

TRADITIONAL VS. INTERNET-BASED CLASSES: TEACHING THE WRITING SKILL

By

DIANA CAMILA MADROÑERO DELGADO

A research paper submitted to the School of Human Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of B.A in the English and French Program.

Linguistics and Languages Department

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## Dedicated to

First and foremost, I dedicate this work to God for always having my back and revealing to me the things I should walk from and towards. This work is also dedicated to my parents, Ana and Francisco, my brother Daniel, my grandmother Carmen, my aunt Lilian and to my loyal friend Mateo whose love encouraged me to do whatever it takes to finish what I have started. I am tremendously appreciative of the support you gave me.

## RESUMEN

Este trabajo proporciona una comparación entre los métodos de enseñanza tradicional y enseñanza basada en Internet; además, se explica cómo la habilidad escrita es enseñada a través de cada método dando más importancia al último ya que es visto como una forma didáctica, innovativa y significativa de aprender. El objetivo de este documento es comprender y aprovechar las oportunidades que brinda Internet, creando ambientes de aprendizaje más deliberados. A través de este estudio, es demostrado que Internet apoya al aprendizaje, incentiva a los estudiantes a mejorar sus habilidades y los mantiene motivados. Esta investigación proporcionará información valiosa en cuanto a los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje y direccionará el rol del Internet hacia el mejoramiento de la habilidad escrita. Esto podría llevar a resultados útiles con el fin de reemplazar los obsoletos métodos de enseñanza tradicionales por los métodos de enseñanza basados en Internet.

*Palabras Clave:* Internet, tradicional, escritura, motivación.

## ABSTRACT

This paper provides a comparison between traditional and Internet-based teaching methods. Moreover, it explains how the writing skill is taught through each method, focusing on the latter since it is seen as a didactic, innovative, and significant way of learning. The aim of this research is to understand and take advantage of the opportunities the Internet affords, as more deliberate learning environments. Through this study, it is demonstrated that the Internet supports learning, encourages students to improve their skills, and keeps them motivated. This research provides valuable information regarding the teaching and learning processes, and addresses the role of the Internet to enhance the writing skill, which may lead to useful findings in order to replace obsolete traditional teaching methods for Internet-based ones.

*Keywords:* Internet, traditional, writing, motivation.



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**TRADITIONAL VS. INTERNET- BASED CLASSES: TEACHING WRITING SKILL**

According to the article “Colombianos continúan ‘corchados’ en el inglés” (2017), published by Portafolio, as the latest Education First (EF) study shows, Colombia ranks 49 out of the 72 analyzed countries, making it one of the countries with a 'very low' English level, thereby, it is not surprising that most students are not able to reach a high level of proficiency in English, instead they do not like English classes. Rod Ellis (as cited in Revista Semana, 2016), professor in the Department of Applied Language Studies and Linguistics at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, expressed, many young people have no idea of what English can do for their lives. Students do not understand the usefulness of knowing English. But, what they should notice is that a Colombian student who achieves a good level of proficiency in another language, will be well positioned to face the new demands of this world (Truscott de Mejía, as cited in Altablero, 2005).

Therefore, since students do not know how important English is, it will make the learning process more difficult for them. Students may find the process of writing in English boring, because it involves mastering content, format, style, vocabulary and punctuation to create cohesive and coherent paragraphs and texts. Writing is a complex activity and the mentioned factors, can make students feel unmotivated and confused, which will impede the correct learning of this skill (Bell & Burnaby, as cited in Nunan, 1989, p.36).

Writing is one of the least understood language production tasks (Levy & Ransdell, 1995). Students perceive English writing classes as really boring and tiring, when in reality writing classes should be seen as an opportunity to test the different skills, challenge ourselves, and express our feelings and opinions. In fact, it can be fun, enjoyable and completely useful to the learning process. Students need to get motivated with more didactic English classes; they are tired of traditional ones. They will feel enthusiastic when writing, if writing tasks are interactive

and keep them interested. So, teachers, directors, schools or educational institutions should consider the fact that a change in English classes is needed.

As Truscott de Mejía, (cited in Altablero, 2005), from the Research Center and Education at the University of Los Andes expressed in an interview for the Colombian Ministry of National Education, the media and new technologies can encourage teachers to change their pedagogical practices, giving them access to new didactic resources which are quite important to make an impact on bilingualism programs.

### **Stating the Thesis**

This paper aims at showing the importance of using the Internet in English classes to enhance the writing skill. This paper provides a comparison between traditional and Internet-based writing classes; focusing on the importance of the latter and taking into account the advantages or disadvantages of the two sides. In this way, this paper will make readers ask “Are Internet-based classes useful enough to enhance the writing skill?”

### **Understanding the Complexity of the Writing Skill**

Writing can be defined as a way to communicate among human beings. We can represent a language and emotions through the inscription of signs and symbols, and it is seen as a complement to speech. Languages are systems of symbols and writing is a system for symbolizing these symbols. Then, writing is a form of technology since it involves a whole system full of structures, signs or symbols such as vocabulary, grammar and semantics (Olson, 1994).

Writing skill has a complex nature and can be mastered only through hard work. Students may complain when having to write in English since they may have troubles finding the right words, writing grammatically correct, and expressing themselves accurately. According to Byrne

(1988, p.4), there are some psychological, cognitive and linguistic factors that make writing difficult to learn, even for native speakers.

Most students in high schools or in universities are not able to reach a good level of proficiency in this skill. The failure of many of college students to write decently, even after years of instruction, became an important issue, according to Arum and Roksa (2011). In their book *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*, the authors expressed “with a large sample of more than 2,300 students, we observed no statistically significant gains in critical thinking, complex reasoning and writing skills for at least 25 percent of the students in our study” (Arum and Roksa, 2011, p.36). Even though teachers try to encourage students to improve their writing skills, creating different activities, guiding them, and providing feedback, students are not able to produce coherent texts.

Another difficulty faced by second language learners in writing is the interference of the mother tongue. In addition, students may find writing difficult when producing sentences that are grammatically correct but are unacceptable in English. This happens because their native language interferes in style or construction of ideas with the new language (Norrish, 1983, p.10).

Lots of talented people fail because they do not know how to write well. Moreover, most of college students are not given the opportunity to receive a proper instruction in English composition during the freshman year, and do not have enough opportunities to learn that skill during the educational cycle. It is also difficult to learn the writing skill due to the lack of preparation of English teachers; they are often ill-equipped to teach writing (Breland and Jones, 1982).

Then, since writing is such a complex skill which involves so many processes, it is often misunderstood and poorly taught. As consequence, students receive limited training to be able to

strengthen this skill plus the lack of teachers' preparation may make classes tedious and confusing.

### **Enhancing the Writing Skill**

The importance of the writing skill should be taken into account by students and teachers since nowadays it is a necessity to have access to web pages, writing letters, or even chatting. Enhancing this skill may be difficult for most learners as it involves reading, research, thinking, revision, practice, among other aspects.

Cassany, Luna and Sanz (1994) researchers at the University Pompeu Fabraes, say that knowing how to write refers to a good writer, someone who is able to communicate well in writing and produce texts of considerable length about any subject. Knowing how to write goes beyond putting messages down on paper. It focuses on the process of writing, which is about the skills or strategies developed to carry out the writing skill effectively.

According to Gardner (1983), Dornyei and Skehan (2003), a really useful strategy to enhance the writing skill can be providing scaffolding, and giving more attention to the diverse needs of students. Teachers should try linking the language materials to students' needs and backgrounds. Teachers may also help themselves by involving students when choosing materials for the class and setting their own goals.

Also, Dornyei and Csizer (1998) in a survey of Motivational Strategies, showed that there are ten principles or recommendations that teachers should observe in order to motivate their students. First, set a personal example with your own behaviour. Teachers are of the most influential people in students' lives, so that they have to be positive role models, being responsible, respectful, empathetic, patient and welcoming. Second, create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers should make classes enjoyable for students. If students are uncomfortable, anxious or nervous their motivation and desire to learn decreases, which will

make the teaching and learning processes more difficult. Third, present the tasks properly. Providing students with challenging and interesting tasks of the appropriate level will increase their motivation and their willingness to fulfill the assignments. Fourth, develop a good relationship with the learners. This may help students to feel comfortable with their learning experience since they like the person they are working with, which improves learners' self-confidence and increases their interest in learning. Fifth, rise learners' linguistic self-confidence. Helping students to notice how capable they are to accomplish and learn new things, will rapidly improve their confidence, which will help both, students and teachers to achieve their academic goals. Sixth, make the language classes interesting. Enjoyable and pleasant classes contribute to the students' motivation to learn. Seventh, promote learner autonomy. When learners are responsible for their own learning, they are able to see what they have succeeded or failed in, correct their mistakes and continue learning autonomously. Eighth, personalize the learning process. Adjusting goals and tasks to students' needs will help them to improve what they have to improve and learn what they need to learn, creating more equitable opportunities for students. Ninth, increase the learners' goal-orientedness. If the class has a strong goal orientation, students will be able to focus on tasks and their outcomes, keeping in mind what was originally expected from them and doing whatever is needed in order to achieve their goals. Finally, familiarize learners with the target language culture. Providing students with, authentic materials, promoting contact with native speakers, and giving information about the cultural background will make the second language culture familiar to students (pp.215-218).

For instance, Kim (2003) discovered that writing emails can also be a useful tool to enhance this language skill. In this study, learners of elementary and middle school were interacting with other learners, teachers and online learning content. Thus, they improved their vocabulary and became more energetic and participative using computers and the Internet.

Teachers can also boost writing through motivation. Language teachers may use rewards to motivate students. Terrell and Rendulic (1996) agree on the fact that rewarding learners when achieving a task improves self-esteem and motivation. Feedback can be used as a way to reward learners. It is important to include comments of praise and encouragement in the form of written feedback. When correcting errors, it is useful to make students check their work in groups, which encourages communication and motivates students, enhancing the writing skill learning process (Norrish, 1983, p.71).

Another interactive way to improve students' writing skill is through video-games. Ferdig and Pytash (2014), express that the use of video-games could be useful for literacy acquisition and instruction, focusing on reading and writing. In the book titled *Learning, Education & Games* (2014), Kongmee, et al. (as cited in Ferdig and Pytash, 2014) conducted a study of massive multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs) and their potential for language learning. The selected games were intended for entertainment rather than for educational purposes. The study proved that learners who participated in a game-based environment had positive achievements in reading, vocabulary, conversational relevance, writing, and public speaking. The findings demonstrated that MMORPGs can enhance language learning. The authors said that "The students became more active in using English, showing greater patience in reading, being more motivated to write and also to produce dialogues when speaking and chatting."

As we could see, enhancing the writing skill takes time and is all about hard work. To improve this skill it is necessary to select the correct strategies. We can take into account the tips or strategies mentioned before or search on the Internet for more interactive and innovative activities, such as the MMORPGs and the use of emails.



After analyzing the complexity of the writing skill and the ways to enhance it, it is necessary to know about the teaching and learning processes of this skill. In this paper, the focus is on two approaches to teach and learn the writing skill. First, the traditional or conventional education, and then the Internet-based education will be addressed.

### **Traditional Writing Classes**

#### **Describing the Procedures of a Traditional Writing Class**

A traditional class is also known as back-to-basics or conventional education and refers to the common way schools teach. Here, students and teachers interact in a face-to-face environment. Teachers start the lessons, focusing on teaching the content found in the traditional textbooks provided by the educational institution (McCarthy and Anderson, 2000).

According to the Ministry of Education of Colombia (MEN), traditional classrooms often consist of 30 or 40 students (Ministerio de educación nacional, 2002). Rows are the typical environment for a teacher-centered classroom and an individual learning approach. Students face the 'front' of the class. The teacher starts the lesson from a 'front' position. This type of setup can be an effective method of behavior management (Dewey, 1938, p.25).

Another characteristic of traditional classes is that, as Professor Scrivener (2005) expressed, students are considered to have knowledge holes that are filled with information provided by the teacher. This may be known as 'jug and mug.' Traditional teaching focuses on the teacher-centred education, which is concerned with the teacher being the controller of the learning environment. Power and responsibility are held by the teachers and they play the role of instructors and decision makers. Teachers always tend to play an authoritative role and utilize textbooks, which are seen as main sources of knowledge (Dewey, 1938, p.5). Teachers and the elders are the sources of information and authority and learners are seen as passive absorbers of information; they should obey the teacher (Kuzu, 2007). Since students are expected to be

passive and docile, there is little expression and free activity (Dewey, 1938, p.5). Students do not learn through own experience, but through the imposition of rules and knowledge because traditional methods are linked to harshness and autocracy (p.11).

Teacher's main activities are assigning tasks and observing students' productions. Teachers are also responsible for maintaining classroom discipline or punishing errors, separating students according to their grades and even teaching different subjects to girls and boys. Students study and memorize rules to carry out an exam (McCarthy and Anderson, 2000). Traditional methodology in language teaching is about memorizing rules, analyzing texts, and literal translation (Tharp, 1932).

We already know how writing is taught in traditional classes, and what teachers and students do during the lessons, but it is also important to know what goals or objectives students are expected to achieve in conventional classes.

### **Describing the Objectives of a Traditional Writing Class**

Since traditional classes are focused on a teacher-centred environment, the main purpose is to make students develop general mental discipline, proper behavior, work individually rather than in groups to keep the class in order, and be competitive: students are not expected to think aloud or interact (Huba and Freed, 2000).

Another objective is preparing students for future responsibilities (Dewey, 1938, p.4), which may be graduating, reaching high test scores, and grades. It is expected from students to be able to memorize grammar patterns, sentences, vocabulary, and practice grammatical rules, analyzing different types of texts and translating them from the target to the native language (Tharp, 1932). Besides, traditionalists focus on making students perform well on state-mandated tests, rather than satisfying their needs (Lynch, 2010) which is unsuccessful because students' knowledge is judged based only on their scores.

As reported by MEN (2006), in the Basic Standards of Competence in Foreign Languages, adhered to the Common European Framework (CEFR), students are expected to reach a B1 level of proficiency in English at the end of eleventh grade. There are six categories, ranging from A1, for basic learners, to C2, for the ones who master the language. The objectives students have for their English classes depend on the level of English they have to reach and these are the following:

- First to third grade: A1 level, beginners: students have to be able to copy and transcribe words that they understand and frequently use in the classroom, they have to write the name of places and elements that they recognize in an illustration, respond briefly to WH questions such as "what, who, when, and where," write personal information, invitations, and congratulations messages in simple formats, and show knowledge of the Basic structures of English.
- Fourth to fifth grade: A2, 1 level, basic users 1: Students have to be able to write about topics of interest, write descriptions and short stories based on illustrations or created by themselves, write short messages of greetings or invitations, describe people, link phrases and sentences using connectors that express sequence and addition, describe mood and preferences, use structures and grammatical patterns frequently used, and verify the spelling of words.
- Sixth to seventh grade: A2, 2 level, basic users 2: Students have to be able to describe people, places, objects or related things and situations using short sentences, write short messages with different purposes using different situations, objects, places or people, complete personal information in basic formats and simple documents, write short texts related to themselves, their family, friends and environment, write short texts to express

contrast, addition, cause and effect between ideas, and use appropriate vocabulary to give coherence to their writings.

- Eighth to ninth grade: B1, 1 level, pre-intermediate users 1: students have to be able to write stories about personal experiences and things around them, write messages in different ways about topics of interest, diligence formats with personal information, answer in written form questions related to texts they have read, produce simple texts to describe, narrate, or argue about different issues, paraphrase information, organize short coherent paragraphs, taking into account formal elements of language such as spelling and punctuation, use maps or diagrams for developing their writings, exemplify their points of view in written form, and edit their writing in class, taking into account rules of spelling, adequacy of vocabulary and grammatical structures.
- Tenth to eleventh grade: B1, 2 level, pre-intermediate users 2: students have to be able to structure their texts taking into account punctuation, spelling, syntax, coherence and cohesion, plan, revise, and edit their writings with the help of their classmates and teachers, express values of their culture through writing, write different types of texts of medium length using simple structures such as, letters, notes, messages, emails, etc. Write summaries and reports, write different texts considering the possible readers, value writing as a means of expressing their ideas and thoughts, write texts for explaining their preferences, decisions or actions, and write expository texts about topics of their interest (MEN, 2006).

Knowing what students and teachers do in traditional classes, and the goals students need to achieve in order to enhance the writing skill, we can now consider the main advantages and disadvantages these classes may bring for the teaching and learning processes.

### **Knowing the Advantages of a Traditional Writing Class**

To have a realistic approach to this subject, it is necessary to consider the advantages and disadvantages of traditional education in the English learning and teaching process. This knowledge can help us determine the possible problems we will face when trying to make this investigation in a specific academic community. In addition, it can motivate us showing the large range of possibilities we have and the way this project can improve the actual life of students, teachers and everyone involved in this process. Among the advantages of teaching and learning English through conventional education, we have:

**Scaffolding.** It is the help or guidance received from adults or more competent peers to solve a problem or complete a task. Students without scaffolding have demonstrated poor ability to regulate their learning, and failure to gain a conceptual understanding of topics (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). Here, teachers select a task and make sure that this task will develop the skills needed to be improved. Also, teachers have to choose an interesting topic from the textbook to catch students' attention, such as sports or style icons, and look for more information to create didactic activities. After that, teachers should study and prepare the class thinking about the errors learners are likely to commit and being prepared to clarify doubts, providing feedback, and avoiding useless instruction. Besides, teachers should not only focus on the activity and the textbook, but also on the students emotive or affective factors; they should try to make students participate, asking "known-information" questions. If teachers see that students are not motivated, they should be able to change the activity and encourage learners in their learning process by passing around their sits and conversing with them, providing hints or clues (Simons and Klein, 2007).

Scaffolding could be really useful to help students in their learning process. Using textbooks can be simple for teachers when providing feedback to the learners or guiding them. The search of interesting topics in their textbooks or different materials in order to make learners

feel motivated can make the scaffolding process a lot easier for students and teachers. Indeed, that one is the next advantage: using textbooks in traditional classes to enhance the writing skill.

**Resources.** According to Dewey (1938), in traditional classes, teachers are provided with traditional textbooks. Since these books are seen as the main sources of information (p.4) teachers use only these materials to prepare their classes, so that, it may be not so difficult for teachers to look for information or different resources. Teachers use the board, and textbooks, which are essential in traditional schools (p.14).

Teachers think textbooks are very easy to use (Grant, 1990, p.13), have a good structure, are very organized, and they may have attractive presentations (Harmer, 2001, p.304), which can keep students attracted to the activities shown in the books. Also, textbooks have the information for the class ready. So, it saves teachers' time (Richards, 2001, p.1), which can be invested in preparing more activities or materials for the class.

### **Recognizing the Disadvantages of a Traditional Writing Class**

**Demotivation.** One of the most difficult aspects about teaching is motivating students. Motivation is one of the most important elements for the learning process (Truscott de Mejía, as cited in Altablero, 2005). If students are not motivated, they will not learn effectively, retain information, participate, etc. Students get bored in traditional classes because of the excessive use of textbooks, which contain material that is not interesting enough (Harmer, 1998, p.116-117).

According to Fine (2014), almost three-quarters of adolescents are bored and unchallenged by their classes; they clearly need to get motivated. Students and teachers should know that they are there to work but that does not necessarily mean that they cannot have fun when learning. The problem in traditional classes is that teachers are so focused on giving commands and trying to keep students quiet that they forget about their students' needs and

objectives. Teachers should use immediacy behaviors, which means that they have to get involved with their students, becoming closer and controlling behavior in a positive way (Mehrabian, 1968).

Educational institutions should consider setting aside the notion that classes must be teacher-centred and incorporate the student-centred environment, giving learners the opportunity to say what and how they want to learn. As said before, in traditional classes students feel demotivated and one of the reasons may be because they are expected to be competitive, and work individually as we will see below.

**Individual Work.** Considering that traditional teaching is teacher-centred, culture here is competitive and individualistic (Huba and Freed, 2000). Students are often expected to be competitive and fight with each other to obtain the highest grades. When students work cooperatively, they are forced to do so, which is not the right way to teach them to work in groups (McCorkle, et al., 1999). The matter here is that teachers must identify what kind of competitive activities would have destructive or constructive outcomes. Students may learn to achieve their goals pushing others around, and ignoring the idea of working as a team with their classmates, which is another disadvantage in traditional classes as described below.

**Group work.** Students do not like working in groups as they usually enjoy working in a group when they form it on their own, because they just have fun working with their friends. “Adolescents often have problems understanding each other and usually have conflicts with their peers; they are narcissists and cannot think about ‘we’ instead of ‘me’” (Friedley and Manchester, 2005).

Since activities in traditional writing classes are perceived as boring and demotivating, students will have problems completing or focusing on their tasks, and they usually have problems with their classmates. So, if students are not focused in the classroom activities, and if

the group is not cohesive they can easily get distracted and get in troubles (Piezon and Donaldson, 2005). That is why teachers have to look for more didactic activities to encourage learners to work in groups, and motivate them. But, that may be difficult as we will see in the following disadvantage.

**Information.** Teachers in traditional teaching use mainly textbooks for planning classes (Dewey, 1938), but finding interesting and contextualized information using only textbooks can be a difficult thing to do (Richards, 2001, p.2). Because of that, students lack motivation since the only available information for them is the one found in the textbooks (Harmer, 1998, p.116-117; Richards, 2001, p.2). Besides, it has been found that textbooks show discrimination towards immigrants and women (Johnsen, 1993, p.109), which can make students feel uncomfortable and even more demotivated. Then, teachers should make their lessons as interesting and contextualized as possible and get more prepared to do that, which is another disadvantage shown below.

**Teachers' Preparation.** As mentioned before, teachers in traditional classes are used to consider books as the primary source of knowledge (Dewey, 1938, p.4), and since they get too dependant on books, they ignore all other materials. In this way, the teaching and learning process is controlled by traditional textbooks rather than by teachers (Harmer, 1998, p.116-117). Teachers can become deskilled or less efficient in their jobs since they let textbooks decide for them (Richards, 2001, p.2). Also, according to Grant (1990, p.13), traditional textbooks use students' mother tongue excessively which can make teachers get immensely used to it, and not practice the target language with the learners.

As we already covered the first part of this paper; that is teaching and learning the writing skill, using the traditional or conventional approach in education, we can now proceed to the



analysis of the second approach: teaching and learning the writing skill based on Internet-based instruction.

### **Internet-Based Writing Classes**

The Internet and computers have become common terms. Nowadays, knowing how to use a computer has become really important for almost everyone as well as being able to use the Internet. But, what is the Internet? According to Rouse (2014), the Internet, sometimes called simply “the Net,” is a global system that people use to receive or share information, and talk to others through a computer.

The popularity of the Internet has also spread to the educational community and it is being used as an educational tool when teaching. As a consequence, the number of educational institutions connected to the Internet is increasing rapidly. Using it to teach English, in this case the writing skill, offers tremendous advantages to students and teachers when struggling with lack of motivation, resources, behavior, etc. But, there may also be some disadvantages, like thinking that it is complex to use or not having access to it.

We already know what the Internet is, but it is also necessary to know about the teaching and learning process of the writing skill using an Internet-based approach, which will be reviewed below.

### **Describing Procedures of an Internet Based Writing Class**

An Internet-based class might be a new concept for some. It is seen as a revolutionary way of teaching. Since Internet-based classes are student-centered, the role of teachers moves from tellers to coordinators, and from material users to material providers. Students are responsible for the construction of their own knowledge, they are no longer seen as passive learners, and are actively involved in their learning process (Huba and Freed, 2000).

In Internet-based classes, learners use mainly computers to interact with the teacher, other students, and the learning material. The Internet supports traditional classroom teaching by making it more simple and didactic. Teachers can look for resources and materials available on the Internet beforehand to use them in class. Web-based learning can also be formal or informal. Formal web-based learning is when teachers plan learning activities for their students. Learning is organized and structured by educators. Formal learning can be seen as a bus “the driver decides where the bus is going. The passengers are along for the ride” (Cross, 2006). Informal learning refers to the independent way of learning, when students search for material they need on the Internet to satisfy their needs at their own pace. It depends on how much students are willing to learn and the goals they have. Informal learning can be seen as a bike “the rider chooses the destination, the speed and the route” (Cross, 2006).

In addition, teachers can select computer materials, programs or resources that are going to be used. They can decide to use Internet resources to explain topics or whether to make students take online quizzes, depending on the objectives of the class. Teachers usually have the computers ready beforehand by loading them with the needed materials. They may divide the class into several groups with at least one student who is good at computers so that more experienced students can help the others. Here, teachers should be around to explain the topics using the traditional approach. Also, they may give students a little more freedom when developing certain activities, encouraging them to look for their own resources to complete the activity.

In contrast with traditional teaching, learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, performance, and portfolios instead of assessing indirectly through the use of objectively scored tests (Huba and Freed, 2000). Besides, if possible, teachers may ask their students to complete

the assignments and submit them electronically to their emails, which can be easier for teachers to carry and mark, being eco-friendly as well.

Teachers who cannot use the computer room for every English class may look for activities at home and print them for their students to work in class. The Internet can guide teachers when feeling lost or without ideas to motivate their students. Teachers can find lots of information and resources by just typing what they need. But, it is necessary to keep in mind that there may be some unreliable web pages, so users need to make sure to get the right information. Here, learning may be independent, collaborative, cooperative, and competitive.

We know how writing may be taught in Internet-based classes, and what teachers and students can do during the lessons, but it is also important to know what goals or objectives, students are expected to achieve in these classes.

### **Describing the Objectives of an Internet Based Writing Class**

Since Internet-based classes are student-centered, the main purpose is to make students develop autonomy to construct their own knowledge, work cooperatively, collaboratively, and supportively. Students are expected to be active and get involved in the class (Huba and Freed, 2000).

Another objective is to prepare students for future responsibilities through learning or acquiring knowledge in real-life contexts (Huba and Freed, 2000). That is to say, learners are expected to study and practice grammar patterns, sentences, vocabulary, analyzing different types of texts and translating them (Tharp, 1932) if necessary, through online games and didactic activities, instead of simply repeating things and using textbooks.

The objectives of an Internet writing class may be similar to those of a traditional one in terms of the Basic Standards of Competence in Foreign Languages adhered to the Common European Framework (MEN, 2006), previously mentioned. Also, students are expected to reach

high test scores and grades to graduate. But, in Internet-based writing classes, grades are used to promote and diagnose learning rather than just monitor learning (Huba and Freed, 2000).

Students feel more motivated, since activities and resources on Internet make writing attractive and fun. Students work with great pleasure on the computers (Gregoire, 1996), because the language is given in different and more interesting ways such as games and animated graphics. The objective is to give students an opportunity to explore learning in a different way, and make writing more attractive for them.

### **Recognizing the Advantages of an Internet Based Writing Class**

To fully understand this subject, it is necessary to consider the advantages of using the Internet in English learning and teaching processes. Among the most visible advantages of teaching and learning the writing skill through the Internet, we have:

**Motivation.** Truscott de Mejía (as cited in Altablero, 2005) agrees that motivation is one of the most important things for learning a language successfully. When teachers keep the conviction that students are capable of performing well in a foreign language, creating knowledge and making progress, it is very likely that the teacher will transmit that conviction to the students.

A lot of studies show that the use of the Internet in teaching, motivates both, students and teachers. One of those studies is the one called “The Theory of Gregoire” (1996). It is about the inclusion of the Internet in education, and shows us the benefits of the Internet in motivation. This theory was considered revolutionary because it emerged during a period when the Internet was not considered as important as now. Gregoire (1996) stated that the Internet must be included as a part of the education process and that there were two important benefits derived from the inclusion of the Internet in the teaching and learning process. First, the stimulation of students’ intellectual skills, that can be made through the introduction of the Internet. Second, new technologies are more attractive than other types of approaches for learning and teaching

like the traditional approach. This theory confirms that the Internet is a helpful tool to increase motivation.

In Colombia, many researchers did different qualitative research to study this topic contributing to this document. A study named “la Internet como herramienta de apoyo en la formación de alumnos investigadores del inglés” (Moreno, 2005) demonstrated how learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) can be motivated by the use of web-based instruction. A group of 10 students was trained in the use of the Internet to learn English skills. After being trained, these students decided to open an English course for beginners by themselves.

Also, Taylor (1998) expressed that the use of web-based instruction in foreign language learning programs can be a nice stimulus for students as it provides a lot of fun activities, and reduces learning anxiety. They also provide the opportunity of repeating lessons as often as necessary. This idea supports the introduction of the Internet as a tool to make classes less boring for students. Many authors have worked on this theory, among them, one of the most recognized is Kumaravadivelu. In his book *Beyond Methods: Macrostrategies for Language Teaching* (2003) the author says that the Internet offers unlimited possibilities for teachers and learners to connect the word to the world. Teaching writing classes with the help of the Internet resources motivates students to use English and practice outside the classroom, making the foreign language a part of their daily lives. Also, learners can make contact with native English speakers all over the world without being immerse in English-speaking countries (Gonglewski, et al., 2001).

The Internet motivates students since it leads to autonomy as learners control their own learning process, allowing them to consult electronic resources beyond those of grammar-check, dictionary, and thesaurus. Besides, the Internet gives an opportunity for shy students to have a forum to freely express themselves.

Krashen (as cited in Altablero, 2005) says that if the emotional filter is lowered, students feel more confident to try to communicate in the foreign language, despite their fear of making mistakes. If students are nervous, the affective filter is high. So that, they cannot communicate effectively. If learners are relaxed, they feel confident and the affective filter goes down. In this way, learners manage to communicate more and better (Altablero, 2005). Thus, when students use computers and work with the Internet, they feel more comfortable with their environment since they enjoy using technology which increases motivation facilitating the teaching and learning process. In this case, the teaching and learning of the writing skill.

Softwares and the Internet offer options for students to have tasks at an appropriate level that can be matched to their individual needs (Lynch et al., 2000). It provides students with a lot of genuine educational materials. Since the Internet has thousands of materials and didactic resources for teachers and students, they can get what they look for and satisfy their needs, which leads to increase motivation and ease the process of learning. Also, since the Internet makes students feel a lot more motivated, it is easier for teachers to provide feedback and guide students in their learning process, which is another advantage of this approach.

**Scaffolding through Internet.** The Internet offers limitless sources of knowledge that can help students of a second language to improve. In this case, as the Internet contains lots of web pages to help second language students, it is perfect to be considered as a “more competent peer” (Vygotsky, 1978). It is to say that, it is possible to apply scaffolding theory in the process of teaching and learning through the Internet.

According to Hill and Hannafin (2001), there are four main types of scaffolding used to teach and learn through the Internet:

- **Conceptual:** This type of scaffolding helps students to decide what they consider as valuable knowledge in the learning process.

- Procedural: It helps students to use the resources in an effective way and to use the best tools.
- Strategic: It centers its attention on finding alternative strategies and methods to solve problems.
- Metacognitive: It is used to help students to think about what they are learning along the process, and to acknowledge their final results and thoughts on the subject.

Metacognitive scaffolding is one of the most popular and it is the one to be explored and developed more as it provides many benefits. It helps students and teachers to think in a critical way about their teaching and learning. This type of scaffolding is more likely to lead to a meaningful knowledge. In addition, it does not neglect students and teachers' previous knowledge of the subject. On the contrary, it values and considers them as the basis of any new achievement in the learning and teaching processes. Metacognitive scaffolding can be used to build a sense of community among learners. Reingold et al. (2008) recommend this type of scaffolding to support students working on a common task, in this case, when teaching the writing skill and trying to get students motivated to develop this skill.

Computers make teachers' job easier since they are flexible and untiring. Computers can repeat the same thing as many times as needed without complaining, whenever students need help or guidance. Teachers and computers provide a really helpful guidance. As said before, in Internet classes motivation is encouraged, and since the Internet offers countless resources to students, that may be positive when working alone and that is another advantage of Internet-based education.

**Individual Work.** In Internet-based classes, students develop autonomy and can work at their own pace with little dependence on teachers. Internet-based learning encourages exploring material on your own and enables to skip over materials already mastered. Web-based learning

supports personalized learning and is self-directed. It builds self-knowledge and self-confidence. Also, for shy students who prefer working individually, it lets them express themselves and work without pressure. Besides, students can use web sources at home and practice what they have learned alone (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014).

Independent learners can practice and develop the skill they need to improve, and look for or choose the activity they like the most. In this case, to improve the writing skill, they may find puzzles, crosswords, story writing activities, myths, legends, etc. Also, since students are focused on the screens, they are more disciplined (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014).

Students in Internet-based classes are more likely to work in groups, and since they feel more motivated and interested in working with Internet-based activities, working in groups is usually easier than in traditional classes, which is another advantage.

**Group Work.** Being Internet-based classes a new teaching approach, the roles of teachers and students are different. In Internet-based learning, education is student-centered. Here, according to Huba and Freed (2000), a cooperative, collaborative, and supportive culture is encouraged. In an Internet-based writing class, students are often expected to work cooperatively. With the help of their classmates, students get a full understanding of the topic and the most computer literate students may work as group leaders. Teachers can divide and form groups strategically, so that each student helps the group with his or her skills. Computers help students realize their full potential and collaborate as a team to fulfill assignments more effectively.

Working in groups in a writing class can provide tremendous advantages. “Pair writing, can increase critical thinking, motivation and ownership since students are able to -better understand discourse structures, grammar, and vocabulary usage. It can also help students



improve their writing in content, organization, and vocabulary over individual writing.

Collaborative writing can lead to higher quality writing” (Bikowski and Vithanage, 2016).

In Internet-based learning, teachers can divide the class into groups. There are three methods suggested by Agarwal and Novickis (2014). First, the same-ability groups. Students at the same levels are grouped and work freely with their classmates, without needing the teacher to explain everything to each student. Second, mixed-ability groups. These groups are organized to make advanced students help their group. Third, groups with leaders. In these groups, advanced learners are leaders of the groups so that they can help others.

Pair writing is even more powerful when working with the help of the Internet. Students who can use computers easily can look for resources and references, while the others work based on what they know to check, and improve the assignment with the help of the resources found on websites. Students may also have troubles when working with an assigned group, but sometimes they may be left behind if students are greatly involved in such didactic activities the Internet provides. With the right rules, guidance and supervision problems can be solved. It is an extra work for teachers that it is worth it. That is why teachers have to look for more didactic activities, and different information to encourage learners to work in groups and motivate them. And that is another advantage as we will see below.

**Information.** Most teachers are provided with textbooks for their classes. Teachers can use those textbooks to find information and complement it with Internet resources. The Internet allows teachers to quickly find the information they need for the class, as well as obtaining information from students (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014).

In Internet-based writing classes, teachers focus on making classes more didactic and taking advantage of the information found on the Internet. They feel comfortable using different resources which means to be computer literate. This way, teachers get more involved with the

activities offering students a variety of different activities which can be incentives, and encourage them to participate and be motivated.

Language teachers can make their classes individualized and personalized, resulting in self-empowerment and autonomy in learning (Warschauer, et al., 1996). The Internet provides information that teachers and students cannot find in textbooks and worksheets.

Besides, according to Warschauer, et al. (1996), teachers can find different resources on the Internet for their classes and share their ideas and knowledge, as well as getting new information from other teachers using web pages, forums, etc. After knowing the advantages the Internet has, we can proceed to analyze some of the disadvantages Internet-based education may have.

### **Knowing the Disadvantages of an Internet-Based Writing Class**

**Individual Work.** Working individually in a pure Internet-based class may be difficult since not all schools have enough computers for students to be placed individually. Computers and access to the Internet are expensive (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014). But, if possible, the Internet is a powerful tool when providing a student with the exact information to fulfill their needs.

**Resources.** Teachers have difficulties finding appropriate teaching materials and integrating Internet resources into their lessons, because of the vast amount of information available on the Internet, and the little time to look for useful information (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014). Thus, students can easily get inaccurate or outdated information online.

Besides, computers and access to the Internet are expensive. Most educational institutions cannot afford a computer and may not support Internet-based classes, since computer rooms are needed as well as technicians to make the computers and network work properly (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014). Gregoire (1996) also talks about how complex the inclusion of the Internet as a didactical strategy in an educational community, which is the ultimate goal of

this research, can be. He says that these communities need to be well-informed in order to accept it.

Since Internet sources are countless and not all of them are reliable, teachers have to be trained and learn how to use this tool in an appropriate way, which can be sometimes hard and this may be another disadvantage.

**Teachers' Preparation.** An important research on this topic is the one entitled "Alfabetización en TIC: Un proceso de investigación con profesores de instituciones oficiales en Girardot, Cundinamarca, Colombia" (Cárdenas and Vargas, 2010). The objective of that research was to train 250 teachers to teach English using the Internet. The main result was that even though all English teachers received training in the use of the Internet, many of them still preferred to carry out their classes in the traditional way. Even if the Internet is a worldwide known tool, some teachers are not comfortable using it since they may think it is complicated. They are used to traditional teaching methods or materials and they hesitate to try new things.

To implement the Internet in writing classes, both students and teachers must be computer-literate because using the Internet means being good at computers in order to use them properly. That may take time and effort which can discourage teachers and educational institutions (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014).

In addition, the available resources may cause confusion among students and discourage them from participating, if they are not well guided. Here, teachers should work as facilitators, helping students build their own learning strategies. Teachers role includes planning, analyzing, organizing, coordinating, and problem-solving in a student-centered environment, which can be a problem with large classes when keeping discipline (Agarwal and Novickis, 2014), since students can get distracted in other websites different from those required for the class.

The two approaches used to teach and learn the writing skill were covered, but for a complete understanding of the topic, a proposal with a general comparison between Traditional classes and Internet-based classes is shown below.

### **Proposal to Boost Writing Skill Instruction**

The Internet is constantly growing in popularity and availability. Nowadays, it is being used in many fields such as education and businesses (Warschauer, et al., 2000). For this reason, teachers are being interested in using it for their classes, especially those who teach English as a second language. Learners get motivated by using computers and the Internet which encourage them to continue learning at their own pace, and changing the boring and uninteresting perspective students have about writing in English classes.

The Internet can be a powerful tool when used as an online communication medium in language and writing classes (Warschauer, Shetzer & Meloni, 2000) since it offers lots of different materials that cannot be found in textbooks or lectures and the information is varied, easy to obtain, up-to-date, free to access, authentic and easy to understand. By using it, teachers can provide students with authentic settings to use the target language.

Then, the aim of this proposal is to enhance the writing skill through the implementation of Internet- based activities in the classroom, in order to complement the information found in traditional textbooks. Activities in this proposal are designed taking into account the student-centered approach (Huba and Freed, 2000) and with the help of Internet materials such as games, online activities, and handouts, which are attractive and contextualized for students to motivate and help them to improve the writing skill.

Thus, in this proposal, activities are based on common topics found in traditional textbooks, such as learning vocabulary on food and giving personal information, as well as talking about likes and dislikes. The topics proposed in the textbooks will be taught through the

use of Internet-based activities from the web page “Anglomaniacy” and “British Council LearnEnglish Teens” and the activities are focused on enhancing the writing skill.

For example, in a traditional class, when teaching and learning vocabulary about food, students would be expected to memorize it through repetition and translation of the items to Spanish (Tharp, 1932). But, in an Internet-based class, teachers can look for the same topic on the Internet and complement the information with the web page “Anglomaniacy” which is created for kids to learn English through games, stories, songs, and didactic exercises, such as reading and matching activities, crosswords, word search games, etc. Knowing the fact that kids love games and are enthusiastic when learning through computers (Gregoire, 1996), this web page can be useful to the learning process.

Moreover, for teaching students to introduce themselves, and talking about their likes and dislikes, learners in traditional classes were often expected to write down about themselves using coherent sentences and appropriate vocabulary learned in class, using dictionaries or the help of the teacher, which could be tedious and boring. But, in an Internet-based class, teachers can look for a different activity using resources from “British Council LearnEnglish Teens” which is a web page created for teens to learn and practice English through podcasts, videos, interactive exercises, and worksheets. Besides, here, teachers can use Facebook, blogs or emails to post useful information or activities, give feedback to students, and make learners chat with partners in order to get help from them, considering Vygotsky’s (1978, p.86) concept of scaffolding. This can be an interesting class, taking advantage of the fact that teenagers really like using Facebook, blogs, and writing emails.

The activities found in “Anglomaniacy” will be addressed to basic users of English language, placed in an A2, 1 level according to MEN (2006). Learners are in fourth grade and their ages may rank between nine and ten years old (See appendix A for a detailed explanation).

The activities found on “British Council LearnEnglish teens” will be addressed to students of pre-intermediate level or B1, 1 (MEN, 2006). Learners are in eighth grade and their ages rank between thirteen and fourteen years old (See appendix B for a detailed explanation). Teachers mainly need to have a computer lab available for carrying out the lessons.

The potential of the Internet can be enormous if teachers make efforts to find and use Internet resources with a positive attitude. The use of the Internet supports the learner-centred classroom that is a current pedagogical preference in EFL, instead of the traditional teacher-centred classroom. Without being aware, learners may no longer consider English writing classes as a required subject in school. Instead, they may consider them as a motivating and out of the ordinary activity.

Even if sometimes Internet resources are difficult to use with textbooks, or the information is time consuming, difficult to obtain and understand, if a teacher knows how to look for it and knows what kind of resources are useful, it is worth it. For some teachers, it may be difficult to use the Internet with their students because of limited computer facilities, limited class hours, inappropriate class size and limited technical support. But, they can just look for resources at home, and bring those materials to the class.

The Internet can be powerful, useful, and motivating when teaching writing classes. But, for the effective implementation of it, teachers need to be competent enough to use Internet-based materials in the classroom. As suggested by some teachers, courses should be offered to those who need to learn how to use Internet resources, how to create or select Internet-based activities, how to plan Internet-assisted lessons and how to integrate Internet resources into the classroom. Through training and a positive attitude, teachers would be able to succeed in this way of teaching. The first change in relation to goals is in our minds, in the minds of teachers. We must believe that change is possible so that we can move forward (Altablero, 2005).

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, the purpose of this paper was to show the advantages and disadvantages of traditional vs. Internet-based in writing classes, highlighting the important role of the latter. There is no doubt that Internet resources provide learners and educators with innovative and motivating ways to maximize the English language teaching and learning processes, and enhance the writing skill.

The traditional writing class instruction does not provide students with diverse knowledge because of the lack of authentic, interesting materials and motivation from students which make the teaching and learning process harder. Students work better and more efficiently when there is something connected to modern technologies in the classroom, in this case the Internet. Although the Internet is vital, it will never replace language teachers, but it can make the English language teaching and learning of the writing skill easier for teachers and students. It is, therefore, only a matter of time and attitude until all people of educational institutions realize the great importance of the Internet in teaching and learning processes. Then, let us take into consideration its use in order to maximize English teaching and learning opportunities and make writing classes more entertaining. It is now known that the Internet can be a powerful tool and students are considerably familiar with the Internet, so, why do not we take advantage of it?

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## Appendix A

### Lesson Plan 1

- **Time:** 1 hour
- **Age:** 9 to 10 years old
- **Grade:** 4th
- **Level:** basic users, A2, 1.
- **Topic:** Food.
- **Setting:** computer lab.
- **Materials:** Textbook, board, pictures, markers, computer room, Internet, printed handouts.

TIME	TASK-DESCRIPTION
	In this case, the teacher will complement the information found in textbook with didactic activities from the web page: <a href="http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/index.html">http://www. anglomaniacy. pl/index. html</a>
5 MIN	Warm-up: The teacher starts the lesson telling students what his/her favorite food is. Then she/he asks some students what their favorite food is, to contextualize the topic a little bit more.
	<p>Beforehand, the teacher uses the web page called Anglomaniacy and finds a list of vocabulary and pictures to download.</p> <p>Read and Match: <a href="http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodPT1.pdf">http://www. anglomaniacy. pl/pdf/foodPT1. pdf</a></p> <p>Teachers could also send the materials used in class, using email, in case students want to check them at home, or print them for them.</p>
15 MIN	The teacher brings the pictures and the names of the target items and sticks them on the board. Then, the teacher makes students match them in front of the class, creating short

	<p>simple sentences to contextualize the vocabulary.</p> <p>(Vocabulary: ice cream, bread, eggs, hamburger, buns, cake, butter, chips, cheese, sausages).</p> <p>Example: My favorite ice cream flavor is vanilla.</p> <p>My mom likes eating strawberry bread.</p> <p>I like eating scrambled eggs for breakfast.</p> <p>David is buying a hamburger at McDonald's.</p> <p>Buns with butter are delicious.</p> <p>Pedro hates chocolate cakes.</p> <p>Ana loves popcorn with lots of butter.</p> <p>Daniel and Lizeth do not like potato chips.</p> <p>My mom makes the best cheese sandwiches ever.</p> <p>Andrea is cooking sausages for the picnic.</p>
	<p>As the students are in a computer lab, the teacher proceeds to explain the steps for next activities which will be carried out using the Internet. Teachers can have the computers ready beforehand, or make students look for the web pages and materials that are needed for the class by themselves.</p>
<p>35 MIN</p>	<p>The teacher gives instructions (in Spanish if necessary): on Google, type anglomaniacy. Then, on the top of the web page click on Vocabulary, and topic-based units. Then, choose in Vocabulary topics: Food. Go down and click on Picture Dictionary. Click on the images and learn the words. Use the interactive flashcards with your partners. Go down, click on one of the practice activities. You can choose the Food Spelling game, the Food Guessing Game. Finally, go down and choose the Food Picture Test (the one</p>

	with the bunny). Students should try to score more than 6 points.
	There is no limited time for the activities in the webpage, so that, the groups can complete the activities at their own pace. If some students complete all the tasks faster than the others, the teacher can give them the opportunity to choose a different game of the webpage and practice more.
5 MIN	Homework: The teacher gives students the printed handouts that are in the webpage to practice the vocabulary at home. Students have to bring them next class and socialize the answers through an elimination game with Eeny Meeny Miny Moe song.
	Teachers can replace some of the games for a printed handout to be completed during the class hours, rather than at home. Students here could be divided into small groups, taking into account the three methods suggested by Agarwal and Novickis (2014).  Crossword: <a href="http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodC.pdf">http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodC.pdf</a>  Word Search: <a href="http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodW.pdf">http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodW.pdf</a>  Picture Test: <a href="http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodPT4.pdf">http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodPT4.pdf</a>  Picture Test: <a href="http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodPT3.pdf">http://www.anglomaniacy.pl/pdf/foodPT3.pdf</a>
	Assessment: the teacher will grade students according to their performance in the Test Activity and the fulfillment of the printed handouts.



## Appendix B

### Lesson Plan 2

- **Time:** 1 hour
- **Age:** 13 to 14 years old
- **Grade:** 8th
- **Level:** Pre-intermediate. B1, 1.
- **Topic:** Introducing yourself, expressing likes and dislikes.
- **Setting:** computer lab.
- **Materials:** Textbook, computer room, Internet, Facebook, printed handouts.

TIME	TASK-DESCRIPTION
	In this case, the teacher will use didactic activities from the web page: <a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/</a>
5 MIN	Warm-up: the teacher sticks the logo of Facebook on the board, and asks students what they know about it. Do you like using Facebook? What for? How often? Students will say that they use it for chatting, sharing pictures, etc. Then, the teacher tells students that they will join a Facebook group created by the teacher.
	<p>The teacher will create a facebook group in advance, where the groups have to post the texts they created, in order to share them with the teacher and the other groups. Here, students are expected to read all the conversations and get feedback from the teacher and their partners (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Students can chat with their designed partners to ask for help.</p> <p>Also, the teacher divides the class into groups beforehand, since the conversations will be between groups. For example: if there are 35 students, there will be 5 groups of 4 students, and 5</p>

<p>groups of 3 students.</p> <p>GROUPS OF 4 STUDENTS-----GROUPS OF 3 STUDENTS</p> <p>Team 1 -----will chat with-----Team A</p> <p>Team 2 -----will chat with-----Team B</p> <p>Team 3 -----will chat with-----Team C</p> <p>Team 4 -----will chat with-----Team D</p> <p>Team 5 -----will chat with-----Team E</p>	
<p>10</p>	<p>The teacher divides the class into small groups and makes sure there is at least one student who is a Facebook user. Then, the teacher shows some examples of texts where people introduce themselves and describe their likes and dislikes through an email or a blog, and posts them, so that students can check the information whenever they want.</p> <p>email:</p> <p><a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/introducing_yourself_by_email_email_1.pdf">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/introducing_yourself_by_email_email_1.pdf</a></p> <p>Blog: <a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/introducing_yourself_blog_blog_3.pdf">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/introducing_yourself_blog_blog_3.pdf</a></p> <p>Email: <a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/an_email_to_a_new_friend_email.pdf">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/an_email_to_a_new_friend_email.pdf</a></p>
<p>40</p> <p>MIN</p>	<p>Students follow the examples and tips and create a similar text with their partners using Facebook. Since classes are large, students work in groups and introduce a fictional character or one of the members of the group, and post the texts in the Facebook group. Students here can chat with one of the other groups.</p>
<p>The teacher tells students that they can use Facebook strictly for the fulfillment of the class</p>	

activities, and makes sure to constantly pass by their seats to check their progress.	
5 MIN	<p>Homework: the teacher provides a worksheet for students to bring next class to socialize the answers and clear out any doubts that may arise.</p> <p>Example of worksheet: <a href="http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/an_email_to_a_new_friend_-_exercises.pdf">http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/an_email_to_a_new_friend_-_exercises.pdf</a></p>
Then the teacher checks students' publications and provides feedback commenting on the Facebook group. Students can reply the comments in case they have questions.	
<p>Assessment: for grading the activities, the teacher can take into account the length of the text, creativity, and the performance and interaction of students during the activity.</p> <p>The same activities can be carried out using emails or blogs created by the teacher, instead of Facebook.</p>	