.</p> <p>A: It’s because I was very anxious to make my video.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:35:47.700 – 00:37:16.600)</p>	<p>Here, A is making it clear that she’s interested in being noticed, seen by others, rather than in practising her English or anything else related to learning English. This is a strong driving force that determines how she orientates to the task. It explains, for instance, why A skips two questions in the Sam’s quiz section, and possibly why she provides one-line replies to other questions. By the time she gets to Stage 2: Practise section she is not in the mood to engage in the pronunciation practice provided. In fact, she becomes irritated, as the learning bits are getting in the way of her overall motive, that is, to talk about herself and then watch herself on the video.</p> <p><b>16.09.2011</b></p> <p>This is a core disturbance that seems to be directly affecting the basic S – O relationship. Her object is to see herself on video. My expectation was that she’d be interested in this for the sake of learning English. These very different objects are connected to very different motivations: she feels the need, the urge, to analyse herself following a situation of conflict she recently experience with some fellow students; I feel the need to teach her English through the CALL task that I designed. Naturally, she becomes frustrated and so do I. We don’t have a shared object. Some</p>
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		<p>negotiation would be required to find that shared object. A preliminary attempt at digging the contradictions that may exist in this case points to a possible primary contradiction at the S level whereby the learner is more concerned with difficulties she's experiencing in her personal life, related to her identity, than with learning English. If this were a mini cycle of expansive learning I would find learning materials in English that deal with her personal developmental issues to marry her primary motivation with mine. Here her social experience at school seems to be playing a crucial role. At another part in the video she claims to want to be different, to admire Lady Gaga for having the courage to be different. She also mentions that she admires cultural practices of the United States.</p> <p><b>11.10.2011</b> She spells out the reasons for wanting to take part in the experiment: watch herself as though from an outsider's perspective.</p>
<p>A (  ) She types her answer to the question 'What does Sam talk about in her video?': "were she grow up, about her likes and her sun glasses") (sighs)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:36.58.930 – 00:38.07.090)</p>		<p><b>10.11.2011</b> Provides a one-line answer and sighs (frustrated?). Why didn't she watch the video again or take notes from it to answer more fully?</p>
	<p>T Very good. OK, now you're looking at that section which was on pronunciation. But you're not in the right frame of mind to look at that, what you want to do is the video, right?</p> <p>A Yes, yes.</p> <p>T So, you look at it, you hesitate, what shall I do, what to do? And eventually you move on to the next section.</p> <p>A Yes, I said "let's see how it turns out".</p>	<p><b>15.11.2011</b> This is the sentence that she repeats the most throughout the SR session "Let's see how it turns out". It shows a certain spirit of laissez-faire or care-free attitude; perhaps</p>

	<p>T Uh-huh.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:38:21.400 – 00:38:47.500)</p>	<p>a high level of tolerance of uncertainty or a preference for improvisation.</p>
<p>A (She sighs, looks up and ponders before typing her answer to the question 'What are you going to talk about in your video?': "about interpersonal relationships, and some background about myself")</p> <p>(LA-E 00:38.21.103 – 00:39.17.973)</p>	<p>T: It's interesting that you say that in your video you are going to talk about interpersonal relations.</p> <p>A: Interpersonal relations. But then I end up talking about something else. I... was going to talk about that but I didn't talk about it. It doesn't matter.</p> <p>T: The task required you to make a video and, what were you supposed to say in the video, according to the task? Do you remember?</p> <p>A: Mmm, talk about myself. And show some objects perhaps if I had them that identify me. And talk about my personality.</p> <p>T: But first you decide to talk about interpersonal relations, which is like a topic, isn't it?</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p>T: It's like talking about the environment. Why did you make that decision?</p> <p>A: Because I had always wanted to have a broadcast or a show to discuss topics, like... and give them my perspective. And I said, "OK, I'm going to talk about this but I'm also going to provide an introduction on who I am more or less, and talk a bit about myself". And I feel discussing a topic, when you talk and express yourself, you give a very good impression of what you're like.</p> <p>T: Why did you decide to talk about interpersonal relations?</p> <p>A: Because days earlier I had had... mm... a conflict with my classmates. I decided to speak about interpersonal relations because it's a topic that was hot (draws an ascending curve in the air with her hand). And I said "I'll talk about this". I think that experiments depend a lot on people's moods. For instance, if I had been hungry or something, I would have been like [saying] "Oh, I want to finish". Or I would have been all "Oh, OK, let's see" (lowers her head to imply tiredness). But since I had had some food then it's... it was OK. And if I had been annoyed I would have [said] "Oh, no, this password doesn't work..."</p> <p>T: What was your mood like that day?</p> <p>A: I was like relaxed but kind of... yeah, right... like very unstressed. Very relaxed, very relaxed.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:38:49.400 – 00:40:58.200)</p>	<p><b>10.11.2011</b> Again, one-line answer in the experiment and doesn't focus on form much (grammatical mistakes, no self-correction).</p> <p><b>15.11.2011</b> She seems to indicate that she'd always wanted her sort of 'minute of fame' and she took this opportunity to do just that. However, she was well aware of what the task required her to do. She makes a good point to justify that her own agenda somehow meets the teacher's agenda in relation to this task. An incident with a peer provided the ultimate motivation for the topic she discussed (i.e., interpersonal relations). Finally, she reports not being under any stress during the experiment.</p> <p><b>21/02/2012</b> This is a very interesting instance of the learner exercising agency and negotiating the meaning of the task and her performance with the teacher.</p>
<p>A (A is reading text from the practice section; she looks frustrated) (She takes her headphones off. Throws her hands up in the air in desperation after reading the instructions in the section for about 3'30". Moves on to the next section without having done any of the practice suggested in the previous section. Clicks on the word 'Next' at the bottom of</p>	<p>T Now we'll get to a point...</p> <p>A Where I ask for help.</p> <p>T Yes. We're at 44'. Ah, I want to go back to 43' because there's something interesting. I want you to help me remember. Here you took off the headphones, you're reading this part for a long time and notice what you're going to do now, OK? (both watch the participant throwing her open hands up in the air in desperation on the video).</p>	<p><b>15.11.2011</b> Leaving faults with the design of the task aside, her frustration at this point might be caused by her orientation to the task, which could be of a 'making my own video' sort, as</p>

<p>the page twice to try to go on to the next section, but the word is not hyperlinked; the text that follows is, but A doesn't notice.  Goes to the videoconference page.  Goes to the task page;  clicks on the back button in the browser; reads the instructions in the Stage 2: Practise section again.  Clicks on the FlashVlog link provided on the page in the main VLE menu; when the FlashVlog page opens,  she then clicks on the Quick Start link provided; A scrolls quickly through the FlashVlog Quick Start page and then  goes to the videoconference window;  goes back to the Quick Start page and  clicks on an irrelevant link; frowns and  tries to close the window repeatedly but the 'Close this window' button doesn't seem to be working.  She goes back to the videoconference window and  clicks on 'Open test application';  she quickly closes the window when she realises it's irrelevant;  goes back to the videoconference window)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:42:46.900 – 00:46:04.100)</p>	<p>A So it's like... (she repeats the gesture they just watched on the video).  T What? And what does it mean... what happened...? Tell me because this seemed very interesting to me.  A I wasn't understanding. It's like I didn't concentrate, or I don't know. It's saying "OK, I have to then... go to the... menu of whatever and then click and click...". I said, "Why didn't they give me a link to say 'I click here and I go straight and make my video?'" Yes. And this is when I just said, "Oh, I don't understand anything". And it's like I didn't try to find out more and I just said, "OK, what's next".  T Here you realise that you were supposed to have recorded the video already.  A Yes.  T So you go back to look at the instructions, I think, don't you?  A No, this is already when...  T Or you ask...  A No, this is when I asked. Yes.  T But we were logged out again. And here you go back and look for something at the bottom I think...  A And I went, "The link? Where is it...?"  T And now, OK, "I have to get in here", because the instructions were already telling you that you had to go to FlashVlog. And here the problem...  A I should have gone into the second [link]...  T Exactly.  A And I went into the first one.  T  T And there we lose some time... what happened there? Why did you go into the first one?  A No, I don't remember. Ah, because it said 'Quickstart'. And I said, start quick.  T ... that's what I want.  A Yes, And I [said], 'Quickstart' (mimes clicking with the mouse).  T What happens is that this term is used in English to refer to learning or induction guides.  A Ah, OK. And that's what I didn't know, then.  T And here you go into another link... And we get lost.  A But, if you notice I always go into links. It's like links, links, links...  T Links are your saviours.  A They are my saviours, yes. Links, links...  T It's really interesting. Yes, eventually here you click to do the test and say yes, yes, yes... But instead of saying do the test, you'd rather close it. So, you don't want the test, you want to make it [the video], right?</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:41:00.600 – 00:43:55.600)</p>	<p>opposed to a language learning orientation where opportunities to learn are taken up. For instance, understanding these instructions in English could be beneficial for the improvement of her reading skills. Instead, the instructions are 'in the way' of her needs, which are to 'find' (not look for) the easiest possible way to recording her video. In this case, the reference to links amounts to saying 'give me quick answers' not questions, or instructions. This is reinforced by her interpretation of the 'Quickstart' link.</p> <p><b>21.02.2012</b>  This is a critical incident in which the learner refuses to follow written instructions.</p>
	<p>A I forgot, there I forgot, it's like... what was I going to talk about...  T Now, with hindsight, do you think that your strategy was effective or would you do it differently if you did it again?  A It was effective but not efficient, because I succeeded in talking and providing information</p>	<p><b>21.02.2012</b>  This excerpt of data shows an orientation involving a disregard for language learning opportunities.</p>







	<p>and completing the experiment, but it would have taken me less time if I had, for example, prepared a written text and read it when "Oh, I forgot" (mimes reading from a piece of paper). Fast. T Did you at any point in the task read that suggestion or not? A At... T Did you at any point read the suggestion that... A ... of writing things down, yes. I read that it said write down your... if you like some notes that you have and below write the... oh, yes, and here is the... vocabulary if you like or... pronounce the words that you may use. I said, "I don't need this". T Why? A Because I felt confident at the beginning, but when I was recording it was like "What happened? Oh, no". I didn't feel sure anymore. T Yes, there are two moments when you're lacking vocabulary: such as knock on the door, at that time you lacked vocabulary... A Yes, but I'm also very much like poof and pah and pah, like... I don't know, I like talking with that passion.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:48:16.000 – 00:50:00.900)</p>	
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**Learner-Participant: A    Dimension: Success - failure**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>A (She begins recording her second video) Hello, my name's [<i>name deleted</i>]. I'm a student in a Universidad de Guanajuato. I want to be a er... oh, I don't know, I don't remember the word, how do you say when you are... successful, yes, that's the word. MBA, maybe. I study in FIMEE, Salamanca, and I like a lot my career [degree], I like a lot my teachers... It's very important for her to be successful.</p> <p>(LA-E 00:55:42.115 – 00:56:50.515)</p>		<p><b>23.02.2012</b> Success seems to be an important motivation for her to pursue her programme of studies. This is consistent with her concern with not looking "stupid" or "ignorant" expressed elsewhere.</p>
	<p>T In the beginning, did you feel nervous at all? A Not in the beginning. Not so much nervous but I felt fear. I said, "Oh, what if I mess up!" because I couldn't understand the page the way it was. I was like, 'So, where do I get into now?' T You mean the page of the task, right? A Yes, the page of the task, that one. I was like, "Oh, no", and like... well I kind of said, maybe I would understand this better if it were in Spanish, and I said, and then I said, "No, it would have been the same". So I was like "Where do I click? What's next? How do I do this?" I hadn't used it before, you see, so it was like "Let's see". T So, as this was an environment that you were not familiar with it made you feel insecure, right? A Yes. T And anxious? A Yes, yes. T Perhaps anxious because you don't know what</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b> She expresses her feeling fear of failing in the beginning. She rejects the possibility that L1-L2 was the problem. Rather, she thinks the layout and structure of the task with which she was unfamiliar was to blame.</p>

	<p>it is about, what's next, right?                  A Yes. I was like I didn't even know very well what it was about. I said, 'let's see'.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:00:19.400 – 00:01:51.800)</p>	
	<p>T So it's not necessarily because you were doing the experiment but because you normally try to write properly or correctly, following rules...                  A Yes, exactly. Because you never know when someone might read you and might say 'look, she's such an ignorant'. For example, on <i>Facebook</i>, too, on the biggest social network, I sometimes write comments and all in English, and I try to check that they are well written.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:21:43.700 – 00:22:09.600)</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b>                  This is where she expresses her concern about being perceived as an uneducated person online.</p>

**Learner-Participant:** A      **Dimension:**  
**Time pressure**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>(A stops reading the Introduction section of the task,  goes to videoconference tab; then  closes the email inbox tab on the browser and <i>FlashMeeting</i> crashes;  returns to task tab and  clicks on 'Sign in';  types in her details to be signed in in the task rather than working as a 'guest';  opens a new tab window in the browser to reopen her email)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:17:18.609 – 00:20:18.107)</p>	<p>T There was a little problem there, wasn't there? What happened? I think that at one point you closed your email...                  A It... no, it's like the internet went down and I got disconnected. Then I said, well, I'm going to load [the page] again. And I didn't remember the password anymore so I learnt it by heart because I had to look for it twice before.                  T And you learnt it so that it wouldn't happen again.                  A Yes.                  T We were constantly taken out of the videoconference. Me too.                  A Uh-huh.                  T And you had to access again, and type the password... that, didn't it make you...?                  A It's like, no. I said 'well, take it easy'. I understood. It's the internet here at the school.                  T You know.                  A It happens at home too... but I try not to go mad. Only when I'm under pressure. And I didn't feel under pressure, really.                  T You were calm.                  A I was calm.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:16:13.100 – 00:17:07.900)</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b>                  Learner A seems to recall feeling calm during the task, that is, not feeling any kind of time pressure to finish quickly.</p>
	<p>A I forgot, there I forgot, it's like... what was I going to talk about...                  T Now, with hindsight, do you think that your strategy was effective or would you do it differently if you did it again?                  A It was effective but not efficient, because I succeeded in talking and providing information and completing the experiment, but it would have taken me less time if I had, for example, prepared a written text and read it when "Oh, I forgot" (mimes reading from a piece of paper).                  Fast.                  T Did you at any point in the task read that suggestion or not?</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b>                  Her concept of effectiveness as opposed to efficiency shows that she considers that she got the job done, not reflecting on the quality of the work; the only thing she laments is not having been faster in completing the task. This latter concern is</p>

	<p>A At...                  T Did you at any point read the suggestion that...                  A ... of writing things down, yes. I read that it said write down your... if you like some notes that you have and below write the... oh, yes, and here is the... vocabulary if you like or... pronounce the words that you may use. I said, "I don't need this".                  T Why?                  A Because I felt confident at the beginning, but when I was recording it was like "What happened? Oh, no". I didn't feel sure anymore.                  T Yes, there are two moments when you're lacking vocabulary: such as knock on the door, at that time you lacked vocabulary...                  A Yes, but I'm also very much like poof and pah and pah, like... I don't know, I like talking with that passion.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:48:16.000 – 00:50:00.900)</p>	<p>indicative of an awareness of the implicit need to complete the task as fast as she could. So, although she remains calm at this point, in the overall framework of the learning activity she felt the urgency to do things under some time pressure.</p>
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**Learner-Participant:** A      **Dimension:** Searching – finding

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>T How do you check? You just read them again and look carefully?                  A I read it again, I look carefully and I try to remember, perhaps, I try to remember if it's OK or not, and if I'm not sure at all, I go to <i>Google translate</i> and there I check the word, and if I'm still in doubt because many words are a bad translation and don't work, then what I do is I'd rather not put anything.                  T And you don't use other tools, for example a good dictionary, here in the task I put them as links down there, but you didn't use them.                  A No, I'm not really used to using dictionaries because I have the idea of the primary school dictionary; we had to take it and start looking up words. But for example I find using the internet easier, <i>Google translate</i> like this bam-bam-bam (mimes typing on a keyboard) then it gives you the meaning. But I started to use the Oxford dictionary in the Toefl course we had and I liked it because there they give you even the sound and all. And... but I'm not really used to looking up words there. I'd rather look them up... well, not look them up but find them in songs or in articles...</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:22:09.770 – 00:23:36.500)</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b>                  This is a fascinating piece of data because it shows a typical vocabulary in use process, as follows:                  1. learner is proofreading;                  2. she relies on memory (mental);                  3. when she needs to check a word she goes to <i>Google translate</i>, which doesn't often help;                  4. she abandons the troublesome word or expression altogether if she can't find its correct form.                  Later on she makes steps 2 and 3 more explicit. By mental (step 2), she means "find[ing] them in songs (oral) or in articles..." because she's "not really used to looking up words there [in a dictionary]". Her extraordinary reformulation of 'I'd rather look them up' which she replaces with "well, not look them up but find them" gives a rare insight into the preference for finding</p>

		<p>things rather than searching for things, brought about, at least in part, by digital media because, as she says, "the internet [is] easier, <i>Google translate</i> like this bam-bam-bam (mimes typing on a keyboard) then it gives you the meaning".</p>
	<p>A I forgot, there I forgot, it's like... what was I going to talk about...                  T Now, with hindsight, do you think that your strategy was effective or would you do it differently if you did it again?                  A It was effective but not efficient, because I succeeded in talking and providing information and completing the experiment, but it would have taken me less time if I had, for example, prepared a written text and read it when "Oh, I forgot" (mimes reading from a piece of paper).                  Fast.                  T Did you at any point in the task read that suggestion or not?                  A At...                  T Did you at any point read the suggestion that...                  A ... of writing things down, yes. I read that it said write down your... if you like some notes that you have and below write the... oh, yes, and here is the... vocabulary if you like or... pronounce the words that you may use. I said, "I don't need this".                  T Why?                  A Because I felt confident at the beginning, but when I was recording it was like "What happened? Oh, no". I didn't feel sure anymore.                  T Yes, there are two moments when you're lacking vocabulary: such as knock on the door, at that time you lacked vocabulary...                  A Yes, but I'm also very much like poof and pah and pah, like... I don't know, I like talking with that passion.                  (LA-SR 00:48:16.000 – 00:50:00.900)</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b>                  This is the unfortunate but unavoidable result of her preference for 'finding' vocabulary and structures in her memory rather than 'searching' for them, namely her performance is poor because she can't remember items and, more importantly, she's not actively learning new vocabulary by looking words up.</p>

**Learner-Participant:** A      **Dimension:**  
**Personal development opportunities– personal development issues**

<b>Experiment data</b>	<b>SR data</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>A (🗨️) begins typing her answer to Before you start section Question 1: "when i meet some one I usually am kind of nice but also anoying as a [form] of self-defence, i think that i am as a open book ready to be red. i usually start a conversation telling the people my name in which school im enrolled, asking some questions about the life of the person. When i meet a new person it make me feel good some times it depends on the person, if she or he is nice or he</p>	<p>T Very interesting, everything you say. In this part you say, this is about the content of the task now, that when you meet somebody you go a bit on the defensive. I wanted to ask you, what are you afraid of or what's the point of going a bit on the defensive when you meet somebody?                  A I think that it's... when you talk to somebody you express not just what you say but also what you're like and what you think. And if you expose yourself that way, some people are very clever, ah, and they can use that knowledge to</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b>                  This excerpt shows an adult-like personality in the making typical of the teenage phase. The learner is verbalising her strategies for protecting herself in social encounters. She seems to have learnt</p>













<p>or she is discosting [disgusting]: generally it makes me feel kind of important because i know that it will be a new chance to get a friend. ")</p> <p>(LA-E 00:23:48.280 – 00:28:56.880)</p>	<p>know what your weaknesses are. Then, they can attack you there. And... and what I try is... I talk a lot, right?, but I try to talk about topics that are not like... like they expose me, so...</p> <p>T You don't want...</p> <p>A ... so so much.</p> <p>T ... to become vulnerable...</p> <p>A Ah, exactly. That's it.</p> <p>T ... being, being... indiscreet, probably, or talking about certain things...</p> <p>A That's right.</p> <p>T ... private things.</p> <p>A And for example it's, it's... a personality thing, I guess. It's like 'I'm so and so', 'oh, really? Well then I'm so and so (feigning defiance) it's like a rivalry game. Although it's not always this way, but occasionally it does happen.</p> <p>T To what extent does that reflect the way you see the world, society, that is, do you view society or people as potential attackers or rivals?</p> <p>A I trust everyone until they prove me wrong. It's like I always say. I'm cool with everyone, but because of situations that have happened, the way they have behaved with me (looking down), sometimes people, yes I do choose to... make it known to them, at the beginning, that they are not to play games with me, that, in other words, we'll get along well and stuff but they are not to play with me because I'm not going to let them; yeah, right... (uses an exclamation to tone down her last remark).</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:23:36.500 – 00:25:59.800)</p>	<p>from previous negative social experiences and be in the process of 'hardening up'.</p>
<p>A (She begins recording her second video) Hello, my name's [<i>name deleted</i>]. I'm a student in a Universidad de Guanajuato. I want to be a er... oh, I don't know, I don't remember the word, how do you say when you are... successful, yes, that's the word. MBA, maybe. I'm study in FIMEE, Salamanca, and I like a lot my career, I like a lot my teachers... And I'm a dancer also. I have a little group of girls between 5 no 9 and 14 and I like Lady Gaga (laughs). I will go to her concert in Mexico, in Guadalajara City, and I'm excited. I know how to dance almost all her choreographies and I don't know. It's all. I'm a nice girl. I don't like to go out a lot. I'd rather be in my house watching maybe a movie with my family. And also I want to speak a lot but with another people. I don't like to be alone. And, I don't know. I love about myself and about another people but... I don't know. It's all. (stops recording)</p> <p>(LA-E 00:55:42.115 – 00:58:23.800)</p>	<p>A Yes, because it's a different culture that I feel a bit more similar to what I'm trying to do.</p> <p>T So you somehow are telling me that you want to be different and that those aspects that you want to be different about are present in the culture of the United States?</p> <p>A It influences me very much. For instance, the music context...</p> <p>T Lady Gaga.</p> <p>A Lady Gaga, ah, for example, yes I like her very much.</p> <p>T You can dance all her routines...</p> <p>A Of course. All her routines and...</p> <p>T You like her as a person...</p> <p>A Yes, I like her, well, not her as a person but...</p> <p>T Her character.</p> <p>A Her character, the way she defies people and extravagance. I say, I admire her courage. And what I say is I don't want to be like her, but I'd like to have her attitude. And I'm sometimes taking her kind of as a... I don't care, what I have I'm going to combine it nicely to look different and right now I'm teaching some girls dancing and it turns out that all the girls want to be like Lady Gaga. And I tell them, it's OK, well, I can't tell them it's wrong, but also try to put your... your touch.</p> <p>T Sure. One must look for one's identity.</p> <p>A Uh-huh.</p> <p>T Which will be unique or with bits of this and bits of that.</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b></p> <p>She seems to have a fascination with a celebrity. There is a contradiction between her desire to be different and to conform with aspects of the American pop culture, such as Lady Gaga. Again, this is part of her process of growing up and developing her own identity.</p>

	<p>A Yes. (LA-SR 00:33:32.800 – 00:34:49.500)</p>	
<p>A (In response to the question 'How do you feel about introducing yourself on video?', learner A types: 'good, i'm happy i like to make video eaven i'm not as good as my [Digital] art[s] friends' and then deletes 'eaven I'm not as good as my [Digital] art[s] friends') (LA-E 00:30:50.470 – 00:32:00.920)</p>	<p>T Listen, in the previous section before we go further, because this is going very fast, you talk about... at one point you wrote 'I'm going to make a video, it's exciting, it's cool, but I'm not as good as those from Arts'. A To make videos. T And then you delete that. A Yes. T Why did you delete it? A Because, when you write that, that... I'm not, not so good, it's because you're underrating yourself. T Exactly. A And I said, "No, I'm underrating myself, I can't do that". And I deleted it. And I said, next. (LA-SR 00:34:50.200 – 00:35:22.247)</p>	<p><b>23. 02.2012</b> Again, this is evidence of self-awareness and her conscious efforts to improve her self-esteem by avoiding negative comments about her skills.</p>
<p>A (In response to the question 'Think of some positive reasons for wanting to introduce yourself on video', A types: "I want to introduce my self on video because I wanna examinete [examine] my mods [ways] and how I am to the another point of view.) (LA-E 00:32.14.721 – 00:33:50.400)</p>	<p>T This seems very interesting to me. At one point you say 'I want to make the video because I want another perspective on me'. And you mention 'modes'. A The ways or... T Your ways... A The ways, uh-huh. T You wanted to see your ways. You said that you wanted feedback. A Feedback. Yes. T It sounds as though the purpose in doing this is... A To see me. T What you're going to gain, let's say, is seeing you, and having another person see you, from another perspective, right? A Yes. For instance, I feel that talk in a certain way, and when I hear the video I say, "Blimey, is this how I speak?" For example, then attitudes, I always try to have my back straight, and for instance there I was concentrated and I'm like this (imitates her slouching posture on the video). And I see the way I look at the screen, the way I react. T So, you're learning from watching yourself... A Yes. T ... as you take part in this, right? A And I don't think we normally do this very much. I for one don't. For example, when I record myself dancing, I say 'I dance very badly'. And that time I felt that I danced well and I say 'no, I have to improve this and this and this'. T So that's positive. A Yes. T Here you moved on to another section and you skipped several questions, you didn't answer them. A It's because I was very anxious to make my video. (LA-SR 00:35:47.700 – 00:37:16.600)</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b> She acknowledges her desire to see herself, learn about herself, which might be considered typical of her age and an indication of her motivation to grow and mature.</p>

<p>A (She sighs, looks up and ponders before typing her answer to the question 'What are you going to talk about in your video?': "about interpersonal relationships, and some background about myself")</p> <p>(LA-E 00:38.21.103 – 00:39.17.973)</p>	<p>T: It's interesting that you say that in your video you are going to talk about interpersonal relations.</p> <p>A: Interpersonal relations. But then I end up talking about something else. I... was going to talk about that but I didn't talk about it. It doesn't matter.</p> <p>T: The task required you to make a video and, what were you supposed to say in the video, according to the task? Do you remember?</p> <p>A: Mmm, talk about myself. And show some objects perhaps if I had them that identify me. And talk about my personality.</p> <p>T: But first you decide to talk about interpersonal relations, which is like a topic, isn't it?</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p>T: It's like talking about the environment. Why did you make that decision?</p> <p>A: Because I had always wanted to have a broadcast or a show to discuss topics, like... and give them my perspective. And I said, "OK, I'm going to talk about this but I'm also going to provide an introduction on who I am more or less, and talk a bit about myself". And I feel discussing a topic, when you talk and express yourself, you give a very good impression of what you're like.</p> <p>T: Why did you decide to talk about interpersonal relations?</p> <p>A: Because days earlier I had had... mm... a conflict with my classmates. I decided to speak about interpersonal relations because it's a topic that was hot (draws an ascending curve in the air with her hand). And I said "I'll talk about this". I think that experiments depend a lot on people's moods. For instance, if I had been hungry or something, I would have been like [saying] "Oh, I want to finish". Or I would have been all "Oh, OK, let's see" (lowers her head to imply tiredness). But since I had had some food then it's... it was OK. And if I had been annoyed I would have [said] "Oh, no, this password doesn't work..."</p> <p>T: What was your mood like that day?</p> <p>A: I was like relaxed but kind of... yeah, right... like very unstressed. Very relaxed, very relaxed.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:38:49.400 – 00:40:58.200)</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b></p> <p>Her interest in interpersonal relations together with the fact that she had a negative social experience recently shows her interest in finding ways of improving her social skills possibly by reflecting on that negative experience.</p>
	<p>T: So in a way you saw the positive side of doing this, didn't you?</p> <p>A: Yes. I try to learn from everything and I think that... this experiment was very helpful to realise two things basically: that I need... well, three things. I need to have some kind of guide to develop a topic, a good one, more specific. I need er... a higher higher higher level of English and practise more... everything. And thirdly, I need to... well I can, I have an opportunity to improve the way I speak and express myself with a technological tool.</p> <p>(LA-SR 00:56:47.100 – 00:57:32.400)</p>	<p><b>23.02.2012</b></p> <p>The learner reflects on her experience and finds that she has learnt a few lessons, which one could argue that account for some kind personal development having occurred.</p>

Learner-participant: F  
 Experiment date (duration): 14.11.2010 (02:46:22)  
 SR date (duration): 18.11.2010 (01:10:12)

Learner-Participant F Dimension: Inner speech - private speech		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
F (Speaking to herself) When you meet, meet somebody, meet somebody (  She selects and copies 'meet somebody' from the question) (  Goes to <i>Google translate</i> and pastes it) (LF-E 00:14:24.233 - 00:14:45.405)		<b>05.10.2011</b> She reads and selects parts of the question.
F (  She goes back to the task window) (Speaking to herself; reading from the question) When you meet somebody for the first time, what do you say and do... for the first time. (  She selects 'the first time,  copies it and pastes it in <i>Google translate</i> ) The first time (  then goes back to the task window) When you... Ah, OK! (straightens her back and sits in a more upright position) (LF-E 00:14:45.405 - 00:15:59.239)		<b>05.10.2011</b> More private speech: reading question to herself.
F (  She begins to type her answer in the textbox: 'Hello!! My name's [ <i>name deleted</i> ]. What's your name? Where are you from?' (Reads to herself) Where are you from? (  as she types it: 'Nice to meet you.') (Reads from the question to herself) What do you say and... How does meeting..." (  Selects 'make you feel' and reads aloud) Feel, sentir. (LF-E 00:16:03.760 - 00:18:04.930)		<b>05.10.2011</b> Reads what she's typing. Reads question to herself and translates a word: feel - sentir.
F (  Types: 'I feel very happy...') Ah, OK.	F Ah, and then I make a lot of gestures, I don't know if you noticed... (laughs)	<b>05.10.2011</b> Reads aloud as she

<p>Thank you teacher (speaking to teacher after hearing his instructions through videoconference) (🗨️ goes to <i>Google translate</i> window; speaks to herself) I feel hap... (and 🗨️ types 'I feel happy') (🗨️ goes back to task window and 🗨️ types: '... happy to meeting a new person because is interes...') (speaks to herself) because interesting</p> <p>(LF-E 00:22:22.060 - 00:25:15.990 )</p>	<p>T Do you? F Yes, I'm always making a lot of gestures. T Mmm... Talking about which... Here it is. You see, you come back and here you begin to read... F Yes, it helps me a lot to understand better when I can see it. T So, it was helpful. F Uh-huh. T And... what were you saying to me just now? F Oh yes, that I'm always grabbing my hair or doing other stuff, I don't know, or reading out loud... T Yes, you do read aloud a lot and speak aloud... for instance, you would read the questions out loud, and then you spoke aloud when you were writing things. What's the purpose for you of speaking aloud? F What happens is that when... mmm... er... when we started here at FIMEE [school] a teacher used to say to us: if you want your brain to process it better you can speak softly to yourself and aloud because that way our brain retains more, a doctor used to tell us, so I always try to do that... T And it works? F Yes, this is how I usually study. T You can say it better. F Uh-huh. T To memorise, although in this case it wasn't a question of memorising but rather understanding. F Yes, understanding. T It also helps you in that sense. F Yes, it does, it helps me a lot. T How do you understand it? Is it as though you were talking to yourself? Or is it as though the text were talking to you? Or... F I think so, it's as though the text were talking to me because it's like when... when I read... when I'm learning vocabulary in English I pronounce the words and I write them in the air... (mimics writing in the air) T You write them in the air... Do you make a gesture? F Yes, first I write them... I try to understand them, I pronounce them and I write them in the air and then I do write them. T Tell me about writing in the air... Why do you write them in the air? F Because I'm speaking and I'm writing so, I learn to speak and I learn to write. T Mmm very well OK... F Oh God, I'm a bit... (laughs) T No, no, no. It's just that I don't want to plant any more ideas in your head, but what you're telling me is something that I'm really interested in in my doctorate and this thing about gestures to write is something that has been acknowledged, it's a sort of way to begin writing so, what you're saying reminds me of that theory... It's very interesting so it does help you. But, do you do it in Spanish too? F What do you mean sorry? T Reading aloud and making gestures...</p>	<p>types. Speaks what she types when she looks up a word, and says the translated word and part of a question aloud.</p> <p><b>29.03.2012</b> She can understand and learn things better if she says them aloud (orality) and she can deal with new vocabulary better if she says the word aloud and writes it 'in the air'. She kind of recreates a conversation where the text to be learnt is given life by speaking it aloud and thus she can learn more effectively.</p>
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	<p>F Yes, I do it a lot. In fact when I'm studying for a course I do that, first I read the text, then I remember and I say it as though I were in a conversation and er... that's how I memorise it more easily.                  T It helps...                  F Uh-huh, maybe uh-huh.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:08:01.550 - 00:11:37.080)</p>	
<p>F ( moves on to question 2; reads the question to herself) How do you feel... ( looks up 'nervous' in Google translate and types: 'I am very...'; goes to Google translate and looks up 'nervous') (speaks to herself) nervous... ( goes back to task window) ( looks up 'very nervous') ( goes to Google translate and looks up what she just wrote 'I am very very nervous') ( goes back to task window and begins reading question 3)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:25:25.990 - 00:26:46.990)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b>                  Reads out translated word 'nervous' she looked up in <i>Google translate</i>. Reads question to herself</p>
<p>F (She reads question to herself) I want to introduce... ( selects the word 'myself' and copies it) ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) ( opens feedback pop-up window and reads to herself) want to practise... ( goes to task window) ( goes back to feedback window and speaks to herself as she reads) to make... want to practise ( goes back to task window and types: 'want to practise') ( goes to feedback and reads to herself) practise your English ( goes back to task window, reads to herself) I want to introduce... (and then types: 'because I want to practise my English' after trying to type 'practise speaking English' and deleting it) (sighs) (hums) ( goes to a feedback window and reads) ( goes to task and clicks on feedback link to question 2 that pops up; closes the pop-up window quickly) ( she then moves on to the next section of the task)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:26:53.056 - 00:30:12.010)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b>                  Reads feedback out loud. Reads from feedback and uses a word she read to complete her answer.</p>
<p>F (After reading the feedback to question 1 first, she begins to type her answer: 'she tells...') ( goes back to feedback window and reads) ( minimises size of feedback window so she</p>	<p>T OK, that's good... There are so many things... Er... here I find it interesting when you are about to answer a question, you often, at least in the beginning, you first read; then you read the feedback and then you answer... your answer is often like a... paraphrase of the feedback. Tell</p>	<p><b>05.10.2011</b>                  Reads out loud from feedback and the writes it in her answer. Reads out loud from feedback</p>

<p>can see it while she's typing her answer to question 1) (🗨️) continues typing her answer: '... us her name') (👁️) selects and copies 'hometown and her college' from feedback window) (👁️) goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) (👁️) switches between feedback window and <i>Google translate</i> window twice) (reads to herself from feedback window) about her college experience (👁️) goes back to task window and (🗨️) types: 'about her college experience' as she says it out loud) about her college experience (👁️) goes to feedback window and checks the spelling of 'experience' as she says the word out loud) experience (👁️) goes to feedback window and reads out loud) and her favourite drinks (👁️) goes to task window and (🗨️) types 'and her favourite drinks' as she says it out loud) and her favourite drinks (👁️) goes to feedback window and reads to herself) snacks (👁️) goes to task window and (🗨️) types 'snacks' as she speaks to herself) snacks (talks to teacher through videoconference) Excuse me, teacher. (waits for reply) The question what are the main things she talks about in her video (switches to Spanish) my answer is (reading from screen) She tells us her name, about her college, her favourite drinks and snack (rising her intonation as if unsure) mmm (still in Spanish) should I still say something else? or (switches back to English) is complete? (listens to reply) Ah, OK. Thank you (sighs) (reads the next question aloud to herself) what are you going to talk about...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:37:56.010 - 00:42:16.980)</p>	<p>me about that, because... the process I notice is that you read the question, you find it hard to understand it, you have to look up the meaning or translate it and then you go to the feedback, you look at the feedback and then you write something that's quite similar to the feedback. So, I want you to comment on that...</p> <p>F Ah, it's just that, well, first I couldn't understand what that section was about but then when I opened it [the feedback] and then I analysed the question. After analysing the question for ages, I went to... I thought, as I was saying, I thought that those were different options, so, I chose one, uh-huh that's what I thought.</p> <p>T Ah, OK, I understand.</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T OK... I wanted to ask you specifically about one question...</p> <p>T (mumbles while forwarding the video)</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T Then you go to the quiz, and because you're answering questions you go to the video...</p> <p>T So, here you also go to the feedback...</p> <p>F It's only now that [I understand], only now. As these are highlighted [possibly referring to the feedback links] I thought that they were options...</p> <p>T Ah...</p> <p>F That's why I didn't... as you can see I didn't check it [the feedback] at first because I didn't know, until I clicked on it. So, I thought these were options for me to choose from to answer the question.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:11:37.470 – 00:14:12.642)</p>	<p>and repeats aloud as she types it in her answer.</p>
<p>F (Reads question out loud to herself) What are you going to talk about... (👁️) opens feedback pop-up window before attempting to answer the question; reads question and drags pop-up window so that she can see it while (🗨️) she types her answer)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:42:32.030 - 00:42:54.140)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> She reads question out loud.</p>
<p>F (Another self-access centre user arrives and sits to work at a table behind her to her left) (Talking to herself as she reads from the feedback window) (in Spanish) what thing (switches back to English) 'goes' (👁️) goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'anything goes') (👁️) goes to the feedback window) (👁️) goes to the task window and (🗨️) begins typing)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> "qué cosa 'goes'" before she looks it up 'goes' in the dictionary.</p>

<p>(LF-E 00:43:44.658 - 00:44:25.327)</p>		
<p>F (Another other self-access centre stands up and goes to find help to turn on a TV) (Reading from feedback) That's that's... ( goes to task window and types her answer 'That's very nice' as she says it to herself) That's very nice. ( goes back to feedback window and reads)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:44:25.327 - 00:44:58.224)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Reads aloud as she types her answer.</p>
<p>F ( goes to feedback window and reads) ( goes to task window and types her answer 'Anything' as she reads it to herself) Anything ( goes to feedback window and reads to herself) Anything ( goes back to task window and talks to herself as she types 'goes') Anything goes ( goes to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as you tell people... ( goes back to task window and types 'you tell pe...') ( goes back to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as</p> <p>(LF-E 00:44:58.224 - 00:46:01.807)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Reads aloud as she types</p>
<p>F ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'as long as') ( goes back to feedback window and selects 'you tell people stuff about you') ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'as long as you tell people stuff about you'; deletes 'people stuff about you' and types 'is true' instead; reads to herself) as long as you tell is true ( goes to feedback window and reads) ( goes to <i>Skype</i> and seems to be wanting to type something in text message box for the teacher but doesn't) ( goes back to task window) ( types 'as long as tell is...' as she speaks to herself) as long as tell is... as long as ( goes back to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as tell is true ( goes back to task window and inserts a missing 'you' in the sentence)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:46:01.807 - 00:47:53.161)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Reads from translation and types it.</p>














<p>F (👤 moves on to question 3; reads the question out loud to herself) Are you going to prepare the vocabulary you'll use in your video? If so, you can write down some of the key words you plan to use here and check their meaning and pronunciation in a dictionary (sighs)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:48:03.546 - 00:48:31.954)</p>		<p><b>11.10.2011</b> Not understanding the question is probably causing frustration.</p>
<p>F (👤 moves the feedback pop-up window so that she can see it while she re-reads the question to herself) Are you going... (nodding vigorously) Ah, OK OK OK OK</p> <p>(LF-E 00:49:04.315 - 00:49:27.229)</p>		<p><b>11.10.2011</b> She seems to have understood the question eventually.</p>
<p>F (👤 goes to feedback window and reads to herself) don't make your video too long (👤 goes to task window and 🖱️ types her answer 'don't make your video too...' as she speaks to herself) don't make your video too...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:52:14.997 - 00:52:32.015)</p>		
<p>F (👤 goes back to feedback window and reads to herself) too long (👤 goes back to task window and 🖱️ types 'too long') ... too long. She's...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:52:32.015 - 00:52:51.043)</p>		
<p>F (👤 goes to Google translate and 🖱️ types 'she's' as she speaks to herself) she's (👤 chooses Spanish-to-English translation in Google translate and 🖱️ types 'rapido' [fast]; 🖱️ she then deletes that and 🖱️ types 'she's speaking very fast' as she speaks to herself) she's speaking very fast (👤 switches translation direction to English-to-Spanish) (👤 goes to task window where 🖱️ she types her answer 'she's speaking very fast' as she speaks to herself) she's speaking very fast</p> <p>(LF-E 00:52:51.043 - 00:53:53.956)</p>		
<p>F (She's reading question 1 in the Stage 3: Review section; 👤 selects and copies 'think about' from the question) (👤 goes to Google translate and looks it up; reads English and Spanish versions out loud to herself) Think about - pensar en ello (reads from question to herself) What do you think about it...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:00:58.535 - 01:01:49.589)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Reads translation out loud.</p>

<p>F (gets ready to answer question but doesn't seem to be able to;  selects and copies 'What do you think about it?' from the question)   goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up)   closes two feedback windows she'd used before) ( goes back to task window)  (LF-E 01:01:50.125 - 01:02:22.419)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b>  Reads question out loud</p>
	<p>T Do you feel that this video... how did it affect you, watching Sam's video? Did it help you? Did it intimidate you?  F It helped me to greet, to think that there was an audience.  T Uh-huh.  F That was what motivated me: to think that I had an audience.  (LF-SR 01:08:22.611 – 01:08:31.455)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>  She felt the need to have an imaginary audience. She needed to think that she was talking to someone, not just on her own. This is the imaginary interlocutor. But where does this imaginary interlocutor fit in the learning activity system? Perhaps as a tool? Not in the community because the audience does not share the activity. Is this a different kind of private speech?</p>
<p>F (She's poised to click on the 'Record video' button) (picks up her notebook and reads; tears off a page and reads from it; she begins to read aloud from the page to herself) Today I am talking, talking about me. No, today I am telling... Hello, today... Hello, today...today I am talking about me... little little little... Hello, today I am talking...  (LF-E 01:08:56.982 - 01:10:32.323)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b>  She rehearses her video presentation speaking to herself.</p>
<p>F (rehearses out loud) I am 20 years... 20 years old. I am... I study at the university. I am very friend.... friendly... Hello... hello... hello today I am talking a little... Hello today I am talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am from Mexico. I study at the university... I study... I take... at the university... I am very... I am very friendly. I am [inaudible] I am very friendly. I'm entrepreneurial. I like reading, singing, listening to music...  (LF-E 01:11:16.409 - 01:12:17.848)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b>  Rehearses</p>
<p>F (She's poised to click on 'Record video' but begins rehearsing to herself by reading from her notes) I study in... [inaudible] I'm going to talk a little about me. I'm 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am from Mexico. I am studying to the to the to the university... at the at the at the university study at the university at the university at the at the at the at the university... I am very friendly and</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b>  Rehearses again</p>

<p>entrepreneurial I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like singing I like singing reading, listening to music listening to music... I love and I love and I love dancing Usually usually on Saturdays Usually on Saturdays I go I go to see movies I go to see movies I go to see movies or or to the mmm or to the the mall will my or to the mall or to the mall with my with me boyfriend. And Sundays I go to visit my grandparents. I love Mexican food (turns around to glance to the left, where another self-access centre user is working nearby) I love Mexican food I love to drink orange juice. I love Mexican food. I love I love drink I love to drink I love to drink I love to drink orange juice. She's my sister. Her name's [name deleted].</p> <p>(LF-E 01:13:06.557 - 01:15:02.869)</p>		
<p>F (talking to herself as she reads from her notes) you don't say I am talk a little.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:16:17.976 - 01:16:20.790)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Self-corrects herself out loud.</p>
<p>F (rehearsing out loud as she reads from her notes) I love dancing reading signing studying listening to music. Usually on Saturday usually usually usually on Saturdays I go to see the movies...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:16:55.161 - 01:17:20.286)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearses</p>
<p>F (looks unhappy) (gets ready to begin recording again) (begins rehearsing aloud) Hello, today I am (inhales)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:18:04.037 - 01:18:32.646)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearsing</p>
<p>F (rehearsing aloud) I like singing, cooking, listening... listening to music [inaudible]</p> <p>(LF-E 01:18:56.900 - 01:19:12.913)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearsing</p>
<p>F (rehearsing aloud) is my favourite teddy... teddy because my boyfriend give it to me.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:19:47.619 - 01:20:04.369)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearsing</p>
<p>F (rehearsing as she reads from her notes) I like swimming, reading, listening... Hello, today today I am talking a little about me. I love reading I love reading, listening to music I like reading singing singing listening I like reading cooking listening to music ah I love dancing</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:06.679 - 01:21:37.901)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearsing</p>
<p>F (rehearsing) today I am talking a little...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:46.544 - 01:21:55.790)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearses</p>
<p>F (rehearses by reading aloud from notes) Usually on Saturdays I go to see. Usua... usually usually usually on Saturdays I go to see movies. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies or to</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearses the whole thing really really well, correcting her</p>

<p>mall or usually on Saturdays I go to see movies and Sundays I go to I go to visit my grandparents. Movies with my boyfriend. I usually usually on Saturdays I go to see movies with my boyfriend with my boyfriend. And Saturdays I go to visit my grandparents. This is [name deleted] my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give me to me give it to me. This is [name deleted] my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give it to me. Mmm give it to me. (picking up the picture) She's my sister. Her name her name's her name is [name deleted]. She loves play soccer. She loves to play soccer. She loves to play soccer. She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me and love them. And I love them. My family is very important to me and I love them. And I and I love them. This is my story. I hope liked it. Thanks. Goodbye.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:23:57.931 - 01:25:35.885)</p>		<p>grammar and pronunciation. This is really helping her to focus on form and improve her English through practice.</p>
<p>F (rehearsing) Usually usually on Saturdays I go to see movies with my boyfriend with my boyfriend. And Sundays I go to visit my grandparents.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:26:32.969 - 01:26:52.935)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearses</p>
<p>F (rehearses) [inaudible]</p> <p>(LF-E 01:33:24.282 - 01:33:33.863)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Rehearses a bit</p>

<b>Learner-Participant F Dimension:</b> <b>Peer support- peer problems</b>			
<b>Experiment data</b>	<b>SR data</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
<p>F (Another self-access centre user arrives and sits to work at a table behind her to her left) (Talking to herself as she reads from the feedback window) (in Spanish) what thing (in English) 'goes' (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'anything goes' (  goes to the feedback window) (  goes to the task window and begins typing)</p> <p>F (The other self-access centre stands up and goes to find help to turn on a TV) (Reading from feedback) That's that's... (  goes to task window and  types her answer) That's very nice. (  goes back to feedback window and reads)</p> <p>F (  goes to feedback window and reads) (  goes to task window and types her answer)</p> <p>Anything (reads it to herself) Anything (  goes to feedback window and reads to herself)</p> <p>Anything (  goes back to task window and talks to herself as  she types 'goes') Anything</p>	<p>F And then the boy distracted me a lot. T Did he? F Yes. T The one who was around there [in the self-access centre]. Yes, he can be seen there at one point... so, that distracted you. F Yes, it's just that I hadn't understood and then... yes.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:15:36.459 – 00:15:49.658)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> The presence of another self-access centre user nearby affects her.</p>	

<p>goes ( goes to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as you tell people... ( goes back to task window and types 'you tell pe...' as she says it out loud) you tell pe... (the other self-access centre user comes back with helper who switches on the TV) ( F goes back to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as</p> <p>(LF-E 00:43:44.600 – 00:46:01.900)</p>		
	<p>T So... in terms of the noise coming from people and distractions, what would be best for you? How is it... What would be a better situation to be doing the task without these distractions? Would you feel more comfortable working somewhere else or if the space was arranged in a different way?</p> <p>F No, it's OK like this... it's just that... well the guy was making noise so I was turning around because I get distracted easily. In fact I liked the location a lot because the workstations don't let people see you so I wasn't so embarrassed about doing my video.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:17:00.611 – 00:17:47.109)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> She insists that having another self-access centre user nearby distracted her but she also acknowledges that she gets distracted easily and comments positively on the workstation as being her private space.</p>
<p>F (She's poised to click on 'Record video' but begins rehearsing to herself by reading from her notes) I study in... [inaudible] I'm going to talk a little about me. I'm 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am from Mexico. I am studying to the to the to the university... at the at the at the university study at the university at the university at the at the at the at the university... I am very friendly and entrepreneurial I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like singing I like singing reading, listening to music listening to music... I love and I love and I love dancing Usually usually on Saturdays Usually on Saturdays I go I go to see movies I go to see movies I go to see movies or or to the mmm or to the the mall will my or to the mall or to the mall with my with me boyfriend. And Sundays I go to visit my grandparents. I love Mexican food (turns around to glance to the left, where another self-access centre user is working nearby) I love Mexican food I love to drink orange juice. I love Mexican food. I love I love drink I love to drink I love to drink I love to drink orange juice. She's my sister. Her name's [name deleted].</p> <p>(LF-E 01:13:06.557 – 01:15:02.869)</p>	<p>T You turn around (as they both watch her turn around to her left in the video).</p> <p>F Yes.</p> <p>F It's just that I kept forgetting that the guy was there and I wasn't sure whether I was talking too loudly. Yes, I remember that.</p> <p>T It wouldn't be right to talk loudly.</p> <p>F Well, I didn't want to bother the guy.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:45:00.636 – 00:45:31.925)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> Now she also expresses concern about whether she was distracting the self-access user nearby.</p>
	<p>F In fact, later a friend told me that I should have sung instead (laughs).</p> <p>T You could, because you like that.</p> <p>F Yes, she plays the guitar, so together we sing the song Kiss me.</p> <p>T Kiss me.</p> <p>F Uh-huh. Yes, but I can't do it now.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> Her friend can be seen as a source of peer support in her language learning efforts (in this case, out of school).</p>

	(LF-SR 00:50:46.758 – 00:51:08.734)	
	<p>F (As they both watch her turn around again in the video) No, again it was because I felt that I was too loud.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:52:12.920 – 00:52:19.754)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> She insists that her turning around in the video had to do with her concern about disturbing the nearby self-access centre user with her voice.</p>
	<p>T And your boyfriend, how does he influence you, in your life, in your studies...?</p> <p>F He supports me a lot with English because he's very good at it. Well, he has a lot of... Mmm. How do you call it? His level is very high so, he's always supporting me a lot with English.</p> <p>T How's things with him? What do you do, normally?</p> <p>F As I was telling you we try to have a conversation in English... Uh-huh. So, when we go to the cinema we try to watch movies in English with subtitles, because of him, and he plays a lot of music in English for me. He also writes comments for me on Facebook in English. Yes, he supports me a lot.</p> <p>F Yes, he supports me a lot, especially with English.</p> <p>T And your friend, the one who said that to you about the song, does she also support you with English?</p> <p>F Yes, what happens is she plays... she plays the guitar, the drums... She plays several instruments, so once we had to sing in English and I like that song very much.</p> <p>T What's the name of the song?</p> <p>F Kiss me.</p> <p>T Kiss me.</p> <p>F But I've never taken the time to... what I've always wanted to do with her because we want to sing... I'm going to get it off the internet and then...</p> <p>T Then you can record it and put it up on <i>YouTube</i>.</p> <p>F Yes.</p> <p>F Oh, no. Yes, I want to be recorded really but I'm embarrassed.</p> <p>F Actually very few people know that I sing and that I like singing.</p> <p>T And why don't you share that with others?</p> <p>F A long time ago when I was in secondary school I started having these eating disorders; at that time I used to sing in a band...</p> <p>T Oh, and you left the band...</p> <p>F Yes, because of sixth form, we went our separate ways after secondary school.</p> <p>T And now you don't tell a lot of people about it.</p> <p>F No, not many, very few people know. My grandmother always asks "Sing, F, sing" at parties and I (gestures)... Oh no.</p> <p>T Why don't you say it?</p> <p>F I don't know... Well, to be honest I think that it affects like my image (laughs) because I've tried to... I don't know, like to be more professional and I feel that it would affect that idea that I'm pursuing.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> This is further evidence of support from a peer as the learner explains that her boyfriend helps her to practise her spoken English. They also share entertainment in English. She reports engaging with the language out of school with a friend – an example of peer support as well.</p>

	<p>T Because people...                  F Uh-huh.                  T You're easily embarrassed. You keep on getting it wrong (referring to her video recording in the experiment).                  F Yes, in fact I care about that a lot because that's what I want to do, I want to do a Master's in Public Image.                  T Wow! So, you're aware that you have an image and you take care of it.                  F Uh-huh.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:54:17.138 – 00:57:03.700)</p>	
	<p>F Although when we went to the World Youth Conference we practise a lot of 'Hello, my name is...'                  T Introducing yourselves...                  F Yes, we practised a lot.                  T Do you feel comfortable?                  F Well, the thing is they understood me, and they even started a conversation with me, but then i wouldn't understand them, so I tried to... to meet people and all, but they did give me their email addresses.</p> <p>(LF-SR 01:02:29.253 – 01:02:57.527)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Yet another example of peer support in her efforts to learn English, in this case out of school, at an international event.</p>
	<p>F (as they both watch her turn around again in the video) And I think I traumatised the poor guy. I think he was probably saying 'Oh God, [name deleted].'                  T No, he was just doing his things. He was watching videos.                  F Yes.                  T I like it when someone is working next to me. I like it. It's like being in a work environment.                  F Uh-huh.                  T And also you were careful not to raise your voice.</p> <p>(LF-SR 01:05:41.074 – 01:06:19.934)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Despite my reassurances, she's still concerned about having disturbed the nearby self-access centre user.</p>

Learner-Participant F Teacher support – teacher problems	Dimension:	
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>T (Teacher videoconference audio not available)                      F (Speaking into the microphone attached to her) Teacher (awaits for teacher response through videoconference) I don't understand question (reads from the screen) 'How does meeting a new person make you feel?' (Listens to teacher reply) So-so (laughs) (turns around to look in the teacher's direction, towards the reception area) No, OK (reads from the screen) 'When you meet somebody for the first time what do you say and do?' (switches to Spanish) What I replied is (switches back to English; reads from the screen) 'Hello! My name's [name deleted]. What's your name? Where are you from? Nice to meet you' (listens to teacher reply) Ah, OK. I feel... mmm (👁️ goes to the Google translate window; 🖱️ looks up the English word for 'emoción' [excitement]; 🖱️ looks up 'alegria' [happiness]; 🖱️ then 'I feel' twice; 👁️ goes to task, 👁️ goes to feedback window, 👁️ and back to the task and speaks to herself) I feel... (she seems to be looking for the word she's missing on the page; sighs and speaks to teacher through videoconference audio) I feel very happy (using a rising intonation, as though unsure)                      (🖱️ Types: 'I feel very happy...') Ah, OK. Thank you teacher (speaking to teacher after hearing his instructions through videoconference)                      (👁️ goes to Google translate window; speaks to herself) I feel hap... (🖱️ and types 'I feel happy')                      (👁️ goes back to task window and 🖱️ types: '... happy to meeting a new person because is interes...') (speaks to herself) because interesting                      (LF-E 00:19:00.000 - 00:25:15.990)</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b>                      She can't understand a question. She manages to understand it with some help from the teacher and then goes on to answer the question.</p>
<p>Excuse me, teacher. (waits for reply) The question what are the main things she talks about in her video (switches to Spanish) my answer is (reading from screen; in English) She tells us her name, about her college, her favourite drinks and snack (rising her intonation as if unsure) mmm (switches to Spanish again) should I still say something else? or (switches back to English) is complete? (listens to reply)</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b>                      She talks to teacher to ask for confirmation that her answer is complete as is.</p>



<p>Ah, OK. Thank you (sighs) (reads the next question aloud to herself) what are you going to talk about...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:41:28.715 - 00:42:16.980)</p>		
<p>F (Speaking through the videoconference audio) Excuse me, teacher.</p> <p>T (teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Mmm. In activity 1 (switches to Spanish) of the second video (switches back to English) I don't understand</p> <p>T (teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F (nods and listens to teacher through her headphones) No, is... uh-uh. One Topic 1... is Stage 4: Practise... State 2: Practise.</p> <p>T (teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F I don't understand activity 1</p> <p>T (teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Ah, OK. Is practice...?</p> <p>T (teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Practise pronunciation?</p> <p>T (teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Thank you, teacher.</p> <p>(LF-E 00:57:30.165 – 00:59:31.435)</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b></p> <p>Asks teacher for help to understand what Practise Act 1 means (through videoconference audio).</p>
<p>F (Talking to teacher through videoconference audio) Excuse me, teacher.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F (switches to Spanish) I completed the topics but the answers were not saved.</p> <p>F Ah, OK.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Ah, OK.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Ah, OK. Thank you, teacher.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F (later on) Excuse me.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F (switches to Spanish) I completed topic 1; topic 2 is like the answers, right?</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F (in Spanish) Yes, activity 2.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Ah. OK.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Ah, OK. Uh-huh.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Ah, OK, so I already completed the answers. Activity 1 is complete. I should proceed to the video.</p> <p>T (Teacher audio not available)</p> <p>F Bye, teacher.</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b></p> <p>She asks the teacher for clarification when she finds out that the task cannot save answers in textboxes, which results in losing one's answers when moving between sections. She's also confused about the fact that the automated feedback pop-up windows appear in the menu on the left under 'Topic 2' as they could not be hidden in this Moodle environment.</p>

(LF-E 01:06:35.679 – 01:08:28.239)		
F (talking to teacher through videoconference; in Spanish) No, I'm still doing the video. Eh, teacher, I already recorded one [video] and I saved it on the desktop, but here I get - where it says <i>IM for Skype</i> - it says 'time: 03 s' so it's not a problem that I saved it on the desktop? I just saved it to watch it, but I'm going to record it a few more times. (teacher audio not available) Ah, OK. Ah, OK. Good, thank you, teacher.  (LF-E 01:32:23.848 – 01:33:03.914)		<b>12.03.2012</b> She wanted to check that it was OK to record and save several videos. She's concerned about 'rules'?
F (In Spanish; talking to teacher through videoconference audio) Teacher, I finished.  (LF-E 01:44:24.872 – 01:45:02.811)		<b>12.03.2012</b> She just lets the teacher know that she's finished through the videoconference.

Learner-Participant F Dimension: Support from others – problems with others		
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>F Yes, yes, yes. Well even... well, I had already understood that in this section you had to see how she pronounced it and I had to pronounce it, but, then if you notice I went to Start and I couldn't find...</p> <p>T You couldn't find the Sound recorder, and you read very carefully, you take your time... That's something that really caught my attention...</p> <p>F No.</p> <p>F Yes.</p> <p>F Ah, I always read that way.</p> <p>T That's part... And why are you like that? Because let me tell you that out of ten participants you're probably the only one who has prepared something... [the only one] that brings her notebook and takes all the time in the world. Somehow in my experience you are an exception in what I've observed but to me this is the right thing to do, I must confess that if I did it [the task] I would do it this way. I would have something prepared in my notebook. What makes you be like that, where do that attitude and way of working come from?</p> <p>F It's just that I've never like being... I've always liked being organised and keeping some sort of... control because I've never liked arriving without anything. I like getting there prepared and knowing what I'm going to do. So, since I knew that it was going to be something in English, then I had my notes with me and my notebook to write down something if I didn't understand it and also I had prepared the video [presentation] because if...</p>	<p><b>14.03.2012</b> Problems at home (between her parents) are affecting her behaviour at school.</p>

	<p>It's hard enough speaking, so I need some basis to do it properly. So, it's always like this, it's not just here, I'm always like this.</p> <p>T Where does that come from?</p> <p>F Well, I don't know, perhaps it's because since I was a little child I have had to grow up quickly and be organised and stuff and especially because I have worked already.</p> <p>T OK, I need to know a bit more about that. What has made you grow up?</p> <p>F For example, at home I've had many problems with my parents. Well, my parents have, there have been a lot of problems, so since I was a child I've had to work, well, not work a lot kind of thing...</p> <p>T At home?</p> <p>F No.</p> <p>T Out there.</p> <p>F Yes, out there. For example, I began to work when I was 14 as a telephone assistant. Yes, I was the receptionist and then I kept changing jobs so that has made me grow up because in my last job I was... (she stops talking and watches the video; both F and T watch the video)</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:23:55.274 – 00:26:22.808)</p>	
	<p>T We'll let the video play for a bit while we continue talking. You said you had to work, and I also had to work since I was 13, and it's true that it helps you grow up. Tell me, how old are you?</p> <p>F 21.</p> <p>T If you reflect back on your life, do you think that it was positive or negative to have to work and grow up so quickly?</p> <p>F It was something positive because it has helped me, it has taught me to get on with my life on my own all the time, so, now, for instance, I value things more, everything I carry with me costs me. So, I value things much more. It has helped me to be more organised, to manage my time more. It has taught me many things. For example, er... starting as a telephone assistant was like... Then being a waitress and so on until now. From July to September I worked in the economic development unit in Salamanca, I was working there. So, it's also because you work with people who have an education, so you can't get there without anything. So, this has also helped me, I mean seeing people who are already professional and seeing the way they prepare and all that.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:30:10.943 – 00:31:27.457)</p>	<p><b>14.03.2012</b></p> <p>Other people, in this case work colleagues, are having a positive influence on her. Working with professionals who she sees as role models makes her behave in a more 'professional' manner at school</p>
<p>(She's poised to click on the 'Record video' button but doesn't click on it; picks up her notebook and reads; turns around and glances</p>	<p>T It looks like you were a little embarrassed to ask me but, you ask anyway, don't you?</p>	<p><b>14.01.2012</b></p> <p>This is evidence of to what extent her experience of</p>

<p>towards the reception area)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:08:56.982 – 01:10:32.323)</p>	<p>F Yes, yes (laughs).</p> <p>T When you have a question, you ask.</p> <p>F Yes, I'm always like that.</p> <p>T That's good.</p> <p>T There are people who don't ask questions. Why do you ask questions?</p> <p>F Because I don't want to be left wondering?</p> <p>T So, you don't have... Well, you say that in life taking the initiative and looking for help or support to sort out problems has not been a problem for you and here you're behaving precisely in that way, aren't you?</p> <p>F Yes, yes, yes, yes.</p> <p>T And you turn around (as they both watch the video).</p> <p>F And I turn around. It's just the way I am always. I'm always on alert and I have this trauma.</p> <p>T And, why?</p> <p>F I don't know. I'm very insecure but not insecure about myself, insecure about being mugged or something because I was mugged.</p> <p>T Really?</p> <p>F Uh-huh. So, since then I've been like really traumatised, like very insecure about everything.</p> <p>T How long ago was that?</p> <p>F It was about three years ago here (mumbles) about five years ago.</p> <p>T Very traumatic.</p> <p>F Yes it was for me, very very much, because I was walking along a street that was really crowded, and I had my cheque, I had just been paid, and they took my bag and everything, with a knife here in my back.</p> <p>T They didn't hurt you?</p> <p>F No, they only hurt me a bit and I was bleeding but anyway I had already paid my school fees so what hurt me the most was that I was carrying the receipt to register at school.</p> <p>T But that was sorted out.</p> <p>F Yes, thank God I had my mobile phone here (points to her trousers) in a little pocket in my trousers that had many pockets so they didn't notice that I had my mobile phone with me and when they run away with my bag I could call home.</p> <p>T And they helped you.</p> <p>F Yes, my mum went to register me.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:38:47.245 – 00:41:14.042)</p>	<p>being mugged and possibly the current lack of security in the country is affecting her behaviour during the experiment. What kind of support does the institution offer in such cases?</p> <p><b>14.03.2012</b></p> <p>Two interesting things in this excerpt: again, her dysfunctional family background have made her be autonomous, someone who seeks help when she needs it. Secondly, being a victim of violent crime makes her constantly be on edge, turning around all the time, trying to avert danger by seeing it coming first.</p>
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**Learner-Participant F**                      **Dimension:**  
**Language learning opportunities – language learning problems**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	T OK. Now then, well I have seen the first half hour	<b>09.10.2011</b>

	<p>of the video so... well, first of all in relation to this part, the beginning [of the video], I wanted to ask you, how did you feel during the experiment, in general? What feelings did you experience?</p> <p>F OK, well, I liked it a lot because I felt supported. I had you on the [videoconference] audio and I could use <i>Google</i> to check things and all that so that was cool but what I found harder was the questions because as I was telling you I couldn't understand them very well. However, well perhaps there was just a word I didn't understand and the word in bold I tried to translate it and that allowed me to translate the whole question, well I mean I translated it.</p> <p>T So, you did like the task but the difficulty or the obstacle was understanding the vocabulary...</p> <p>F Yes.</p> <p>T For instance, I noticed that you struggled with...</p> <p>F With the questions, yes.</p> <p>T ... questions, vocabulary and when you had to write too.</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:00:10.251 - 00:01:20.065)</p>	<p>She couldn't understand the questions because of the vocabulary (and because of anxiety produced by questions being exam-like?). Limited vocabulary seems to be her weakness.</p>
	<p>F It was that, more than anything else.</p> <p>T Yes, at some point [in the video] you say "I am very very nervous", don't you?</p> <p>F Yes, yes (laughing).</p> <p>T What made you feel nervous?</p> <p>F Not the video, that was what surprised me, because making the video was not making me nervous, it was not being able to answer [the question]... not writing [the answers] properly because that's my weakness, writing.</p> <p>T Writing.</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T So, you felt nervous because you were afraid or insecure?</p> <p>F Yes, insecure above all.</p> <p>T So... what is the obstacle when you have to write? What causes you problems?</p> <p>F Mmm... It's especially when I have to use 'to', 'at' and all that. I try to write the sentence following the guidelines that they have taught me but there are things that I'm not good at because using 'to' and 'at' is something I still forget to include so that's what I find harder. [And] The verbs; I do understand when they have to be in the past, present continuous and all that but some are harder, [making sure] that all the composition has a sequence.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:02:39.929 – 00:03:51.954)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> Language-related problems such as not being able to write accurately are reported. There was no fear of the camera, though. She seems to suggest that she has grammatical problems.</p>
	<p>F Perhaps what's really hard for me is that, for instance, every word you link it with another word or letters and it has quite a few meanings, this is what I find harder because for instance with other people what we try to do is have a conversation even if it's wrong but in your head you begin to try to link. So what I've begun doing is that because I find it very hard and especially understanding when they speak fast. That's what I find hard because when I write when I write when I read or</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> She seems to be finding vocabulary deficiencies her greatest source of distress. Listening comprehension is also a problem. She's suggesting that she lacks listening practice as she's more used to reading than listening. Her reference to</p>

	<p>something well a word, like you taught us, I try to understand what it means together with other words. But when I speak I don't understand so well because I'm used to seeing the written word but not hearing.                  T Yes, in fact in Sam's video did you feel that she talks very fast?                  F Yes, yes.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:06:15.937 – 00:07:17.242)</p>	<p>problems with linking discourse suggests grammatical weakness, perhaps. A picture of a learner with a low level of proficiency begins to emerge.</p>
<p>F (Reads question out loud to herself) What are you going to talk about... ( goes feedback pop-up window before attempting to answer the question; reads question and drags pop-up window so that she can see it while she types her answer) ( She highlights and copies 'anything' from the feedback window) ( goes to Google translate and looks it up) ( goes back to task question)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:42:19:400 – 00:43:22.780)</p>	<p>T In this part... mmm... the specific question is: What are you going to talk about in your video? It doesn't have to be the same as in Sam's. The first thing is trying to understand the question. I think that you go to the feedback and the feedback tells you: That's good. Anything goes as long as you tell people stuff about you. Here you struggled to understand the feedback. And you open [Google translate] anything goes: todo vale... I have the feeling that you didn't understand this question.                  F Yes, actually.                  T Other times you ask me: Teacher, what does this question mean. But there you didn't ask me.                  F No.                  T You grabbed the feedback, you pasted it and just changed the wording a bit.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:14:19.878 – 00:15:33.511)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Vocabulary problems.                  Ineffective writing strategy?</p>
<p>F (Another self-access centre user arrives and sits to work at a table behind her to her left) (Talking to herself as she reads from the feedback window) (in Spanish) what thing (in English) 'goes' ( goes to Google translate and looks up 'anything goes' ( goes to the feedback window) ( goes to the task window and begins typing)                  F (The other self-access centre stands up and goes to find help to turn on a TV) (Reading from feedback) That's that's... ( goes to task window and types her answer) That's very nice. ( goes back to feedback window and reads) ( goes to feedback window and reads) ( goes to task window and types her answer) Anything (reads it to herself) Anything ( goes to feedback window and reads to herself) Anything ( goes back to task window and talks to herself as she types 'goes') Anything goes ( goes to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as you tell people... ( goes back to task window and types 'you tell pe...' as she says it out loud) you tell pe... (the other self-access centre user comes back with helper who switches on the TV) ( F goes back</p>	<p>T At this point to be honest I had a vision of thinking it's as though she were in an exam.                  F Yes, I felt like in an exam... (laughs)                  T So, I don't know, you're in an exam, you don't know the question, I mean you don't understand what I'm asking you but you have to write something... You have a place where you have a suggestion and you get that and copy it to...                  F Oh yes, I do that...                  T And let's see what happens, right?                  F Yes, it's just that I hadn't understood the...                  T And why didn't you ask me... you don't remember?                  F No, I don't remember why...</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:16:16.056 – 00:17:00.611)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Feeling as though she were in exam conditions probably affected her capacity to understand vocabulary. She can't provide a clear reason for copying and pasting chunks of feedback text to use them as the basis for writing her answers. Consistent with her feeling that she's doing some kind of exam, she might be (consciously or unconsciously) 'cheating' by looking at the feedback first and copying and pasting from it.</p>

<p>to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as  (LF-E 00:43:44.600 – 00:46:01.900)</p>		
<p>F (Speaking through the videoconference audio) Excuse me, teacher. T (teacher audio not available) F Mmm. In activity 1 (switches to Spanish) of the second video (switches back to English) I don't understand T (teacher audio not available) F (nods and listens to teacher through her headphones) No, is... uh-uh. One Topic 1... is Stage 4: Practise... State 2: Practise. T (teacher audio not available) F I don't understand activity 1 T (teacher audio not available) F Ah, OK. Is practice...? T (teacher audio not available) F Practise pronunciation? T (teacher audio not available) F Thank you, teacher.  (LF-E 00:57:30.165 – 00:59:31.435)</p>	<p>T (mumbles) Here you tell me that you don't understand activity one... T We'll go back to what you were saying about growing up in a moment... Er... It's interesting that you use English to communicate with me, you're aware of it or it just happened? F It just happened, but there were things that I didn't know how to link, as I was telling you, so I said: let me tell him in Spanish because otherwise he's not going to be able to answer my question but the little [English] I know I tried to use it for instance I asked with the little I know.  (LF-SR 00:27:10.780 – 00:27:57.144)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> She can ask questions in English. This might be proof that she can speak better than she can write, read or listen (and of course grammar is still a problem as she refers to not knowing how to 'link' again).</p>
	<p>T And on the other hand, did it have any other effect, I mean the video, on you? Positive, negative... F Mmm... the truth is I despaired because I couldn't understand her with that speed, because she talked so fast. So I was desperate because I couldn't understand. T That was slightly negative, right?  (LF-SR 01:08:31.455 – 01:08:46.530)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> Listening comprehension problems prevented her from understanding most of Sam's video provided as input.</p>

**Learner-Participant F**      **Dimension:**  
**Focus on meaning - focus on form**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>F (She comes back to her workstation carrying two notebooks) (She props up the notebooks in her workstation, attaches the microphones and puts on her headphones)  (LR-E 00:08:16.738 – 00:09:04.844)</p>	<p>T Very soon we'll see, won't we, how you face things, but, your attitude as you were doing the task was not the most common one, if we compare it to the attitude of other people. You came prepared, you had written something down, you had your notebook, didn't you... tell me a bit about you... I think that in, in I was asking you "What is your motivation for doing this task?" I mean, what motivates you and how do you approach it? What's your predisposition? Tell me a bit about that. What kind of attitude did you come here with? F Ah, I was, yes as I told you I was a little nervous... T Uh-huh. F And... but this... but well, before I started looking at my notebook and writing, to come prepared because I never like coming just like that, without anything... but it was that I came feeling nervous and especially the fact that I didn't know if I was going to answer them properly or not, and especially if I was going to write properly.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> She mentions 'answering properly' as a source of anxiety and then she clarifies that she means writing properly. This shows concern about using 'proper' English, that is, with form and observing rules of grammaticality.</p>

	(LF-SR 00:01:28.172 – 00:02:39.929)	
	<p>F It was that, more than anything else.</p> <p>T Yes, at some point [in the video] you say "I am very very nervous", don't you?</p> <p>F Yes, yes (laughing).</p> <p>T What made you feel nervous?</p> <p>F Not the video, that was what surprised me, because making the video was not making me nervous, it was not being able to answer [the question]... not writing [the answers] properly because that's my weakness, writing.</p> <p>T Writing.</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T So, you felt nervous because you were afraid or insecure?</p> <p>F Yes, insecure above all.</p> <p>T So... what is the obstacle when you have to write? What causes you problems?</p> <p>F Mmm... It's especially when I have to use 'to', 'at' and all that. I try to write the sentence following the guidelines that they have taught me but there are things that I'm not good at because using 'to' and 'at' is something I still forget to include so that's what I find harder.</p> <p>F The verbs, I do understand when they have to be in the past, present continuous and all that but some are harder, [making sure] that all the composition has a sequence.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:02:39.929 – 00:03:51.954)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b></p> <p>Again, she refers to 'writing properly' as a concern of hers.</p>


Learner-Participant F L1-L2		Dimension:
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>T (Teacher videoconference audio not available)</p> <p>F (Speaking into the microphone attached to her) Teacher (awaits for teacher response through videoconference) I don't understand question (reads from the screen) 'How does meeting a new person make you feel?' (Listens to teacher reply) So-so (laughs) (turns around to look in the teacher's direction, towards the reception area) No, OK (reads from the screen) 'When you meet somebody for the first time what do you say and do?' (switches to Spanish) What I replied is (switches back to English; reads from the screen) 'Hello! My name's [name deleted]. What's your name? Where are you from? Nice to meet you' (listens to teacher reply) Ah, OK. I feel... mmm (👁️ goes to the Google translate window; 🗂️ looks up the English word for 'emoción' [excitement]; 🗂️ looks up 'alegría' [happiness]; 🗂️ then 'I feel' twice; 👁️ goes to task, 👁️ goes to feedback</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b></p> <p>Although she was being understood correctly, at one point learner F decides to switch to Spanish while seeking support from the teacher through the videoconference, only to go back to English almost immediately. This is a fairly long segment of interaction between the teacher and the learner where she only uses Spanish at a very specific point for a very short time.</p>





<p>window, and back to the task and speaks to herself) I feel... (she seems to be looking for the word she's missing on the page; sighs and speaks to teacher through videoconference audio) I feel very happy (using a rising intonation, as though unsure)</p> <p>(Types: 'I feel very happy...') Ah, OK. Thank you teacher (speaking to teacher after hearing his instructions through videoconference)</p> <p>( goes to <i>Google translate</i> window; speaks to herself) I feel hap... ( and types 'I feel happy')</p> <p>( goes back to task window and types: '... happy to meeting a new person because is interes...') (speaks to herself) because interesting</p> <p>(LF-E 00:19:00.000 - 00:25:15.990)</p>		
<p>Excuse me, teacher. (waits for reply) The question what are the main things she talks about in her video (switches to Spanish) my answer is (reading from screen; in English) She tells us her name, about her college, her favourite drinks and snack (rising her intonation as if unsure) mmm (switches to Spanish again) should I still say something else? or (switches back to English) is complete? (listens to reply) Ah, OK. Thank you (sighs) (reads the next question aloud to herself) what are you going to talk about...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:41:28.715 - 00:42:16.980)</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b> She uses very little Spanish. It's as though she didn't need to resort to Spanish at all.</p>
<p>F (Speaking through the videoconference audio) Excuse me, teacher. T (teacher audio not available) F Mmm. In activity 1 (switches to Spanish) of the second video (switches back to English) I don't understand T (teacher audio not available) F (nods and listens to teacher through her headphones) No, is... uh-uh. One Topic 1... is Stage 4: Practise... State 2: Practise. T (teacher audio not available) F I don't understand activity 1 T (teacher audio not available) F Ah, OK. Is practice...? T (teacher audio not available) F Practise pronunciation? T (teacher audio not available) F Thank you, teacher.</p> <p>(LF-E 00:57:30.165 – 00:59:31.435)</p>	<p>T (mumbles) Here you tell me that you don't understand activity one... T We'll go back to what you were saying about growing up in a moment... Er... It's interesting that you use English to communicate with me, you're aware of it or it just happened? F It just happened, but there were things that I didn't know how to link, as I was telling you, so I said: let me tell him in Spanish because otherwise he's not going to be able to answer my question but the little [English] I know I tried to use it for instance I asked with the little I know.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:27:10.780 – 00:27:57.144)</p>	<p><b>12.03.2012</b> Again, she uses very little Spanish at a specific point only. In the SR session, she argues that she used Spanish when she was afraid that communication with the teacher would break down (again her reason is her alleged problems with 'linking' language – lack of grammar basis? – this is a common problem local learners report as having). She assumes I won't understand, even though I didn't give any signs of not understanding. Yet, she made the effort of using mostly English.</p>

<p>F (Talking to teacher through videoconference audio) Excuse me, teacher.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F (switches to Spanish) I completed the topics but the answers were not saved.  F Ah, OK.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F Ah, OK.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F Ah, OK. Thank you, teacher.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F (later on) Excuse me.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F (switches to Spanish) I completed topic 1; topic 2 is like the answers, right?  T (Teacher audio not available)  F (in Spanish) Yes, activity 2.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F Ah, OK.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F Uh-huh.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F Ah, OK. Uh-huh.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F Ah, OK, so I already completed the answers. Activity 1 is complete. I should proceed to the video.  T (Teacher audio not available)  F Bye, teacher.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:06:35.679 – 01:08:28.239)</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b>  It's not easy for her to give the reference of where she's at in the task. That's probably why she uses Spanish here.</p>
<p>F (talking to teacher through videoconference; in Spanish) No, I'm still doing the video. Eh, teacher, I already recorded one [video] and I saved it on the desktop, but here I get - where it says <i>IM for Skype</i> - it says 'time: 03 s' so it's not a problem that I saved it on the desktop? I just saved it to watch it, but I'm going to record it a few more times. (teacher audio not available)  Ah, OK. Ah, OK. Good, thank you, teacher.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:32:23.848 – 01:33:03.914)</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b>  In this case, she's using English when asking a technical question.</p>
<p>F (In Spanish; talking to teacher through videoconference audio) Teacher, I finished.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:44:24.872 – 01:45:02.811)</p>		<p><b>12.03.2012</b>  As this is not very relevant to the task, just letting the teacher know about having completed the task, she uses Spanish.</p>

**Learner-Participant F Dimension: Transfer of digital routines**


Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>F (  She clicks on the phonetic transcript</p>	<p>T Yes, here, what I notice here is that you immediately go to these symbols, it's like you</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>  This is an example of</p>

<p>expecting some interactivity that doesn't exist)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:54:32.079 – 00:54:39.114)</p>	<p>wanted to copy them. Well, I got the feeling that you said, what is this, I have to look it up in <i>Google translate</i>. Look at it to see if you agree with that. It's just a suspicion.</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T Now you move on to the next section... Here's the video again, right? (mumbles)</p> <p>F It's just that I remembered these [phonetic symbols] because that's how they appear in books, it's the intonation...</p> <p>T Yes.</p> <p>F The pronunciation.</p> <p>T And now you get to this part and I feel that you're trying to copy it. And here's where you click.</p> <p>F It's just that... (points at the screen).</p> <p>T What is it that you want to...?</p> <p>F No. I just thought that a window would open, because I hadn't read all the instructions yet.</p> <p>T Were you trying to open like an exercise or a video?</p> <p>F I thought that it was a video (nods).</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:22:11.290 – 00:23:36.514)</p>	<p>expectations the learner has that there must be some kind of interactivity behind the phonetic transcript image. This is probably coming from her own prior digital experiences. It's interesting to see how I wouldn't have been able to work out her intentions without the SR data. She's also transferring knowledge she has about phonetic transcripts from her work with textbooks. So there is a positive transfer of knowledge from another type of media (print, in this case). However, the same kind of transcript in this digital medium raises the expectation of watching a video.</p>
<p>F (  opens Start &gt; Search but  types 'grabadora de sonidos' [sound recorder] in the wrong place and an irrelevant web page opens in the window)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:00:16.258 – 01:00:22.891)</p>	<p>F Yes, yes, yes. Well even... well, I had already understood that in this section you had to see how she pronounced it and I had to pronounce it, but, then if you notice I went to 'Start' and I couldn't find...</p> <p>T You couldn't find the Sound recorder...</p> <p>F No.</p> <p>T ... and you read very carefully, you take your time... That's something that really caught my attention...</p> <p>F Yes. Ah, I always read that way.</p> <p>T That's part... And why are you like that? Because let me tell you that out of ten participants you're probably the only one who has prepared something... [the only one] that brings her notebook and takes all the time in the world. Somehow in my experience you are an exception in what I've observed but to me this is the right thing to do, I must confess that if I did it [the task] I would do it this way. I would have something prepared in my notebook. What makes you be like that, where do that attitude and way of working come from?</p> <p>F It's just that I've never like being... I've always liked being organised and keeping some sort of... control because I've never liked arriving without anything. I like getting there prepared and knowing what I'm going to do. So, since I knew that it was going to be something in English, then I had my notes with me and my notebook to write down something if I didn't understand it and also I had prepared the video [presentation] because if... It's hard enough speaking, so I need some basis to do it properly. So, it's always like this, it's not just here, I'm always like this.</p> <p>T Where does that come from?</p> <p>F Well, I don't know, perhaps it's because since I was a little child I have had to grow up quickly and be organised and stuff and especially because I have worked already.</p> <p>T OK, I need to know a bit more about that. What</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b></p> <p>In this case, I expected her to have used the Search function of the Windows environment before and therefore to have no problem to find the Sound recorder easily. But it wasn't the case. I wonder why? Is it because this is an XP machine?</p>

	<p>has made you grow up?                  F For example, at home I've had many problems with my parents. Well, my parents have, there have been a lot of problems, so since I was a child I've had to work, well, not work a lot kind of thing...                  T At home?                  F No.                  T Out there.                  F Yes, out there. For example, I began to work when I was 14 as a telephone assistant. Yes, I was the receptionist and then I kept changing jobs so that has made me grow up because in my last job I was... (she stops talking and watches the video; both F and T watch the video)</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:23:55.274 – 00:26:22.808)</p> <hr/> <p>T Yes, this is the problem. I was looking for it on the internet and I couldn't find it. To find it you had to click on the option and type the file and the results [of the search] appear here.                  F Yes, yes, yes.                  T So that's why somehow they assume that you had already done this, so since you can't find the Sound recorder you just continue, you move on...                  F Yes, because of the time, because when I began looking at the time...                  T Here you move to this other section by which time you should have recorded your video already.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:29:02.670 – 00:29:40.927)</p>	
	<p>T You didn't visualise who the audience was?                  F Only after I watched then I did want to put it up on <i>YouTube</i>. No please! I wrote (laughs).                  T And, why not?                  F It's like because I'm still embarrassed. But it's strange because I love meeting people and I've always liked it. Yes, meeting new people and all that, making friends, but not with great masses [of people], no.                  T Yes, I recently put up my first video on <i>YouTube</i>. It's about my research but, phew, I thought long and hard about it. But I put it up and I didn't like it. I took it down and I did it again. I put it up and it takes so long. I thought, who's watching this? But I don't appear in the video.</p> <p>(LF-SR 01:03:26.069 – 01:03:55.348)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  What's interesting about her comment is that it stands in sharp contrast to what Sam says in the <i>YouTube</i> video provided as input. Sam has grown tired of the routine of having to introduce herself to people in the real world, so she's decided to take action and do it 'once and for all' in the digital world by posting a <i>YouTube</i> video. She wants it to be available for the masses. Learner F is not prepared to take that kind of step. Unsurprising, I would say, considering the lack of security prevalent in Mexico at the time of the study, the effects of which are obvious elsewhere in her comments during the SR session.</p>

<p><b>Learner-Participant F</b>                      <b>Dimension:</b>  <b>Technological affordances</b></p>			
<p><b>Experiment data</b></p>	<p><b>SR data</b></p>	<p><b>Comments</b></p>	
<p>F Ah, OK.                  T The problem is that now since the internet is</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Teacher explains to learner</p>	






<p>not working well...                  F Oh, no! (concerned) Ah, teacher, and the email messages you sent me yesterday I couldn't open them.                  (LF-E 00:01:26.296 – 00:01:31.053)</p>		<p>that the internet is not working well. She reacts somewhat concerned.</p>
<p>T I'm going to check that to see what the problem was. Look, now the internet is not working but there are other dictionaries. Some people like using <i>Google translate</i> and you can also get it there, and then here on this side (pointing to the shelves behind them) we have dictionaries, they are here, so you can also use the dictionaries and if you want me to help you with something [I can do that] too.                  F Oh, no! (panics about the internet issue)                  (LF-E 00:01:46.996 – 00:02:03.896)</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Learner panics as it becomes obvious that she will not be able to use the recommended online dictionary because of local connectivity issues. The teacher gives her the option of using print dictionaries shelved behind her.</p>
<p>(She just began work with the task. She moves on to the next section, Learning outcomes. She opens <i>Google Chrome</i> and tries to open the OALD's online page, but it's not working. She then opens <i>Google translate</i> in the same browser window. She goes back to the task and goes back to the previous Introduction section. Copies a whole paragraph and pastes it in <i>Google translate</i>. The translation into Spanish is fairly accurate. She reads it and goes back to the task window.)                  (LF-E 00:09:46.652 - 00:11:42.294)</p>	<p>T You mean connecting words, right? So that it is accurate or it makes sense too. OK, well here unfortunately the dictionary I suggested was not available so you had to resort to the translator. How did you feel using Google translate?                  F Well, what happens is I had to translate word by word because it doesn't... it doesn't seem to link words. Just like me! (laughs) So, well, it's only for individual words but I don't feel that the translator is terribly good...                  T Not very good then...                  F No, but it did help me. I could, for instance (pointing at the screen) I'm translating a sentence I did not understand at all.                  T Yes... and it looked like it did help you to understand. For instance, the translation helped you a lot with that sentence in particular, I think.                  F Yes, yes, yes, yes it helped me. In fact I didn't know that my computer was being recorded. I just realised.                  (LF-SR 00:03:52.250 - 00:04:57.730)</p>	<p><b>05.10.2011</b>                  She tries to use the recommended online <i>Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary</i> but local DNS problems prevent her from accessing that particular website. She then decides to go to <i>Google translate</i> and begins by translating a whole sentence from the Introduction section.</p>
<p>F (She types answer to question 4: 'Yes, I like video').                  F (clicks on 'Help' and reads) (clicks on 'Credits') (clicks on 'Topic 2') (clicks on 'Q1_feedback' from 'Topic 2') (clicks on 'Topic 1' to go back to the task)                  (LF-E 01:05:41.543 – 01:06:27.036)</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  This is an example of how constraints in the platform affect learner experience. Moodle in OpenLearn didn't allow me to include just one topic in the menu with all the task's sections in it, nor did it allow me to conceal the feedback links, which the learner clicks on to her confusion.</p>
<p>F (Talking to teacher through videoconference audio) Excuse me, teacher.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F (switches to Spanish) I completed the topics but the answers were not saved.                  F Ah, OK.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F Ah, OK.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F Ah, OK. Thank you, teacher.</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  This is another example of how the constraints of the platform are affecting learner behaviour. In this case, she's confused because her answers had been deleted from the textboxes. Keeping them in the textboxes was not</p>








<p>T (Teacher audio not available)                  F (later on) Excuse me.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F (switches to Spanish) I completed topic 1; topic 2 is like the answers, right?                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F (in Spanish) Yes, activity 2.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F Ah. OK.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F Uh-huh.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F Ah, OK. Uh-huh.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F Ah, OK, so I already completed the answers. Activity 1 is complete. I should proceed to the video.                  T (Teacher audio not available)                  F Bye, teacher.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:06:35.679 – 01:08:28.239)</p>		<p>accepted on the platform. She's also seeking confirmation that the irrelevant feedback links that could not be hidden are indeed irrelevant.</p>
<p>F (  clicks on 'Save' to save her video file) (video file begins compiling but an error message appears)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:34:59.154 – 01:35:23.207)</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Recording tool error. The tool worked well subsequently.</p>

<b>Learner-Participant F</b> <b>Dimension:</b> <b>Being camera-shy</b>			
<b>Experiment data</b>	<b>SR data</b>	<b>Comments</b>	
	<p>F It was that, more than anything else.                  T Yes, at some point [in the video] you say "I am very very nervous", don't you?                  F Yes, yes (laughing).                  T What made you feel nervous?                  F Not the video, that was what surprised me, because making the video was not making me nervous, it was not being able to answer [the question]... not writing [the answers] properly because that's my weakness, writing.                  T Writing.                  F Uh-huh.                  T So, you felt nervous because you were afraid or insecure?                  F Yes, insecure above all.                  T So... what is the obstacle when you have to write? What causes you problems?                  F Mmm... It's especially when I have to use 'to', 'at' and all that. I try to write the sentence following the guidelines that they have taught me but there are things that I'm not good at because using 'to' and 'at' is something I still forget to include so that's what I find harder.                  F The verbs, I do understand when they have to be in the past, present continuous and all that but some are harder, [making sure] that all the composition has a sequence.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:02:39.929 – 00:03:51.954)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Surprisingly, she was not at all afraid of the camera.</p>	
	<p>T So... in terms of the noise coming from people and</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b></p>	







	<p>distractions, what would be best for you? How is it... What would be a better situation to be doing the task without these distractions? Would you feel more comfortable working somewhere else or if the space was arranged in a different way?                  F No, it's OK like this... it's just that... well the guy was making noise so I was turning around because I get distracted easily. In fact I liked the location a lot because the workstations don't let people see you so I wasn't so embarrassed about doing my video.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:17:00.611 – 00:17:47.109)</p>	<p>Recording the video in this environment was fine, she claims, because she had sufficient privacy, despite the distraction caused by a nearby user.</p>
	<p>T Do you feel that this video... how did it affect you, watching Sam's video? Did it help you? Did it intimidate you?                  F It helped me to greet, to think that there was an audience.                  T Uh-huh.                  F That was what motivated me: to think that I had an audience?</p> <p>(LF-SR 01:08:22.611 – 01:08:31.455)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  She needed to think of an audience and greet her audience to be able to record her video.</p>







**Learner-Participant F**      **Dimension:**  
**False starts**






Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>F Ah, OK.                  T And finally to record the video we use this tool (  maximising the <i>IMCapture for Skype</i> application window and  then the <i>Skype</i> window) that makes use the video feed from <i>Skype</i> and records from <i>Skype</i>. So, here (  using the pointer to point at the relevant button) clicking on 'Record video' it begins to record and when you finish you click on 'Stop' and a window opens and it tells you 'Convert' and that's it, it compiles and saves the video and it asks you where you want to save and under what name and it also lets you watch it again if you want.                  F Or record it again?                  T Or record it again, yes.                  F And do I delete it there or how do I record it again?                  T If you want to record it again you just close that window...                  F I don't save it...                  T ...that window, you don't save it and you click on 'Record video' again as many times as you like; you click and it records again and again.</p> <p>(LF-E 00:02:30.440 - 00:03:27.490)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b>                  She's already anticipating to have to record the video several times.</p>
<p>F (  clicks on 'Record video') Hello, today I talk a little about me. I am twenty... (sticks out her tongue as she realises that she made a mistake)                  (  clicks on 'Stop recording')</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b>                  false start 1</p>





(LF-E 01:10:32.323 - 01:10:48.001)		
F (  Clicks on 'Record video') Hello, today in a talk little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study an university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like reading, singing, listening to music... I love dancing. Usually... usually go on a Saturday I go to the see... (fakes soft crying)		<b>05.10.2011</b> false start 2
(LF-E 01:12:17.848 - 01:12:53.023)		
F (  Clicks on 'Record video') Hello... hello. I am tell a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading. I like singing. I love swimming. I loves dancing. We usually on Saturdays... usually on Saturdays... (  stops the recording and shakes her head disapprovingly) (fakes soft crying and taps the floor with her feet)		<b>05.10.2011</b> false start 3
(LF-E 01:15:02.869 - 01:15:40.724)		
F (  begins recording again) Hello, today I am talk a little (fakes soft crying as  she stops recording)		<b>05.10.2011</b> false start 4
(LF-E 01:15:52.717 - 01:16:06.787)		
F Hello, today I'm talking little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading. I love singing. And I... I like swimming. I love... I love... (sighs, deflated; shakes her head disapprovingly)		<b>05.10.2011</b> false start 5
(LF-E 01:16:20.790 - 01:16:47.456)		
F Hello, today I am talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I like I... am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like dancing. I like listening to music. I like cooking. I love I love swimming. Usually on Saturdays I go to the I go to the see movies at the (sighs and shakes her head disapprovingly)		<b>05.10.2011</b> false start 6
(LF-E 01:17:20.286 - 01:18:04.037)		
F (  begins recording again) Hello, today I'm talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading I love reading (faking soft crying) (switches to Spanish) Again...		<b>05.10.2011</b> false start 7
(LF-E 01:18:32.646 - 01:18:56.900)		
F (  begins recording) Hello, today I am talk a		<b>05.10.2011</b> false start 8












<p>little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading. I love singing. I like listening to music. I love I love very very dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to the see movies or the mall with 'con' (uses the Spanish word for 'with').</p> <p>(LF-E 01:19:12.913 - 01:19:47.619)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello, I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like sing, reading... (sighs)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:20:04.369 - 01:20:22.995)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 9</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I study... (fakes soft crying) (shakes her whole body in desperation)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:20:43.765 - 01:21:06.679)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 10</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello. Today I am... (sighs) (glances towards reception)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:37.901 - 01:21:46.544)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 11</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am study on the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually, on Saturdays, I go to see movies or the mall with my boyfriend. And the Sundays I go to the visit my grandparents. I love Mexican food. I love to drink orange juice. (showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted], my favourite teddy because boyfriend give it to me. (Showing picture to camera) She is my sister. Her name [name deleted]. My family is very important to me and love them. This story and I hope...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:55.790 - 01:23:00.646)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 12</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I am talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, cooking, listening to music... I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see the movies or on the mall with my boyfriend and Sundays I go to visit my fanparents. (Showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted]. Is my favourite teddy because with me...</p> <p>(  stops recording) (talks to herself) it's because my boyfriend give it to me give it to me.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:23:09.423 - 01:23:56.725)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 13</p>





<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today sis a like it.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:25:35.885 - 01:25:43.657)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 14</p>
<p>F (  she begins recording) Hello! Today I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. Study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies 'con' (uses the Spanish word for 'with' again)...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:25:51.295 - 01:26:27.944)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 15</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I'm talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like... I love singing (sighs) (  stops the recording) (switches to Spanish) I got it wrong (rehearses to herself, in English) I love reading, singing, listening to music, I love dancing.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:26:52.935 - 01:27:16.653)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 16</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I am talking little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I like reading, singing, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies with my boyfriend. And Sundays I go to my visit grandparents. I love Mexican food. I love to drink orange juice. (Showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted]. Is my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give me to me. (Showing picture to camera) She is my sister. Her name [name deleted]. She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me. I love them. This is my story. I hope you like it and thanks. See you!</p> <p>(LF-E 01:27:26.167 - 01:28:35.311)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> This is a successful recording of the entire presentation.</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I'm talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, singing, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies mm with my boyfriend. On Sundays I go to my visit my grandparents. I love Mexican food. I love drink orange juice. (Showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted]. Is my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give it to me. (Showing picture to camera) She is my sister. Her name, [name deleted]. She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me and I love studying. This is my story. I hope liked it. Thanks. See you.</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> This is a much better version of her video presentation. She seems to have learnt and improved a lot in the process.</p>





(LF-E 01:33:33.863 - 01:34:36.709)		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I'm talk little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, singing, listening to music, cooking... I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see the movies with my boyfriend. I go and mm</p> <p>Sundays... (sighs) (  stops recording) (scratches her head) (turns around)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:35:47.126 - 01:36:18.817)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 17</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I'm talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am a study at university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, singing, listening to music, cooking. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see the movies or the mall with my boyfriend. I on Sunday I go to the visit my grandparents. I love the Mexican food I love to drink orange juice. (Showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted]. Is my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give it to me. (Showing picture to camera) She is my sister. Her name, [name deleted]. She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me. I love them. This is my story. I hope you liked it. Thank you. See you.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:36:27.259 - 01:37:29.904)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Again, this is a complete recording of the entire presentation. She's getting more and more fluent and accurate the more she records.</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like reading, singing, listening to listening, cooking... Ah, and I love dancing.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:40:35.561 - 01:41:04.304)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> false start 18</p>
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like reading, singing, listening to music... I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies or the mall with my boyfriend. And Sundays I go to visit my grandparents. (Showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted] my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give it to me. (Showing a picture to camera) She is my sister. She- her name is... She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me. I love them. This is my story. I hope you liked it. Thank you. See you.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:41:12.210 - 01:42:05.743)</p>		<p><b>05.10.2011</b> Another complete version of the presentation. Very confident.</p>

Learner-Participant F Mental notes – written notes	Dimension:	
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>F (She comes back to her workstation carrying two notebooks) (She props up the notebooks in her workstation, attaches the microphones to herself and puts on her headphones)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:08:16.760 – 00:08:48.880)</p>		
<p>F (  Types her answer to question 3 as she checks her notebook notes: 'Hola !! I'm 21 years old. I'm from mexico. I love mexican food and loves to drink orange juice')</p> <p>(LF-E 00:49:27.229 – 00:50:47.897)</p>		
<p>F (She's poised to click on the 'record video' button) (picks up her notebook and reads; turns around to glance towards the reception area; tears off a page and reads from it; she begins to read aloud from the page to herself) Today I am talking, talking about me. No, today I am telling... Hello, today... Hello, today...today I am talking about me... little little little... Hello, today I am talking...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:08:56.982 – 01:10:32.323)</p>		
<p>F (  clicks on 'Record video') Hello, today I talk a little about me. I am twenty... (sticks out her tongue as she realises that she made a mistake...)</p> <p>(  clicks on 'stop recording')</p> <p>(LF-E 01:10:32.323 – 01:10:48.001)</p>		
<p>F (rehearses out loud) I am 20 years... 20 years old. I am... I study at the university. I am very friend... friendly... Hello... hello... hello today I am talking a little... Hello today I am talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am from Mexico. I study at the university... I study... I take... at the university... I am very... I am very friendly. I am [inaudible] I am very friendly. I'm entrepreneurial. I like reading, singing, listening to music</p> <p>(LF-E 01:11:16.409 – 01:12:17.848)</p>		
<p>F (  Clicks on 'Record video') Hello, today in a talk little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study an university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like reading, singing, listening to music... I love dancing. Usually... usually go on a Saturday I go to the see... (fakes soft crying)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:12:17.848 – 01:12:53.023)</p>		
<p>F (She's poised to click on 'Record video' but begins rehearsing to herself by reading from her notes) I study in... [inaudible] I'm going to talk a</p>		






<p>little about me. I'm 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am from Mexico. I am studying to the to the to the university... at the at the at the university study at the university at the university at the at the at the at the university... I am very friendly and entrepreneurial I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like singing I like singing reading , listening to music listening to music... I love and I love and I love dancing Usually usually on Saturdays usually on Saturdays I go I go to see movies I go to see movies I go to see movies or or to the mmm or to the the mall will my or to the mall or to the mall with my with me boyfriend. And Sundays I go to visit my grandparents. . I love Mexican food I love Mexican food I love to drink orange juice. I love Mexican food. I love I love drink I love to drink I love to drink I love to drink orange juice. She's my sister. Her name's [name deleted]...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:13:06.557 – 01:15:02.869)</p>		
<p>F (  Clicks on 'Record video') Hello... hello. I am tell a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading. I like singing. I love swimming. I loves dancing. We usually on Saturdays... usually on Saturdays... (stops the recording and shakes her head disapprovingly) (fakes soft crying and taps the floor with her feet)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:15:02.869 – 01:15: 40.724)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording again) Hello, today I am talk a little (fakes soft crying as  she stops recording)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:15:52.717 – 01:16:06.787)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording again) Hello, today I'm talking little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading. I love singing. And I... I like swimming. I love... I love... (sighs, deflated; shakes her head disapprovingly)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:16:20.790 – 01:16:47.456)</p>		
<p>F (rehearsing out loud as she reads from her notes) I love danding reading signing studying listening to music Usually on Saturday usually usually usually on Saturdays I go to see the movies...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:16:55.161 – 01:17:20.286)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording again) Hello, today I am talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am</p>		

<p>from Mexico. I study at the university. I like I... am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like dancing. I like listening to music. I like cooking. I love I love swimming. Usually on Saturdays I go to the I go to the see movies at the (sighs and shakes her head disapprovingly)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:17:20.286 – 01:18:04.037)</p>		
<p>F (looks unhappy) (gets ready to begin recording again) (begins rehearsing aloud) Hello, today I am (inhales)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:18:04.037 – 01:18:32.646)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording again) Hello, today I'm talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading I love reading (faking soft crying) (switches to Spanish) Again...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:18:32.646 – 01:18:56.900)</p>		
<p>F (rehearsing aloud) I like singing, cooking, listening... listening to music [inaudible]</p> <p>(LF-E 01:18:56.900 – 01:19:12.913)</p>		
<p>F (  Begins recording) Hello, today I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading. I love singing. I like listening to music. I love I love very very dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to the see movies or the mall with 'con' (uses the Spanish word for 'with')</p> <p>(LF-E 01:19:12.913 – 01:19:47.619)</p>		
<p>F (rehearsing aloud) is my favourite teddy... teddy because my boyfriend give it to me.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:19:47.619 – 01:20:04.369)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello, I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like sing, reading... (sighs)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:20:04.369 – 01:20:22.995)</p>		
<p>F (shakes her head disapprovingly) (scratches her head) (sighs) (reads from her notes)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:20:23.263 – 01:20:43.765)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I study... (fakes soft crying)</p>		



<p>(shakes her whole body in desperation)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:20:43.765 – 01:21:06.679)</p>		
<p>F (rehearsing as she reads from her notes) I like swimming, reading, listening... Hello, today today I am talking a little about me. I love reading I love reading, listening to music I like reading singing singing listening I like reading cooking listening to music ah I love dancing...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:06.679 – 01:21:37.901)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello. Today I am... (sighs) (glances towards reception)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:37.901 – 01:21:46.544)</p>		
<p>F (rehearsing) today I am talking a little...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:46.544 – 01:21:55.790)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I am study on the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually, on Saturdays, I go to see movies or the mall with my boyfriend. And the Sundays I go to the visit my grandparents. I love Mexican food. I love to drink orange juice. (showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted], my favourite teddy because boyfriend give it to me. (showing picture to camera) She is my sister. Her name [name deleted]. My family is very important to me and love them. This story and I hope...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:21:55.790 – 01:23:00.646)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I am talking a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, cooking, listening to music... I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see the movies or on the mall with my boyfriend and Sundays I go to visit my fanparents. (showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted]. Is my favourite teddy because with me... (  stops recording) (talks to herself) it's because my boyfriend give it to me give it to me.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:23:09.423 – 01:23:56.725)</p>		
<p>F (rehearses by reading aloud from notes) Usually on Saturdays I go to see. Usua... usually usually usually on Saturdays I go to see movies. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies or to mall or usually on Saturdays I go to see movies and Sundays I go to I go to visit my grandparents. Movies with my boyfriend. I usually usually on Saturdays I go to see movies</p>		

<p>with my boyfriend with my boyfriend. And Saturdays I go to visit my grandparents. This is is [name deleted] my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give me to me. give it to me. This is [name deleted] my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give it to me. Mmm give it to me. (picking up the picture) She's my sister. Her name he name's her name is [name deleted]. She loves play soccer. She loves to play soccer. She loves to play soccer. She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me and love them. And I love them. My family is very important to me and I love them. And I and I love them. This is my story. I hope liked it. Thanks. Goodbye.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:23:57.931 – 01:25:35.885)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today sis a like it.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:25:35.885 – 01:25:43.657)</p>		
<p>F (  she begins recording) Hello! Today I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. Study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies 'con' (uses the Spanish word for 'with' again)...</p> <p>(LF-E 01:25:51.295 – 01:26:27.944)</p>		
<p>F (rehearsing) Usually usually on Saturdays I go to see movies with my boyfriend with my boyfriend. And Sundays I go to visit my grandparents.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:26:32.969 – 01:26:52.935)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I'm talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like... I love singing (sighs) (  stops the recording) (switches to Spanish) I got it wrong (rehearses to herself) I love reading, singing, listening to music, I love dancing.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:26:52.935 – 01:27:16.653)</p>		
<p>F (begins recording) Hello! Today I am talking little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I like reading, singing, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies with my boyfriend. And Sundays I go to my visit grandparents. I love Mexican food. I love to drink orange juice. (showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted]. Is my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give me to me. (showing picture to camera) She is my sister. Her name [name deleted]. She loves to play soccer. My</p>		



<p>family is very important to me. I love them. This is my story. I hope you like it and thanks. See you!</p> <p>(LF-E 01:27:26.167 – 01:28:35.311)</p>		
<p>F (rehearses) [inaudible]</p> <p>(LF-E 01:33:24.282 – 01:33:33.863)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I'm talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, singing, cooking, listening to music. I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies mm with my boyfriend. On Sundays I go to my visit my grandparents. I love Mexican food. I love drink orange juice. (showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted]. Is my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give it to me. (showing picture to camera) She is my sister. Her name, [name deleted]. She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me and I love studying. This is my story. I hope liked it. Thanks. See you.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:33:33.863 – 01:34:36.709)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I'm talk little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I love reading, singing, listening to music, cooking... I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see the movies with my boyfriend. I go and mm</p> <p>Sundays... (sighs) (  stops recording) (scratches her head) (turns around)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:35:47.126 – 01:36:18.817)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I am talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I lke reading, singing, listening to listening, cooking... Ah, and I love dancing.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:40:35.561 – 01:41:04.304)</p>		
<p>F (  begins recording) Hello! Today I talk a little about me. I am 21 years old. I am from Mexico. I study at the university. I am very friendly and entrepreneurial. I like reading, singing, listening to music... I love dancing. Usually on Saturdays I go to see movies or the mall with my boyfriend. And Sundays I go to visit my grandparents. (showing teddy to camera) This is [name deleted] my favourite teddy because my boyfriend give it to me. (showing a picture to camera) She is my sister. She- her</p>		





















<p>name is... She loves to play soccer. My family is very important to me. I love them. This is my story. I hope you liked it. Thank you. See you.</p> <p>(LF-E 01:41:12.210 – 01:42:05.743)</p>		
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Learner-Participant F Using a dictionary		Dimension:
Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>F And, how do you call it, for example if I have any doubts about a word and stuff, isn't there a dictionary or something?</p> <p>T Yes, look. Here you have a couple of dictionaries that I recommend.</p> <p>F Ah, OK.</p> <p>T The problem is that now since the internet is not working well...</p> <p>F Oh, no! (concerned) Ah, teacher, and the email messages you sent me yesterday I couldn't open them.</p> <p>T It didn't work.</p> <p>F No, and I clicked on the link you gave me and it wouldn't open the page. And then it said: If the link doesn't open follow the instructions and I followed them but it wouldn't open either.</p> <p>T I'm going to check that to see what the problem was. Look, now the internet is not working but there are other dictionaries. Some people like using <i>Google translate</i> and you can also get it there, and then here on this side (pointing to the shelves behind them) we have dictionaries, they are here, so you can also use the dictionaries and if you want me to help you with something [I can do that] too.</p> <p>F And I'm going to be answering these (pointing at the screen)...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:01:14.800 - 00:02:17.260)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b></p> <p>When I'm giving learner A instructions before she has even started work on the task, one of the first things she asks for is a dictionary, and I show them the dictionary links included in the task. This is quite exceptional behaviour; she's probably the only learner who asked for this (check). Although this is expected behaviour for me.</p>
	<p>T OK. Now then, well I have seen the first half hour of the video so... well, first of all in relation to this part, the beginning [of the video], I wanted to ask you, how did you feel during the experiment, in general? What feelings did you experience?</p> <p>F OK, well, I liked it a lot because I felt supported. I had you on the [videoconference] audio and I could use Google to check things and all that so that was cool but what I found harder was the questions because as I was telling you I couldn't understand them very well. However, well perhaps there was just a word I didn't understand and the word in bold I tried to translate it and that allowed me to translate the whole question, well I mean I translated it.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:00:10.251 – 00:00:58.625)</p>	<p><b>09.10.2011</b></p> <p>She used <i>Google translate</i> to understand vocabulary.</p>
<p>(She just began work with the task.  She moves on to the next section, Learning outcomes.  She opens <i>Google Chrome</i> and</p>	<p>T You mean connecting words, right? So that it is accurate or it makes sense too. OK, well here unfortunately the dictionary I suggested was not available so you had to resort to the translator. How</p>	<p><b>09.10.2011</b></p> <p>She tries to use the recommended online Oxford Advanced Learner's</p>

<p> tries to open the OALD's online page, but it's not working.  She then opens <i>Google translate</i> in the same browser window.  She goes back to the task and  goes back to the previous Introduction section.  Copies a whole paragraph and  pastes it in <i>Google translate</i>. The translation into Spanish is fairly accurate. She reads it and  goes back to the task window.)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:09:46.652 - 00:11:42.294)</p>	<p>did you feel using Google translate?                  F Well, what happens is I had to translate word by word because it doesn't... it doesn't seem to link words. Just like me! (laughs) So, well, it's only for individual words but I don't feel that the translator is terribly good...                  T Not very good then...                  F No, but it did help me. I could, for instance (pointing at the screen) I'm translating a sentence I did not understand at all.                  T Yes... and it looked like it did help you to understand. For instance, the translation helped you a lot with that sentence in particular, I think.                  F Yes, yes, yes, yes it helped me. In fact I didn't know that my computer was being recorded. I just realised.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:03:52.250 - 00:04:57.730)</p>	<p>Dictionary but local DNS problems prevent her from accessing that particular website. She then decides to go to Google translate and begins by translating a whole sentence from the Introduction section.</p>
<p> She moves on to the Learning outcomes section.  She selects all the text as though she was going to copy it all. But then  she deselects the text and tries to read carefully instead. She then  selects the word 'outcomes', copies it and  pastes it in <i>Google translate</i>.  She then moves on to the next section, Before you start)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:11:52.344 - 00:12:53.850)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>                  After moving on to the Learning outcomes section of the task she seems to be tempted to select all the text in the section and have it translated in Google translate. But then thinks better of it, reads and then chooses only the word 'outcomes' to look up in Google translate.</p>
<p>F (Speaking to herself) When you meet, meet somebody, meet somebody (  She selects and copies 'meet somebody' from the question.  Goes to <i>Google translate</i> and  pastes it)  She goes back to the task window) (Speaking to herself; reading from the question) When you meet somebody for the first time, what do you say and do... for the first time.  She selects 'the first time', copies it and  pastes it in <i>Google translate</i>) The first time  then goes back to the task window) When you... Ah, OK! (straightens her back and sits in a more upright position)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:14:45.405 - 00:15:59.239)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>                  She looks up part of the question in Google translate.</p>
<p>T (Teacher videoconference audio not available)                  F (Speaking into the microphone attached to her) Teacher (awaits for teacher response through videoconference) I don't understand question (reads from the screen) 'How does meeting a new person make you feel?' (Listens to teacher reply) So-so (laughs) (turns around to look in the teacher's direction, towards the reception area) No, OK (reads from the screen) 'When you meet somebody for the first time what do you say and do?' (switches to Spanish)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>                  It's interesting to see how, still in conversation with the teacher, while she types her answer, she uses Google translate to find the English expression for 'emoción', but the results are not good enough. Uses Google translate to find English vocab (e.g.,</p>



<p>What I replied is (switches back to English; reads from the screen) 'Hello! My name's [<i>name deleted</i>]. What's your name? Where are you from? Nice to meet you' (listens to teacher reply) Ah, OK. I feel... mmm ( goes to the <i>Google translate</i> window; looks up the English word for 'emoción' [excitement]; looks up 'alegría' [happiness]; then 'I feel' twice; goes to task, goes to feedback window, and back to the task and speaks to herself) I feel... (she seems to be looking for the word she's missing on the page; sighs and speaks to teacher through videoconference audio) I feel very happy (using a rising intonation, as though unsure)</p> <p>(Types: 'I feel very happy...') Ah, OK. Thank you teacher (speaking to teacher after hearing his instructions through videoconference)</p> <p>( goes to <i>Google translate</i> window; speaks to herself) I feel hap... ( and types 'I feel happy')</p> <p>( goes back to task window and types: '... happy to meeting a new person because is interes...') (speaks to herself) because interesting</p> <p>(LF-E 00:19:00.000 - 00:25:15.990)</p>		<p>'interesante' – interesting</p>
<p>F ( moves on to question 2; reads the question to herself) How do you feel... ( types: 'I am very...'; goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'nervous') (speaks to herself) nervous... ( goes back to task window)</p> <p>( types: 'very nervous') ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up what she just wrote 'I am very very nervous') ( goes back to task window and begins reading question 3)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:25:25.990 - 00:26:46.990)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> Looks up 'nerviosa'. She needs it to answer question. Then she uses <i>Google translate</i> to check if her answer to the question is correct by translating what she wrote in English into Spanish.</p>
<p>F (She reads question to herself) I want to introduce... ( selects the word 'myself' and copies it) ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) ( opens feedback pop-up window and reads to herself) want to practise... ( goes to task window) ( goes back to feedback window and speaks to herself as she reads) to make... want to practise ( goes back to task window and types: 'want to</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> Looks up word from question 'myself'.</p>






















<p>practise') ( goes to feedback and reads to herself) practise your English ( goes back to task window, reads to herself) I want to introduce... (and then types: 'because I want to practise my English' after trying to type 'practise speaking English' and deletes it) (sighs) (hums)</p> <p>( goes to a feedback window and reads)</p> <p>( goes to task and clicks on feedback link to question 2 that pops up; closes the pop-up window quickly) ( she then moves on to the next section of the task)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:26:53.056 - 00:30:12.010)</p>		
<p>(After watching the video she is about to click on the feedback to the first video quiz question but she doesn't) (Instead, she selects the word 'things' from the question, copies it and goes to <i>Google translate</i> to look it up)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:36:48.119 - 00:37:10.899)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> She looks up the word 'things' from the question.</p>
<p>F (After reading the feedback to question 1 first, she begins to type her answer: 'she tells...')</p> <p>( goes back to feedback window and reads)</p> <p>( minimises size of feedback window so she can see it while she's typing her answer to question 1) ( continues typing her answer: '... us her name') ( selects and copies 'hometown and her college' from feedback window) ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up)</p> <p>( switches between feedback window and <i>Google translate</i> window twice) (reads to herself from feedback window) about her college experience ( goes back to task window and types: 'about her college experience' as she says it out loud) about her college experience</p> <p>( goes to feedback window and checks the spelling of 'experience' as she says the word out loud) experience ( goes to feedback window and reads out loud) and her favourite drinks ( goes to task window and types 'and her favourite drinks' as she says it out loud) and her favourite drinks ( goes to feedback and reads to herself) snacks ( goes to task</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> She looks up 'hometown' and 'college' from feedback in <i>Google translate</i>.</p>

<p>window and  types 'snacks' as she speaks to herself) snacks (talks to teacher through videoconference) Excuse me, teacher. (waits for reply) The question what are the main things she talks about in her video (switches to Spanish) my answer is (reading from screen) She tells us her name, about her college, her favourite drinks and snack (rising her intonation as if unsure) mmm (still in Spanish) should I still say something else? or (switches back to English) is complete? (listens to reply) Ah, OK. Thank you (sighs) (reads the next question aloud to herself) what are you going to talk about...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:37:56.010 - 00:42:16.980)</p>		
<p>F (  She selects and copies 'anything' from the feedback window)</p> <p>(  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up)</p> <p>(  goes back to task question)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:42:54.140 - 00:43:22.749)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> She looks up 'anything' in Google translate.</p>
<p>F (Another self-access centre user arrives and sits to work at a table behind her to her left) (Talking to herself as she reads from the feedback window) (in Spanish) what thing</p> <p>(switches back to English) 'goes' (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'anything goes')</p> <p>(  goes to the feedback window) (  goes to the task window and  begins typing)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:43:44.658 - 00:44:25.327)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> Looks up 'goes'.</p>
<p>F (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'as long as') (  goes back to feedback window and  selects 'you tell people stuff about you')</p> <p>(  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'as long as you tell people stuff about you';  deletes 'people stuff about you' and  types 'is true' instead; reads to herself) as long as you tell is true (  goes to feedback window and reads) (  goes to <i>Skype</i> and seems to be wanting to type something in text message box for the teacher but doesn't)</p> <p>(  goes back to task window)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:46:01.807 - 00:47:24.753)</p>	<p>F Yes, I think that it would be more comfortable and above all... How do you call it? Well, you also have several reference [materials] at home too...</p> <p>T Yes, when you begin the experiment, I said to you: if you need them here you have some dictionaries but I don't think you used them.</p> <p>F No, and then it just felt easier, and since you told me I had two hours I already felt that I had spent too long on the questions...</p> <p>T You felt that it took you a long time.</p> <p>F At first I didn't realise, but then I began to realise I thought it hadn't taken me so long but it had.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:18:14.177 – 00:18:44.461)</p>	<p><b>09.10.2011</b> Looks up a big chunk of the question and the uses the translator to form her own sentence.</p> <p><b>10.10.2011</b> She didn't use dictionaries because she felt time pressure.</p>
<p>F (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and  types 'she's' as she speaks to herself) she's</p> <p>(  chooses Spanish-to-English translation in</p>	<p>T You continue using <i>Google translate</i>.</p> <p>F Yes, and then what I was telling you is that I was writing it in English and <i>Google</i> was telling me the Spanish so, that's how I could see if was linking the words.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> She thinks that <i>Google translate</i> was helping her check the grammar of her English sentences. I'm not</p>

















<p>Google translate and  types 'rapido' [fast];  she then deletes that and  types 'she's speaking very fast' as she speaks to herself) she's speaking very fast          (  switches translation direction to English-to-Spanish) (  goes to task window where  she types her answer 'she's speaking very fast' as she speaks to herself) she's speaking very fast          (LF-E 00:52:51.043 - 00:53:53.956)</p>	<p>T Exactly.          (LF-SR 00:21:45.897 – 00:22:06.265)</p>	<p>sure this is the case as <i>Google translate</i> is not grammatically reliable.</p>
<p>F (She's reading question 1 in the Stage 3: Review section;  selects and copies 'think about' from the question) (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up; reads English and Spanish versions out loud to herself) Think about - pensar en ello (reads from question to herself) What do you think about it...          (LF-E 01:00:58.535 - 01:01:49.589)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>          Looks up 'think about'.          Basic vocabulary missing.</p>
<p>F (gets ready to answer question but doesn't seem to be able to;  selects and copies 'What do you think about it?' from the question) (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) (  closes two feedback windows she'd used before) (  goes back to task window)          (LF-E 01:01:50.125 - 01:02:22.419)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>          Looks up a bigger chunk as she still doesn't understand the question.</p>
<p>F (  Selects 'learn' from question 3 and copies it) (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) (  goes back to task window)          (LF-E 01:02:54.177 - 01:03:04.696)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>          Looks up 'learn'.</p>
<p>F (  Selects 'this unit' from question 4 and copies it) (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) (sighs)          (LF-E 01:04:28.044 - 01:05:14.609)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>          She looks up 'this unit'.</p>

**Learner-Participant F**      **Dimension:**  
**Using feedback**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>(She reads the first question in the Before you start section.  She opens the feedback for that question and reads it in the pop-up window.  Goes back to the task window.</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>          This is the first question she comes across in the experiment. She reads it, opens the feedback, and</p>


<p>Reads the question again and gets ready to answer the question in the textbox provided)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:13:02.895 - 00:14:24.233)</p>		<p>reads it again. Unexpectedly she reads the feedback before she tries to answer the question.</p>
<p>F (She reads question to herself) I want to introduce... (  selects the word 'myself' and copies it) (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) (  opens feedback pop-up window and reads to herself) want to practise... (  goes to task window) (  goes back to feedback window and speaks to herself as she reads) to make... want to practise (  goes back to task window and  types: 'want to practise') (  goes to feedback and reads to herself) practise your English (  goes back to task window, reads to herself) I want to introduce... (and then  types: 'because I want to practise my English' after trying  to type 'practise speaking English' and  deleting it) (sighs) (hums)</p> <p>(  goes to a feedback window and reads)</p> <p>(  goes to task and  clicks on feedback link to question 2 that pops up;  closes the pop-up window quickly) (  she then moves on to the next section of the task)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:26:53.056 - 00:30:12.010)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> Checks feedback before she answers question.</p>
<p>(After watching the video she is about to click on the feedback to the first video quiz question but she doesn't) (Instead,  she selects the word 'things' from the question, copies it and  goes to <i>Google translate</i> to look it up)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:36:48.119 - 00:37:10.899)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> She was about to check the feedback link before answering the question but doesn't. Why?</p>
<p>(  She goes back to the task and  checks the feedback to question 1 before trying to answer it)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:37:15.321 - 00:37:52.774)</p>	<p>T OK, that's good... There are so many things... Er... here I find it interesting when you are about to answer a question, you often, at least in the beginning, you first read; then you read the feedback and then you answer... your answer is often like a... paraphrase of the feedback. Tell me about that, because... the process I notice is that you read the question, you find it hard to understand it, you have to look up the meaning or translate it and then you go to the feedback, you look at the feedback and then you write something that's quite similar to the feedback. So, I want you to comment on that...</p> <p>F Ah, it's just that, well, first I couldn't understand what that section was about but then when I opened it [the feedback] and then I analysed the question. After analysing the question for ages, I went to... I</p>	<p><b>09.10.2011</b> Looks at feedback before answering question.</p>
















	<p>thought, as I was saying, I thought that those were different options, so, I chose one, uh-huh that's what I thought.  T Ah, OK, I understand.  F Uh-huh.  T OK... I wanted to ask you specifically about one question...  T (mumbles while forwarding the video)  F Uh-huh.  T Then you go to the quiz, and because you're answering questions you go to the video...  T So, here you also go to the feedback...  F It's only now that [I understand], only now. As these are highlighted [possibly referring to the feedback links] I thought that they were options...  T Ah...  F That's why I didn't... as you can see I didn't check it [the feedback] at first because I didn't know, until I clicked on it. So, I thought these were options for me to choose from to answer the question.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:11:37.470 – 00:14:12.642)</p>	
<p>F (After reading the feedback to question 1 first,  she begins to type her answer: 'she tells...')  ( goes back to feedback window and reads)  ( minimises size of feedback window so she can see it while she's typing her answer to question 1) ( continues typing her answer: '... us her name') ( selects and copies 'hometown and her college' from feedback window) ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up)  ( switches between feedback window and <i>Google translate</i> window twice) (reads to herself from feedback window) about her college experience ( goes back to task window and  types: 'about her college experience' as she says it out loud) about her college experience  ( goes to feedback window and checks the spelling of 'experience' as she says the word out loud) experience ( goes to feedback window and reads out loud) and her favourite drinks ( goes to task window and  types 'and her favourite drinks' as she says it out loud) and her favourite drinks ( goes to feedback and reads to herself) snacks ( goes to task window and  types 'snacks' as she speaks to herself) snacks (talks to teacher through videoconference) Excuse me, teacher. (waits for reply) The question what are the main things she talks about in her video (switches to Spanish) my answer is (reading from screen) She tells us her name, about her college, her favourite drinks and snack (rising her intonation as if unsure)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b>  Uses feedback to answer question.</p>

<p>mmm (still in Spanish) should I still say something else? or (switches back to English) is complete? (listens to reply) Ah, OK. Thank you (sighs) (reads the next question aloud to herself) what are you going to talk about...</p> <p>(LF-E 00:37:56.010 - 00:42:16.980)</p>		
<p>F (Reads question out loud to herself) What are you going to talk about... ( opens feedback pop-up window before attempting to answer the question; reads question and drags pop-up window so that she can see it while she types her answer) ( She highlights and copies 'anything' from the feedback window) ( goes to Google translate and looks it up) ( goes back to task question)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:42:19:400 – 00:43:22.780)</p>	<p>T In this part... mmm... the specific question is: What are you going to talk about in your video? It doesn't have to be the same as in Sam's. The first thing is trying to understand the question. I think that you go to the feedback and the feedback tells you: That's good. Anything goes as long as you tell people stuff about you. Here you struggled to understand the feedback. And you open [Google translate] anything goes: todo vale... I have the feeling that you didn't understand this question.</p> <p>F Yes, actually.</p> <p>T Other times you ask me: Teacher, what does this question mean. But there you didn't ask me.</p> <p>F No.</p> <p>T You grabbed the feedback, you pasted it and just changed the wording a bit.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:14:19.878 – 00:15:33.511)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b> Uses the feedback in a way that I did not expect – to make some small changes and use it as her own answer to the question.</p>
<p>F (Reads question out loud to herself) What are you going to talk about... ( opens feedback pop-up window before attempting to answer the question; reads question and drags pop-up window so that she can see it while she types her answer)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:42:32.030 - 00:42:54.140)</p>		<p><b>09.10.2011</b> She checks feedback before answering question.</p>
<p>F ( clicks on feedback link and reads from the feedback pop-up window)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:48:36.711 – 00:49.04.315)</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b> Uses feedback.</p>
<p>F ( moves on to question 4; opens feedback link and reads from it)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:51:13.759 – 00:51:48.197)</p>		<p><b>10.10.2011</b> Reads feedback before answering question.</p>

<b>Learner-Participant F</b> <b>Dimension:</b> <b>Using the video transcript</b>			
Experiment data	SR data	Comments	
<p>F ( Clicks on the 'Video transcript' hyperlink after watching Sam's video; goes to Skype while the transcript opens in a new browser tab, turns around to glance in the direction of the reception area and immediately comes back to the browser; reads the transcript carefully; turns around to glance in the direction of the</p>	<p>T But what you did was you opened the video transcript and there...</p> <p>F Yes, uh-huh.</p> <p>T And there you... You spent quite a long time...</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T ... reading what she was saying, I don't...</p> <p>F Uh-huh.</p> <p>T I don't know if that helped you, if you managed to understand a bit more. In a moment you're going to open the transcript (mumbles).</p>	<p><b>13.03.2012</b> She's probably the only learner who took the time to read the video transcript (check this). She keeps turning around, anxious about other people approaching her, perhaps.</p>	

<p>reception area as footsteps can be heard;   leaves the transcript tab after reading it for about three minutes)                  (LF-E 00:33:13.317 – 00:36:29.158)</p>	<p>F Ah, and then I make a lot of gestures, I don't know if you noticed... (laughs)                  T Do you?                  F Yes, I'm always making a lot of gestures.                  T Mmm...                  T ... Talking about which...                  T Here it is. You see, you come back and here you begin to read...                  F Yes, it helps me a lot to understand better when I can see it.                  T So, it was helpful.                  F Uh-huh.                  T And... what were you saying to me just now?                    (LF-E 00:07:20.180 – 00:08:43.570)</p>	
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






<b>Learner-Participant F</b> <b>Adhering to the task</b>	<b>Dimension:</b>	
<b>Experiment data</b>	<b>SR data</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>F (As she's attempting to answer Question 4 in Quiz: Sam's video section) ( goes back to feedback window and reads to herself) too long ( goes back to task window and types her answer) ... too long. She's... ( goes to <i>Google translate</i> and  types 'she's' as she speaks to herself) she's ( chooses Spanish-to-English translation and  types 'rapido' [fast];  she then deletes that and  types 'she's speaking very fast' as she speaks to herself) she's speaking very fast ( switches translation direction to English-to-Spanish) ( goes to task window where  she types her answer 'she's speaking very fast' as she speaks to herself) she's speaking very fast                  (LF-E 00:52:50.900 – 00:53:53.956)</p>	<p>T You continue using <i>Google translate</i>.                  F Yes, and then what I was telling you is that I was writing it in English and <i>Google</i> was telling me the Spanish so, that's how I could see if was linking the words.                  T Exactly.                    (LF-SR 00:21:45.897 – 00:22:06.265)</p>	<p><b>14.03.2012</b>                  Although she tries to follow the task, she really struggles to understand the vocabulary in some of the questions and feedback. In this case, she couldn't answer the question properly because she simply did not understand it.</p>
<p>( Moves on to Stage 2: Practise;  clicks on the phonetic transcript expecting some interactivity that doesn't exist; turns around to glance in the direction of the reception area)                  F (Speaking through the videoconference audio) Excuse me, teacher. (teacher audio not available) Mmm. In activity 1 (switches to Spanish) of the second video (switches back to English) I don't understand (nods and listens to teacher through her headphones) No, is... uh-uh. One Topic 1... is Stage 4: Practise... (listens to teacher) State 2: Practise. I don't understand activity 1 (listens to teacher) Ah, OK. Is practice...? (listens to teacher) Practise pronunciation? (listens to teacher) Thank you, teacher.</p>		<p><b>14.03.2012</b>                  As most of the other learners, she wasn't sure what she was expected to do in this section. However, unlike most of the other learners, she asks for help from the teacher through the videoconference. Unfortunately, a mistake she makes when trying to find the Sound recorder prevents her from completing Activity 1. She skips Activity 2, which involved recording her</p>

<p>(👤 opens Start &gt; Search but types 'grabadora de sonidos' in the wrong place – in the address bar - and an irrelevant web page opens in the window; 👤 moves on to the next section having completed none of this section)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:54:23.800 – 01:00:51.287)</p>		<p>video.</p>
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<b>Learner-Participant F</b> <b>Language learning orientation</b>	<b>Dimension:</b>	
<b>Experiment data</b>	<b>SR data</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p>F (She reads question to herself) I want to introduce... (👤 selects the word 'myself' and copies it) (👤 goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks it up) (👤 opens feedback pop-up window and reads to herself) want to practise... (👤 goes to task window) (👤 goes back to feedback window and speaks to herself as she reads) to make... want to practise (👤 goes back to task window and 🗣️ types: 'want to practise') (👤 goes to feedback and reads to herself) practise your English (👤 goes back to task window, reads to herself) I want to introduce... (and then 🗣️ types: 'because I want to practise my English' after trying to type 'practise speaking English' and deleting it) (sighs) (hums) (👤 goes to a feedback window and reads) (👤 goes to task and 👤 clicks on feedback link to question 2 that pops up; 👤 closes the pop-up window quickly) (👤 she then moves on to the next section of the task)</p> <p>(LF-E 00:26:53.056 - 00:30:12.010)</p>	<p>F Yes, yes, yes. Well even... well, I had already understood that in this section you had to see how she pronounced it and I had to pronounce it, but, then if you notice I went to 'Start' and I couldn't find...</p> <p>T You couldn't find the Sound recorder...</p> <p>F No.</p> <p>T ... and you read very carefully, you take your time... That's something that really caught my attention...</p> <p>F Yes. Ah, I always read that way.</p> <p>T That's part... And why are you like that? Because let me tell you that out of ten participants you're probably the only one who has prepared something... [the only one] that brings her notebook and takes all the time in the world. Somehow in my experience you are an exception in what I've observed but to me this is the right thing to do, I must confess that if I did it [the task] I would do it this way. I would have something prepared in my notebook. What makes you be like that, where do that attitude and way of working come from?</p> <p>F It's just that I've never like being... I've always liked being organised and keeping some sort of... control because I've never liked arriving without anything. I like getting there prepared and knowing what I'm going to do. So, since I knew that it was going to be something in English, then I had my notes with me and my notebook to write down something if I didn't understand it and also I had prepared the video [presentation] because if... It's hard enough speaking, so I need some basis to do it properly. So, it's always like this, it's not just here, I'm always like this.</p> <p>T Where does that come from?</p> <p>F Well, I don't know, perhaps it's because since I was a little child I have had to grow up quickly and be organised and stuff and especially because I have worked already.</p> <p>T OK, I need to know a bit more about that. What has made you grow up?</p> <p>F For example, at home I've had many problems with my parents. Well, my parents have, there have been</p>	<p><b>14.03.2012</b></p> <p>She seems to have a genuine interest in practising her English guiding her orientation to the task; in other words, she seems to have a language learning orientation to the task. In the SR she explains that she likes to be organised and prepared ahead of taking part in an activity of this kind. The fact that speaking English is 'hard enough' makes her prepare notes to do it 'properly'. All in all she seems to take this seriously and to gear up to give it her best. She claims that her life experience, that is, problems at home and the need to work, have made her mature more quickly and see the value in being organised and preparing things.</p>

	<p>a lot of problems, so since I was a child I've had to work, well, not work a lot kind of thing...</p> <p>T At home?</p> <p>F No.</p> <p>T Out there.</p> <p>F Yes, out there. For example, I began to work when I was 14 as a telephone assistant. Yes, I was the receptionist and then I kept changing jobs so that has made me grow up because in my last job I was... (she stops talking and watches the video; both F and T watch the video)</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:23:55.274 – 00:26:22.808)</p>	
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**Learner-Participant F**      **Dimension:**  
**Success – failure**


Experiment data	SR data	Comments
<p>F (Another self-access centre user arrives and sits to work at a table behind her to her left) (Talking to herself as she reads from the feedback window) (in Spanish) what thing (in English) 'goes' (  goes to <i>Google translate</i> and looks up 'anything goes' (  goes to the feedback window) (  goes to the task window and begins typing)</p> <p>F (The other self-access centre stands up and goes to find help to turn on a TV) (Reading from feedback) That's that's... (  goes to task window and  types her answer) That's very nice. (  goes back to feedback window and reads)</p> <p>F (  goes to feedback window and reads) (  goes to task window and types her answer) Anything (reads it to herself) Anything (  goes to feedback window and reads to herself)</p> <p>Anything (  goes back to task window and talks to herself as  she types 'goes') Anything goes (  goes to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as you tell people... (  goes back to task window and  types 'you tell pe...' as she says it out loud) you tell pe... (the other self-access centre user comes back with helper who switches on the TV) (  F goes back to feedback window and reads to herself) as long as</p>	<p>T At this point to be honest I had a vision of thinking it's as though she were in an exam.</p> <p>F Yes, I felt like in an exam... (laughs)</p> <p>T So, I don't know, you're in an exam, you don't know the question, I mean you don't understand what I'm asking you but you have to write something... You have a place where you have a suggestion and you get that and copy it to...</p> <p>F Oh yes, I do that...</p> <p>T And let's see what happens, right?</p> <p>F Yes, it's just that I hadn't understood the...</p> <p>T And why didn't you ask me... you don't remember?</p> <p>F No, I don't remember why...</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:16:16.056 – 00:17:00.611)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  She admits to feeling as though she were doing an exam.</p>

<p>(LF-E 00:43:44.600 – 00:46:01.900)</p>	<p>T And, why did you feel as though it were an exam?                  F No, no well whenever they ask me to do a questionnaire well especially if it's in English I always feel very concerned, more than in other subjects, I don't know why.                  T So if it's English you almost feel like in an exam by default.                  F Yes, well yes. Well not by default in all cases but for instance I saw the questions and... I wasn't ready to answer questions.                  T So, you feel as though you were in an exam and you didn't know the answer...                  F Yes, especially thinking oh God, I'm going to come out with a low grade and stuff.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:18:45.466 – 00:19:27.810)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  So there seem to be two reasons why she felt this was like an exam: (a) the subject matter, English, which causes more anxiety than others and (b) having questions in the task, which admittedly are exam-like. Her behaviour later on in the task seemed to confirm that she was anxious mainly because of the questions presented to her.</p>
	<p>T And your boyfriend, how does he influence you, in your life, in your studies...?                  F He supports me a lot with English because he's very good at it. Well, he has a lot of... Mmm. How do you call it? His level is very high so, he's always supporting me a lot with English.                  T How's things with him? What do you do, normally?                  F As I was telling you we try to have a conversation in English... Uh-huh. So, when we go to the cinema we try to watch movies in English with subtitles, because of him, and he plays a lot of music in English for me. He also writes comments for me on Facebook in English. Yes, he supports me a lot.                  F Yes, he supports me a lot, especially with English.                  T And your friend, the one who said that to you about the song, does she also support you with English?                  F Yes, what happens is she plays... she plays the guitar, the drums... She plays several instruments, so once we had to sing in English and I like that song very much.                  T What's the name of the song?                  F Kiss me.                  T Kiss me.                  F But I've never taken the time to... what I've always wanted to do with her because we want to sing... I'm going to get it off the internet and then...                  T Then you can record it and put it up on YouTube.                  F Yes.                  F Oh, no. Yes, I want to be recorded really but I'm embarrassed.                  F Actually very few people know that I sing and that I like singing.                  T And why don't you share that with others?                  F A long time ago when I was in secondary school I started having these eating disorders; at that time I used to sing in a band...                  T Oh, and you left the band...                  F Yes, because of sixth form, we went our separate ways after secondary school.                  T And now you don't tell a lot of people about it.                  F No, not many, very few people know. My grandmothers always ask 'Sing, Stephanie, sing' at parties and I (gestures)... Oh no.                  T Why don't you say it?                  F I don't know... Well, to be honest I think that it</p>	<p><b>29.03.2012</b>                  She is ambitious – she wants to do a Master's. She is very concerned about her reputation and public image. So much so that she wants to become an expert at this by doing a Public Image master's and becoming a public relations agent. This is also connected to her earlier comment about having had an eating disorder, perhaps.</p>

	<p>affects like my image (laughs) because I've tried to...                  I don't know, like to be more professional and I feel that it would affect that idea that I'm pursuing.                  T Because people...                  F Uh-huh.                  T You're easily embarrassed.                  T You keep on getting it wrong (referring to her video recording in the experiment).                  F Yes, in fact I care about that a lot because that's what I want to do, I want to do a Master's in Public Image.                  T Wow!                  T So, you're aware that you have an image and you take care of it.                  F Uh-huh.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:54:17.138 – 00:57:03.700)</p>	
	<p>T What were we talking about?                  F Ah, about me studying Public Image.                  T Yes, yes, yes so the image you want to project is that of a serious and professional person.                  F Uh-huh.                  T ... entrepreneurial. And your music talent can't fit in there, nor your dancing. They can't fit.                  F Well, the image... Well, what I am. However, I don't know, I feel like... I still have, apart from that image it's like I was saying in the verbal communication workshop I still find it very hard, the anxiety, the embarrassment and everything, I find it hard to control that in public, so... Actually when I go to gigs with my band I always came out wearing dark glasses and a hat... so that most people wouldn't recognise me. Even when I came down the stage they asked me 'was it you up there?' and they wouldn't believe me.                  T It's a kind of protection.</p> <p>(LF-SR 01:00:17.665 – 01:01:25.402)</p>	<p><b>29.03.2012</b>                  More evidence of her concern about her public image and reputation. She's protecting herself from... what? Failing socially? Having her public image tarnished?</p>

**Learner-Participant F**      **Dimension:**  
**Time pressure**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>F Yes, I think that it would be more comfortable and above all... How do you call it? Well, you also have several reference [materials] at home too...                  T Yes, when you begin the experiment, I said to you: if you need them here you have some dictionaries but I don't think you used them.                  F No, and then it just felt easier, and since you told me I had two hours I already felt that I had spent too long on the questions...                  T You felt that it took you a long time.                  F At first I didn't realise, but then I began to realise I thought it hadn't taken me so long but it had.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:18:14.177 – 00:18:44.461)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  She refers to time constraints as the reason for her non using print dictionaries.</p>
<p>(  opens Start &gt; Search but types 'grabadora de sonidos' in the wrong place – in the address bar - and an irrelevant web page opens in the</p>	<p>T Yes, this is the problem. I was looking for it on the internet and it couldn't find it. To find it you had to click on the option and type the file and the results [of the search] appear here.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Time is again referred to as the reason why she skipped a section, in this</p>

<p>window;  moves on to the next section having completed none of this section)</p> <p>(LF-E 01:00:16.258 – 01:00:51.287)</p>	<p>F Yes, yes, yes.                  T So that's why somehow they assume that you had already done this, so since you can't find the Sound recorder you just continue, you move on...                  F Yes, because of the time, because when I began looking at the time...                  T Here you move to this other section by which time you should have recorded your video already.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:29:02.670 – 00:29:40.927)</p>	<p>case.</p>
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**Learner-Participant F**                      **Dimension:**  
**Personal development opportunities – personal development issues**

Experiment data	SR data	Comments
	<p>F Yes, yes, yes. Well even... well, I had already understood that in this section you had to see how she pronounced it and I had to pronounce it, but, then if you notice I went to Start and I couldn't find...                  T You couldn't find the Sound recorder, and you read very carefully, you take your time... That's something that really caught my attention...                  F No.                  F Yes.                  F Ah, I always read that way.                  T That's part... And why are you like that? Because let me tell you that out of ten participants you're probably the only one who has prepared something... [the only one] that brings her notebook and takes all the time in the world. Somehow in my experience you are an exception in what I've observed but to me this is the right thing to do, I must confess that if I did it [the task] I would do it this way. I would have something prepared in my notebook. What makes you be like that, where do that attitude and way of working come from?                  F It's just that I've never like being... I've always liked being organised and keeping some sort of... control because I've never liked arriving without anything. I like getting there prepared and knowing what I'm going to do. So, since I knew that it was going to be something in English, then I had my notes with me and my notebook to write down something if I didn't understand it and also I had prepared the video [presentation] because if... It's hard enough speaking, so I need some basis to do it properly. So, it's always like this, it's not just here, I'm always like this.                  T Where does that come from?                  F Well, I don't know, perhaps it's because since I was a little child I have had to grow up quickly and be organised and stuff and especially because I have worked already.                  T OK, I need to know a bit more about that. What has made you grow up?                  F For example, at home I've had many problems with my parents. Well, my parents have, there have been a lot of problems, so since I was a child I've had to work, well, not work a lot kind of thing...                  T At home?                  F No.                  T Out there.                  F Yes, out there. For example, I began to work when I</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  Problems at home and having to work are mentioned as factors that made learner F grow up quickly and might explain her behaviour in the experiment.</p>



	<p>was 14 as a telephone assistant. Yes, I was the receptionist and then I kept changing jobs so that has made me grow up because in my last job I was... (she stops talking and watches the video; both F and T watch the video)</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:23:55.274 – 00:26:22.808)</p>	
	<p>T We'll let the video play for a bit while we continue talking. You said you had to work, and I also had to work since I was 13, and it's true that it helps you grow up. Tell me, how old are you?</p> <p>F 21.</p> <p>T If you reflect back on your life, do you think that it was positive or negative to have to work and grow up so quickly?</p> <p>F It was something positive because it has helped me, it has taught me to get on with my life on my own all the time, so, now, for instance, I value things more, everything I carry with me costs me. So, I value things much more. It has helped me to be more organised, to manage my time more. It has taught me many things. For example, er... starting as a telephone assistant was like... Then being a waitress and so on until now. From July to September I worked in the economic development unit in Salamanca, I was working there. So, it's also because you work with people who have an education, so you can't get there without anything. So, this has also helped me, I mean seeing people who are already professional and seeing the way they prepare and all that.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:30:10.943 – 00:31:27.457)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b></p> <p>She claims that working has helped her organise her times and priorities. Educated people in workplaces have acted as role models.</p>
	<p>T And can you manage with everything?</p> <p>F Well, this has helped me to start my own business and now I haven't stopped working because I have a business with some friends, it's an event-decoration business.</p> <p>T Very good. So, this is not very common, is it?</p> <p>F No. I am not normal... (laughs)</p> <p>T Not many young women of 21 do what you do. Are you aware of that?</p> <p>F Yes.</p> <p>T Well, what's your perception? Most young people your age are not doing what you do. Why? Why are they not working? With their own business, helping at home... What's your perception of the other people, your classmates, your friends who don't do what you do?</p> <p>F Well, I don't know. I think that everyone... has to decide what they want to do in life what you harvest is what you... get, isn't it?</p> <p>T Would you recommend people to do the same as you?</p> <p>F No, not the same as me. But perhaps they should find different activities, not just studying, because at the end of the day it's only a complement. I, from the time I was 14... From the time I began to work I liked imitation jewellery, so I saw it as a kind of... just as a hobby. But then people that saw me work and then saw my items began to ask for more, please do me some, and that's how I began selling, that's where my entrepreneurial spirit began.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b></p> <p>She makes an interesting suggestion: engaging in different activities is beneficial. For instance, a hobby can become an income-generating activity. This seems to be evidence of the blurring of in-school and out-of-school activities.</p>

	(LF-SR 00:32:05.446 – 00:33:36.834)	
	<p>T It looks like you were a little embarrassed to ask me but, you ask anyway, don't you?                  F Yes, yes (laughs).                  T When you have a question, you ask.                  F Yes, I'm always like that.                  T That's good.                  T There are people who don't ask questions. Why do you ask questions?                  F Because I don't want to be left wondering?                  T So, you don't have... Well, you say that in life taking the initiative and looking for help or support to sort out problems has not been a problem for you and here you're behaving precisely in that way, aren't you?                  F Yes, yes, yes, yes.                  T And you turn around (as they both watch the video).                  F And I turn around. It just the way I am always. I'm always on alert and I have this trauma.                  T And, why?                  F I don't know. I'm very insecure but not insecure about myself, insecure about being mugged or something because I was mugged.                  T Really?                  F Uh-huh. So, since then I've been like really traumatised, like very insecure about everything.                  T How long ago was that?                  F It was about three years ago here (mumbles) about five years ago.                  T Very traumatic.                  F Yes it was for me, very very much, because I was walking along a street that was really crowded, and I had my cheque, I had just been paid, and they took my bag and everything, with a knife here in my back.                  T They didn't hurt you?                  F No, they only hurt me a bit and I was bleeding but anyway I had already paid my school fees so what hurt me the most was that I was carrying the receipt to register at school.                  T But that was sorted out.                  F Yes, thank God I had my mobile phone here (points to her trousers) in a little pocket in my trousers that had many pockets so they didn't notice that I had my mobile phone with me and when they run away with my bag I could call home.                  T And they helped you.                  F Yes, my mum went to register me.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:38:47.245 – 00:41:14.042)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  She recalls the time when she was mugged in the street and how that still affects her to this day by making her feel insecure and turning around all the time. It's somewhat surprising that her main concern when she was mugged was that she lost her payment slip that proved she had paid her registration fees to attend school.</p>
	<p>F And I have a better profile. There [in the video] I look awful (laughs as she points to the screen).                  T It's just that the take is from below. When C [another participant] came she grabbed the camera and put it up there (mimicking her actions).                  F Uh-huh.                  T And... and... she said that it looks awful so I now put the camera high up for other people because they don't like it so much from below.                  F I look like I have double chin.                  T Yes, they say it doesn't make you look good.                  F No, it doesn't make you look good, no.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  The learner is concerned about her appearance on camera.</p>

	<p>T Everyone [says so]...</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:41:14.578 – 00:41:46.939)</p>	
	<p>F In fact, later a friend told me that I should have sung instead (laughs).                  T You could, because you like that.                  F Yes, she plays the guitar, so together we sing the song Kiss me.                  T Kiss me.                  F Uh-huh. Yes, but I can't do it now.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:50:46.758 – 00:51:08.734)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  This is evidence of her use of English out of school in collaboration with someone else. The friend and learner F might be seen as learning collaboratively, supporting each other.</p>
	<p>T And your boyfriend, how does he influence you, in your life, in your studies...?                  F He supports me a lot with English because he's very good at it. Well, he has a lot of... Mmm. How do you call it? His level is very high so, he's always supporting me a lot with English.                  T How's things with him? What do you do, normally?                  F As I was telling you we try to have a conversation in English... Uh-huh. So, when we go to the cinema we try to watch movies in English with subtitles, because of him, and he plays a lot of music in English for me. He also writes comments for me on Facebook in English. Yes, he supports me a lot.                  F Yes, he supports me a lot, especially with English.                  T And your friend, the one who said that to you about the song, does she also support you with English?                  F Yes, what happens is she plays... she plays the guitar, the drums... She plays several instruments, so once we had to sing in English and I like that song very much.                  T What's the name of the song?                  F Kiss me.                  T Kiss me.                  F But I've never taken the time to... what I've always wanted to do with her because we want to sing... I'm going to get it off the internet and then...                  T Then you can record it and put it up on YouTube.                  F Yes.                  F Oh, no. Yes, I want to be recorded really but I'm embarrassed.                  F Actually very few people know that I sing and that I like singing.                  T And why don't you share that with others?                  F A long time ago when I was in secondary school I started having these eating disorders; at that time I used to sing in a band...                  T Oh, and you left the band...                  F Yes, because of sixth form, we went our separate ways after secondary school.                  T And now you don't tell a lot of people about it.                  F No, not many, very few people know. My grandmothers always ask 'Sing, Stephie, sing' at parties and I (gestures)... Oh no.                  T Why don't you say it?                  F I don't know... Well, to be honest I think that it affects like my image (laughs) because I've tried to... I don't know, like to be more professional and I feel that it would affect that idea that I'm pursuing.                  T Because people...                  F Uh-huh.</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  She shows concern about her self-image, her public image, to the point of concealing her passion for singing and also thinking of doing a master's in that area.</p>

	<p>T You're easily embarrassed.                  T You keep on getting it wrong (referring to her video recording in the experiment).                  F Yes, in fact I care about that a lot because that's what I want to do, I want to do a Master's in Public Image.                  T Wow!                  T So, you're aware that you have an image and you take care of it.                  F Uh-huh.</p> <p>(LF-SR 00:54:17.138 – 00:57:03.700)</p>	
	<p>T What were we talking about?                  F Ah, about me studying Public Image.                  T Yes, yes, yes so the image you want to project is that of a serious and professional person.                  F Uh-huh.                  T ... entrepreneurial. And your music talent can't fit in there, nor your dancing. They can't fit.                  F Well, the image... Well, what I am. However, I don't know, I feel like... I still have, apart from that image it's like I was saying in the verbal communication workshop I still find it very hard, the anxiety, the embarrassment and everything, I find it hard to control that in public, so...                  F Actually when I go to gigs with my band I always came out wearing dark glasses and a hat... so that most people wouldn't recognise me. Even when I came down the stage they asked me 'was it you up there?' and they wouldn't believe me.                  T It's a kind of protection.</p> <p>(LF-SR 01:00:17.665 – 01:01:25.402)</p>	<p><b>10.10.2011</b>                  More evidence of her efforts to conceal the fact that she sings (or used to sing) and her interest in portraying herself in a certain way socially. She says she's protecting herself – from what?</p>

## APPENDIX 6: TECHNICAL DETAILS

	No	Learner	Experiment date (duration)	SR date (duration)	Comments
Pilot study	1	Núria	05.11.2009 (unknown)	06.11.2009 (unknown)	Impossible to synch data files.
	2	Isabella	10.11.2009 (unknown)	11.11.2009 (unknown)	Video data lost (unreliable <i>VirtualVCR</i> software).
Main study	1	Learner A	14.10.2010 (01:24:50)	02.11.2010 (01:00:33)	
	2	Learner B	05.11.2010 (01:11:05)	14.11.2010 (00:42:26)	
	3	Learner C	08.11.2010 (02:12:15)	14.11.2010 (01:40:15)	
	4	Learner D	17.11.2010 (02:46:22)	18.11.2010 (unknown)	SR video file lost ( <i>Camtasia</i> crash); only notes available.
	5	Learner F	14.11.2010 (01:47:31)	18.11.2010 (01:10:12)	
	6	Learner G	07.09.2010 (01:53:18)	08.09.2010 (01:53:42)	
	7	Learner J	19.11.2010 (01:42:20)	19.11.2010 (01:32:51)	
	8	Learner M	15.11.2010 (00:53:52)	18.11.2010 (00:56:44)	
	9	Learner S	24.11.2010 (02:35:30)	26.11.2010 (01:26:18)	
	10	Learner T	22.11.2010 (01:11:10)	25.11.2010 (01:14:10)	

Audio data was collected using *Audacity* (v. 1.3.9). Video data was collected and compiled using *VirtualVCR* (v. 2.6.9) (pilot study) and *Camtasia Recorder* and *Camtasia Studio* (v. 7.1.0), *Anyplace Control* (v. 5.0.2.0), and *IMCapture for Skype* (v. 5.3). After using an audiographic conference application provided in the *Blackboard* environment at first (pilot study), two videoconference applications were used subsequently: *FlashMeeting* (v. 3) (pilot study and early part of the main study) and *Skype* (v. 4.2.0.187) (latter part of the main study). Almost in parallel, two learning management systems (LMS) were used: the University of Guanajuato's *Blackboard* (pilot study only) and the OU's *Open Learn Moodle* (main study). The literature review was mainly done using *Atlas.ti* (v. 6). For data preparation and analysis purposes, *Elan* (v. 4.1.0 and v. 4.1.2) and *Microsoft Word* (2003, 2007 and 2010) were used. The equipment used include an *HP 2133* mini laptop (pilot study), several *Lanix Titan 3190* desktop computers (both studies), an *HP G42* laptop (main study), and a *Steren COM-115* web cam, several *Ativa 43963* microphones and several *Sony MDR-XD100* headphones (both studies). *Dragon NaturallySpeaking* (v. 11.50.100.039), a speech recognition software application, was used to transcribe data.

**APPENDIX 7: DATA COLLECTION DETAILS FOR THE CULTURAL-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS**

Four interviews were conducted and recorded via telephone over the internet (using *Skype*) on three separate dates in March 2011, as the table below shows. The interviews were conducted in Spanish. They were later transcribed and translated into English before the data was analysed.

<b>Schedule of interviews with institutional representatives</b>				
<b>No</b>	<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Years in post/years in institution</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1	Language teacher with no permanent post but middle-management duties	1/8	03/03/2011	Her motivation is her love for her work. Unaffected by not having permanent post. Currently, she has middle-management duties, such as curriculum reform, for which she would like to have support from an external expert. Earlier, she only had teaching duties.
2	Middle manager with a permanent post	0/8	04/03/2011	Her motivation is having achieved her permanent post this year (Jan 2011). Earlier, she had been a middle manager (temporary post) with the same duties for three years. She is now involved in curriculum reform, which somehow overwhelms her. For the first few years she was teaching at the institution's high school.
3	Former Mexican Federal Congressman	3	16/03/2011	He was frustrated at the impossibility of effecting large-scale changes due to existing economic interests.
4	Top level IT manager	2/11	16/03/2011	He has the huge task of developing and running the institution's own infrastructure to curb the extortionate rates of the telecommunications service provider (essentially <i>Telmex</i> , owned by billionaire Carlos Slim).