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TRABAJO DE FIN DE MASTER

Improving communication in the EFL classroom through short story reading

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Valladolid, 2020-2021

ABSTRACT

Communication is the basis of our daily life. We are constantly communicating, either with others or with ourselves. Therefore, even if we are used to communicating, it is necessary to put it into practice in different contexts, and even in different languages. Although the four main skills (oral and written production and reception) are taught in English in secondary education, sometimes they are not taught in real contexts. Therefore, students end up sounding robotic, using a language that does not sound natural when communicating. To solve this problem, this paper proposes to introduce literature as a source for students to have a topic to discuss and learn about – literary texts are used as a basis to propose activities, following different methodologies, in which students have the opportunity to practice these said skills in real contexts, which will ultimately improve their communication competence in the English language. If well applied, the advantages are several: students develop a taste for reading, their exposure to real language is increased, and they find it more engaging than traditional activities.

Key words: communicative competence, CLT, TBLT, literature in the EFL classroom, language skills.

RESUMEN

La comunicación es la base de nuestra vida diaria. Estamos comunicándonos constantemente, ya sea con otros o con nosotros mismos. Por eso, aunque estemos acostumbrados a comunicarnos, es necesario ponerlo en práctica en diferentes contextos, e incluso en diferentes idiomas. A pesar de que en la Educación Secundaria se enseñan las cuatro principales destrezas en inglés (producción y recepción oral y escrita), en ocasiones no se hace dentro de contextos reales. Por lo tanto, los alumnos acaban sonando robóticos, utilizando un idioma que no suena natural a la hora de comunicarse. Para solventar este problema, este ensayo propone introducir la literatura como una fuente para que los alumnos tengan un tema sobre el que discutir y aprender – se utilizan textos literarios como base para proponer actividades, que siguen distintas metodologías, en las que los alumnos tengan la oportunidad de practicar dichas destrezas en contextos reales, lo que acabará mejorando su competencia comunicativa en inglés. Si esto se aplica bien, las ventajas son varias: los alumnos desarrollan el gusto por la lectura, están expuestos más tiempo al lenguaje real, y les resulta más atractivo que las actividades tradicionales, entre otras.

Palabras clave: competencia comunicativa, CLT, TBLT, literatura en el aula de EFL, destrezas lingüísticas.

Index

Justification

It is a fact that teenagers do not have a deep-rooted reading habit. They read less and less, and if they do read, it is usually out of obligation with the compulsory readings they have in high school. Attempts have been made to introduce literature in secondary school classrooms, and they succeeded. However, this introduction to literature was and is done in a way that does not lure students towards reading.

This paper was written taking into account the Spanish Organic Law of Education for the educational quality improvement (8/2013 LOMCE), the Royal Decree 1105/2014, the Order EDU 362/2015, and the Order ECD/65/2015. These laws place great importance on reading and the skills derived from it. This is why I consider it important to emphasize reading in the classroom. However, it is difficult to engage students in reading just for the sake of reading. Sometimes, we need to have a goal that goes beyond.

This leads me to believe that if literature is used in the classroom as an excuse for other activities, students will read and, in turn, improve their communicative competence in the target language (English). In order for those students to achieve this improvement, they have to practice mostly with the four main skills (oral and written production and reception). Thus, it is the job of the teacher to provide language learners with opportunities to practice these said skills. Here, in this paper, I provide examples on how to combine literature with language skill practice.

1.   Introduction

We communicate every day, whether we meet people or not. We also communicate with ourselves, while we think or talk to ourselves. Communication is something we practice constantly, and something that is not taught as such through explanations, but something that we are not born with either, it is not innate (Anonymous, 2012). We learn to communicate day by day through observation and interaction – practice makes perfect.

However, a few years ago, communication began to be seen as a field of research. To such an extent that it is even taught in schools and high schools. Nevertheless, it was taught from a theoretical point of view (e.g., sender, receiver, message), not from a practical one. Lately, experts started to talk about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (see section 3.1 below), which puts the focus on several elements and components of a language/culture, thus teaching communication, somehow, without actually teaching it.

Carey (1989) says that communication was not studied or did not arouse interest because it is an everyday habit, something that is part of our daily life, and we do not tend to pay attention to those things, they are natural to us, so we simply accept them without questioning. However, nowadays there has been a radical turn and if there is anything that is under exhaustive study is communication, precisely because it is the bases of our life (Vidales-Gonzáles, 2015).

An interesting way of teaching or improving the foreign language learners' communication competence is through the introduction of literature in the classroom. Since teenagers do not usually read literary texts for pleasure, there are several reading programs promoted by the Spanish government (see section 5 below).

Introducing literature in the classroom has several benefits: it is motivating, it is authentic material, students get to know a different culture, they learn new vocabulary within a real context, it serves as a model for writing, provides an opportunity for discussions, and several others. If students like what they are learning, and how they are learning it, they will be more engaged in their learning process, leading to better academic results.

To improve these said results, this proposal combines literature in the target language (English), the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT), and the Task Based Language Teaching methodology (TBLT).

It is my opinion that, in addition to teaching literature so that students acquire an optimal or good reading comprehension level, working with literature from another point of view is necessary. Students need sometimes to leave the linguistic analysis of the literary texts aside. Teachers should not always focus on the grammatical aspects, but also on the literary ones. Literary texts can be exploited in many different ways – they allow students to reflect on several and diverse topics, to share their opinions and ideas.

For this reason, this dissertation focuses on the improvement of communication through reading, and more specifically, through the reading of a short story. In order to do so, this paper deals with a theoretical section and a practical one. The theoretical section discusses about communication as such (the different types of communication that exist, whether communication can be taught, the communicative competence, and the communicative language teaching approach), and about the language skills that students need to practice and improve so as to enhance their communication abilities. It also deals with the habit of reading in secondary education, and how the government and the schools, with the help of the teachers, make an effort to lure students towards reading. It finishes with the way in which literature is introduced in the foreign language teaching classroom.

The practical part provides an example of what can be done to improve communication using literature as a means. It firstly offers a hypothetical context of a school, talks about the different laws that rule education in Spain, and in Castilla y León, and comments on the methodologies that will be followed when designing the activities. Broadly speaking, the aim of the sessions are to improve students' communicative competence through the creation of a blog in which they will post some activities done in the classroom, and their thoughts on the readings done through the academic year.

2.   Understanding communication

It is a fact that communication is not exclusively a human aspect, since there is evidence which proves that animals do communicate as well (Dash & Bhattacharyya, 2017; Hargie & Dickson, 2005). The main difference between these two types of communication is that people have the ability to talk, while animals communicate through sounds.

Communication does not exist because we want to. We communicate because we have to – it is a necessity we have since we belong to a social specie. Besides, it is impossible for us not to do so (Watzlawick, Beavin & Jackson, 1967). Even when people do not say anything, or walk away, they are communicating – the implicit meaning here is that they do not want to have contact with the rest.

It is believed that the first words that humans produced were actually onomatopoeias (Anonymous, 2012, p. 3), which helped them to share information, alert of danger, or even scare away what was threatening them (Poe, 2011, p. 27). Thus, talking was the only means of communication humans have had for at least 150,000 years besides from gesturing, up until the writing skill was developed (Poe, 2011, p. 36). Once this new way of communication took place, information could be spread around the world, and communication was set at a whole new level. Now people could not only communicate with those around them, but also with people who were far away as well.

However, talking and writing are not the only methods or techniques we have so as to communicate. We can also interact through gestures, noises, codes, and even through movements (non-verbal communication). These processes involve two or more people (a sender, and a receiver), and a message in order for it to be a communication action as such.

Communication is a field that has been under study for many years. It all started with the consideration of rhetoric by Aristotle in the 6th century BC (Anonymous, 2012; Hernández-Guerrero & García-Tejera, n.d.; López-Noreña, 2010). According to Ramírez (2001, p. 66), rhetoric studies the different ways in which human beings express their thoughts, persuade and communicate with their pairs through the usage of words. However, it was not up until the 1940s and 1950s that experts started to talk, study, and write about "Communication theory" (Berger, 2008, p. 1; Fiske, 1990, p. 6; Vidales-Gonzáles, 2015, p. 12).

This has resulted in multiple organizations (dictionaries, encyclopedias, experts) trying to provide a definition for the word 'communication'. The Merriam-Webster dictionary (2021)

defines communication as "a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior." The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2021) says that communication is "the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or of giving people information." Fatimayin (2018) states that "communication means speaking to or with some other person near or far away, either face-to-face through speech, telephone calls or text messages, body language, signs and so on." Yagosesky (2001, p. 1) describes communication as a human relationship process in which we express and share our reality's perception with the intention, whether it is conscious or not, of influencing others' thoughts, attitudes and behaviors.

All of them seem to agree on communication being a process by which people exchange information. However, there is no full consensus among these experts. Furthermore, depending on the field in which communication is being carried out or studied, it will have one meaning or another. Generally speaking, we achieve effective communication when the receiver understands the intentions behind the information provided by the sender, when we receive feedback (Fatimayin, 2018; Miller, 1966). But the meaning of effective communication changes when referring to it when talking about businesses – in this case, effective communication is achieved when the sender accomplishes a desired reaction from the receiver, in other words, when they reach an agreement (Murphy, Hildebrandt, & Thomas, 1997).

For communication to exist at least a sender, a receiver, a message, a code (encode – decode), and a channel are required (Hargie & Dickson, 2005, pp. 12-15; Kelley, 2017). The process goes as follows: the sender is the person who firstly develops an idea or thinks about the information they want to transmit to another person, and then encodes that message. This means that the first thing we do when we want to communicate is think about what we want to say, and then process that information and select and use a code that both the sender and the receiver will understand.

Once this process has finished, the sender produces that information, either orally, written, or by gesticulating (also known as medium). The way in which the sender decides to send the message is called the channel, and it must be free of barriers – the sender needs to avoid interferences when communicating so as to ensure that the message is delivered properly. After the sender has conveyed the message, the receiver picks up the information prior to decoding the message. If the receiver does not understand exactly what the sender intended to

transmit, the receiver failed to decode the message properly. Having done so, the receiver either accepts or rejects that information – the receiver may store or discard this data.

The last step in the process is to provide a feedback to the sender. This feedback is crucial since it allows the sender to check whether communication has been achieved correctly. The fact that the receiver is now providing feedback, implies that he or she becomes now the sender, and the process starts all over again. It is important to mention that this process takes place within a context, which always has an effect in communication. This context does not only imply the physical setting, but also their knowledge, their emotions, personality, age, values, attitudes, goals, and more (Hargie & Dickson, 2005, pp. 22-23).

In regard to communication, different types can be found. Communication may depend on the people who we communicate with, on the medium or channel used in order to carry out communication, on the direction towards which it is aimed, and others. However, due to length restrictions, this dissertation will only deal with types of communication according to the number of people involved in the act of communicating: intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and public communication. This topic will be dealt with in the thereafter subsection 2.1.

There are several elements that have an effect on communication. This does not mean that these aspects are necessarily negative, nor positive, they simply influence communication in the sense that, depending on the context, they will convey the message in one way or another. Independently of these elements, or of how the sender expresses the information and how the receiver interprets it, there is always a purpose behind every act of communication (Hargie & Dickson. 2005).

2.1. Types of communication according to the number of people involved

As it has been mentioned in the previous section, communication can be carried out in different forms, that is, through words, gestures, or noises, among others. In the same vein, there are several types of communication, such as intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication, and public communication.

2.1.1. Intrapersonal communication

It is believed that the perception we have about ourselves depends on how people around us treat us since we are born, which eventually develops in our self-image, and then in our personality (Anonymous, 2012; Wenburg & Wilmot, 1973; Yagosesky, 2001). This self-image

and personality will determine how we communicate with the rest of the world – if we believe we are smart, we will talk as such; if we think we are dumb, we will talk accordingly.

From this, it can be deduced that whatever it is a person says or expresses to the world so as to communicate, that information has been already communicated to the self through thoughts. The fact that this type of communication develops in our thoughts implies that it takes place in our minds, it is internal. Thus, the context for it is quite narrow.

This type of communication is prompted by stimuli, either internal or external (Anonymous, 2012, p. 7; Wenburg & Wilmot, 2973). A person may communicate with his or herself about an internal stimulus such as being thirsty, or about an external stimulus such as having an argument and then thinking about it. What intrapersonal communication does is basically "help us achieve or maintain social adjustment" (Dance & Larson, 1972, p. 51). In these cases, we can talk to ourselves to calm down when going through a difficult situation, or to process our emotions while experiencing a traumatic event. Nonetheless, intrapersonal communication also happens when we are bored and start to think about things so as to keep us entertained – it is another way of killing time.

Intrapersonal communication proves to be a mystery for those dedicated to research in the field of communication since it happens within the self, and it does not always serve a specific and planned purpose. Besides, people do not usually express every thought (e.g., hypothetical conversations). These streams of consciousness usually take place in literature.

2.1.2. Interpersonal communication

In contrast to intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication materializes between people. That is, for it to happen, it requires at least two people "whose lives mutually influence one another" (Anonymous, 2012, p. 8), with the ultimate intention of reaching certain goals (Zayas-Agüero, 2011, p. 35). Through this type of communication humans are able to develop, maintain and even end relationships with others. The scope of reasons for carrying out interpersonal communication is wide – it can go from simply greeting someone, to starting and engaging in a relationship with another person.

The contexts in which this type of communication takes place are also broad and miscellaneous: formal (e.g., at work), informal (e.g., with friends), private, in public, and so on. This implies that the sender has to make an extra effort when encoding a message in order to

adjust it to the context in which the communication is developing, and has to take into account the several internal and external factors that are inherent to the receiver or receivers of the message so as to achieve a smooth, effective and accurate communication.

The fact that it involves a receiver that is different from the sender of the message can cause what is called miscommunication – the receiver could misinterpret the meaning of the message produced by the sender, some information may get lost, or culture may interfere (what is a joke for one of the participants may result offensive for the other). This provokes some kind of uncertainty during the process since we are not completely sure about whether the message will be accurately conveyed and decoded, and thus, the participants can feel insecure about achieving proper communication (Berger, 2008; p. 3). This is so because in interpersonal communication the sender depends on the codification of the message, and the ability of the receiver to decode and understand exactly what the sender was conveying, unlike in intrapersonal communication, in which the entire process is controlled by only one person.

2.1.3.   Group communication

Group communication happens among three or more people. The first contact humans have within a group is usually with the family. As we grow, we enter other groups, which change (some people leave, and others may come), and that makes us conform to that new situation. According to Hargie and Dickson (2005, p. 406), "individuals rely on group membership in order to achieve goals and satisfy certain felt needs that would be either more difficult or impossible to satisfy alone". Said groups are not limited to family and friends, they extend to work and education as well, and in this last two, group communication or group work has been increasing and encouraged lately.

This type of communication shares some characteristics with interpersonal communication: it can take place in several contexts (e.g., at a club, at church, etc.), and it is subject to misinterpretations too. In fact, these misunderstandings are increased by the fact that several people are involved in the process, which makes it harder for the participants to communicate accurately. This is so because the information has to be encoded taking into account every single member of the group and their personal contexts. The process is easier when the sender knows the receivers, but on occasions we find ourselves working in groups with people that are unfamiliar. This situation entails not only understanding the rest and

making yourself understood by getting to know how to communicate with them, but also getting to know those people, all at once, making the process more complicated

Group communication involves interpersonal communication, however, in contrast to the latter, group communication goals are usually common to those that belong to the association (Anonymous, 2012, p. 9; Hargie & Dickson, 2005, p. 404), particularly in formal contexts such as in education. While with interpersonal communication people seek to achieve something at an individual level according to their personal needs, with group communication, the whole group works towards achieving a common target.

2.1.4. Public communication

Public communication is focused mainly on the sender of the message, that is, the sender discloses the information to an audience. It is the case of speeches such as politic meetings, academic presentations, or trying to convince consumers to purchase your product (Kelley, 2017). Its particularities are (1) that the sender and the receiver (audience) are not necessarily related, nor are expected to develop a relationship, and (2) the public is not compelled to provide feedback since it is not a two-way communication, but a one-way one.

This kind of communication requires practice and thoughtful preparation (Kelley, 2017), which is not the case of the previously mentioned types of communication – the latter are spontaneous and are acquired through experiencing them. Public communication involves rehearsals and a careful choice of words and expressions so as to accomplish a specific goal.

2.2. Teachability of communication – Can it be taught?

When in school, students are taught how communication works. Teachers talk about the communication process, and about the elements that take part in the procedure (sender, receiver, message, code, channel). Notwithstanding, people are not usually instructed on how to communicate as such on a daily basis.

Regardless of whether we are a native speaker of a language, or a second-language speaker, we sometimes struggle to find the correct word or set of expressions so as to convey certain information or meaning. In those cases, we usually resort to gestures, definitions, or noises. These methods are called communication strategies or communicative language strategies (Council of Europe, 2018; Faucette, 2001; Maleki, 2007). According to Faerch and Kasper (as cited in Maleki, 2007, p. 584), "communication strategies are potentially conscious

plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular goal".

These communication strategies are usually developed individually through experiencing communication in itself. Some experts believe that, when teaching a language, the teacher should focus only on teaching the language, disregarding communication strategies for when the students cannot find the right expression or word (Kellerman, 1991). Some researchers wonder why someone would teach communication strategies to learners of a foreign language when they already use them in their mother tongue – they could simply apply those L1 strategies to their L2 (Faucette, 2001, p. 2). On the other hand, other authors versed in the matter assure that communicative strategies should be taught and that they can be improved if guidance is provided to the student (Faerch and Kasper, as cited in Maleki, 2007, p. 585).

From what has been said, although the action of communicating is not taught *per se*, some elements can be explained so as to ease the act of communication when encountering vocabulary or expressions problems either in the native or in a foreign language. In order to do so, attention needs to be paid to the strategic competence, which according to Canale and Swain (1980, p. 30) is a "verbal and non-verbal communication [strategy] that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence".

Faerch and Kasper (1984, p. 48) state that, when using a second language and facing communication problems that are caused by a limited knowledge in the target language, the speaker may do one out of two things: they can "adopt avoidance behavior", which implies that they give up on transmitting the message and therefore stopping any kind of communication; or they can "rely on achievement behavior", thus pursuing their goal by arranging another plan to let the receiver know what they intend to say.

Some of the strategies that can be used or/and taught are the following (Faucette, 2001, pp. 36-37; Kárpáti, 2017, pp. 6-7): approximation (implies using a word that does not express exactly what is intended to say, but is similar), paraphrase (by providing a description of what we want to say), foreignizing (using the L1 word adapting it phonologically to the L2), coining a word (creating a word in the L1 and/or the L2), abandonment (letting it be for not knowing how to explain or say it), or appeal for assistance (asking for help), among others.

Research studies have proved that teaching communication strategies is not only possible, but it also enhances the process of communication within students of a foreign language, in spite of already having and using these strategies with their mother tongue (Faucette, 2001; Maleki, 2007; Teng, 2012).

3. Communicative competence

Savignon (2017) explains that, when professors teaching English to international students in the United States of America realized in the 1940s that the grammar-translation teaching method, which was the first method that introduced literature in the EFL classroom, was no longer innovative or revolutionary, they resorted to teaching the language as "a set of grammatical structures" to later evolve the audio-lingual methodology, which included teaching the four skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. These language skills will be addressed in section 4 below.

Noam Chomsky (as cited in Savignon, 2017, p. 2) was the first to point out that focusing on the linguistic competence (the four skills aforementioned) resulted more innovative. In response to this idea, Hymes (as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2008, p. 42) suggested the terminology "communicative competence", with the intention of broadening its scope. It allowed students to know the grammatical structures of the target language (English) along with the four skills (linguistic competence), and also to know how to use that language in a given context, taking into account the social norms as well (communicative competence).

Experts reached the conclusion that a language cannot be fully and properly taught when it is done separately from its social context and culture – having a notion solely on the grammar of a language is not sufficient in order to communicate in the target language. In this regard, Celce-Murcia (2008, p. 51) states that language instruction should include "cultural and cross-cultural instruction", including literature, history, geography, among others.

Thus, language teaching started to be approached from another point of view. They broke with the tradition of teaching an L2 focusing exclusively on the grammar-translation or the audio-lingual methodologies and began to include some kind of cultural preparation, so as to adapt the communicative competence to practical needs (Rickheit & Strohner, 2008).

In 2018, the Council of Europe composed the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR-Companion volume), which follows the idea that communication is more than mastering the aforementioned skills, states that the communicative competence involves linguistic aspects, as well as sociolinguistic and pragmatic ones. The CEFR also makes a change in the terminology and, instead of referring to the four skills present in the communicative competence as speaking, listening writing and reading, the CEFR calls

them reception and production activities. Furthermore, they consider that these two activities should go along with interaction and mediation activities.

As for the reception and production activities or skills, they will be discussed in section 4. The interaction activity refers to the combination and connection of both the reception and production activities. It includes conversation, discussion, or information exchange, among others. One may argue that this interaction activity is the same as the oral production (speaking). However, the CEFR distinguishes it by stating that oral production occurs during a longer period of time, while interaction takes places in short turns.

With relation to mediation activities, the CEFR – Companion Volume (2018, p. 32) states that it "make[s] communication possible between persons who are unable […] to communicate with each other directly". That is, there is a mediator, a person or something that facilitates the process of communication whenever the sender and the receiver of the message have some kind of problem to achieve and complete the process successfully. This mediation activities include, for example, translations.

3.1. Communicative Language Teaching

As it has been said before, teaching a language separately from its culture is possible, but has proved to be ineffective and inefficient. Besides, several authors recommend not doing it since language learners are searching for more than learning exclusively the language. They also want to know about the culture, the history, and they want to be able to communicate in real contexts.

It is on this account that, from the 1960s on, researchers and linguists started to adapt and create new teaching methodologies, and began to talk about Communicative Language Teaching. According to Richards (2006, p. 2), Communicative Language Teaching is "a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom".

Canale and Swain (1980, p. 27) affirm that, in order to apply the communicative approach in the classroom, five principles have to be taken into account: (1) the communicative approach should include, at least, the grammatical competence, the sociolinguistic competence, and communication strategies (strategic competence), (2) learner's communication needs have to

be considered so as to design the lessons, (3) teachers should provide the learners with meaningful realistic communicative interactions, (4) take advantage of the communication skills learners already have in their L1 that are common with their L2, and (5) teachers should provide the learners with "the information, practice, and […] the experience needed to meet their communicative needs in the second language" (p. 28).

In general terms, what this methodology does is avoid traditional approaches to language teaching such as drilling, memorizing, and focusing merely on grammatical structures, thus directing the attention to the grammatical competence, leaving the rest aside. Instead, teachers started to take into account the context when teaching, so that the learners would know what and how to say what they want to express, constantly considering the situation that surrounds them.

This language teaching approach enables language students to practice language in real contexts, as if they were experiencing it in real life. This facilitates the fact that students will know how to apply the knowledge acquired when facing different situations.

In order to achieve all this, it is important that students do not work individually. Working in pairs or groups will help them get used to listening to other people, and most importantly they have the opportunity to have a more active role in the learning process, since the teacher moves from the center of the process to become a monitor or facilitator.

4.   Language skills

Some may argue that language in itself is a skill – people make use of the language after acquiring it. However, when making reference to language skills we usually talk about "micro-skills" and "macro-skills" (Aydoğan, 2014, p. 673). "Micro-skills" point out to vocabulary, grammar, spelling and pronunciation. On the other hand, "macro-skills" are the written and oral reception skills, and the written and oral production skills. For the purpose of this dissertation, only "macro-skills" will be considered. These four "macro-skills" are essential when teaching a foreign language (English in this case), and they should be integrated in the classroom and taught in an effective way. In fact, English teachers tend to focus on them throughout the whole academic year (Marlina, 2018, p. 1).

The "macro-skills" can be divided into two categories: (1) the communication mode and (2) the direction of the communication (Aydoğan, 2014, p. 673; Husain, 2015, p. 2; Rao, 2018, p. 286). As for the communication mode, there are two types, which are the oral mode and the written mode. The listening and the speaking skills belong to the oral mode (oral reception and production – CEFR), while the reading and the writing skills are part of the written mode (written reception and production – CEFR). Moving on to the direction of the communication, there are two types as well. Listening and reading are about receiving a message (the learner has a passive role), while speaking and writing focus on producing a message (the learner has a more active role).

When dealing with the four skills, but specially with those related with production (i.e., speaking and writing), it is essential that students take into account the context in which the communication is taking place. The reason behind this is because they will not talk or write always in the same way – they will have to adjust their vocabulary choices, the grammatical structures they use, and the discursive structures to the context.

It is important to say that aforementioned language skills are connected, they interrelate – there is an interaction, and some of the skills functions as a base for others. For this reason, they all should be taught in the classroom, and students need to be given the opportunity to practice every skill in meaningful activities (Aydoğan, 2014, p. 647). The problem language teachers find when teaching these four communicative activities is that the materials provided by textbooks used in the classroom are not actually authentic, but prefabricated – they are designed to teach a language (Lee, 1995, p. 324). Thus, these materials do not represent how English native speakers communicate in real-life situations or contexts. If students follow

accurately what they are taught in the classroom based on those materials, they end up sounding robotic and unnatural.

4.1. Oral reception

According to Mendelsohn (as cited in Tong-Thi, 2019, p. 268) and Rao (2018, p. 287), the oral reception skill (listening) is the most used when communicating – up to 40-50% of the communication time. For that reason, language teachers cannot overlook this, and it should be taught. However, it was disregarded until the Communicative Language Teaching method appeared (Marlina, 2018, p. 4).

This skill belongs to the oral mode, and the message-receiving direction. In the majority of the cases, when teaching and practicing the listening skill, students are provided with monologues, dialogues or conversations to which they have to answer questions posed by, usually, the textbook. The aim of those activities or questions is to check whether students have correctly and accurately understood the input they received through the audio. This type of tasks links the listening skill with listening comprehension which, according to Buck, is "an active process of constructing meaning and [it] is done by applying knowledge to the incoming sound" (cited in Tong-Thi, p. 269).

There are two types of processes when dealing with the listening skill in the classroom: bottom-up and top-down processes (Marlina, 2018, p. 6; Tong-Thi, 2019, p. 270). The former deals with specific chunks of grammar and vocabulary, while the latter focuses on a more general understanding of the meaning of the oral message.

4.2. Oral production

The oral reception is an essential part of the language in order to teach oral production (speaking). This is because the listening skill provides input for the learners, and is a source of knowledge for them for when they have to speak in terms of connected speech and pronunciation, among others. Thus, these two skills are connected. In the same way that happened with the oral reception, the oral production activity was neglected until the emergence of the audio-lingual method (Marlina, 2018, p. 2). It belongs to the oral mode, and the message-producing direction.

Some experts consider this skill to be the most difficult one to acquire since it "requires command of speech production sub-skills like vocabulary retrieval, choice of grammatical

patterns, and sociocultural competence" (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain cited in Rao, 2018, p. 287). In addition to this, speaking is spontaneous and ephemeral, and usually, English learners do not have many opportunities to practice and use the target language in a context other than the classroom. This is the reason why teachers tend to plan discussions and debates for the lessons, in hopes that students will take advantage of it and speak.

In spite of this, the speaking skill is the one that students want to develop more since it is one of the skills that will allow them to communicate with other people (Kurum, 2016). For that reason, students seek to achieve both accuracy and fluency.

4.3. Written production

In the same way the speaking skill depends on the listening one, the writing skill depends, somehow on the reading skill. It belongs to the written mode, and the productive direction. Different to the speaking skill, which is instantaneous and immediate, writing requires more time since it can be planned, drafted, and modified several times.

Students of English whose L1 is different tend to write having their L1 structures as guide or reference. In other words, L2 English students write according to their L1 writing conventions (Marlina, 2018, p. 8), and they usually differ from those of the target language. In order to amend this, English teachers provide students with models of different genres so that they can follow them.

4.4. Written reception

The reading skill belongs to the written mode and the message-receiving direction. While practicing the written reception, teachers tend to focus on students understanding a text, rather than analyzing it. Rao (2018, p. 288) states that reading "enhances the comprehensive power of learners", which is not only useful when dealing with the reading skill. Besides, reading can help students acquire vocabulary (Aydoğan, 2014, p. 674), different and various grammar and text structures.

According to Davies (cited in Bojovic, 2010, p. 1), some of the sub-skills involved in the reading skill are "identifying word meaning, drawing inferences […], finding answers to questions", understanding different types of information, identifying cohesion-coherence-lexical devices, among others. Also, some experts believe that the reading skill can be divided

into smaller skills such as vocabulary and structural knowledge, content background knowledge, or synthesis strategies.

5.   Reading in secondary education

As it has been said in the introduction, commonly, teenagers lack a reading habit. For this reason, Spanish schools introduced reading projects so as to promote reading among the students. This does not only apply to foreign languages, but it is also applicable to the Spanish students' mother tongue. Broadly speaking, the aim of the education system regarding literature is to lure students towards reading, and this has been carried out by setting a battery of compulsory readings throughout the academic year, and by developing a diverse series of reading projects.

In December 2020, a new Organic Law was passed (Ley Orgánica de Modificación de la LOE - LOMLOE), with which the education curriculum changes. However, this Organic Law is not being implemented yet, and it has not been fully developed (it is not a Royal Decree at the time of writing this thesis). For this reason, and with the purpose of writing this dissertation, the previous law (Ley Orgánica para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa - LOMCE) will be addressed. Besides, it is the law that is currently operating. The LOMCE law was passed in 2013, and it modified the previous law that ruled education (Ley Orgánica de Educación - LOE, passed in 2006).

The LOE law proposed a daily reading time both in primary and secondary school, placed value on school libraries, and started reading plans (Trujillo-Sáez, 2016, p. 98). As of 2014, there were 6717 libraries in Spain, which cost 953 million euros to maintain (Gómez-Hernández, 2016, p. 70). This shows to what extent the government wanted to promote reading among citizens. Having and maintaining public libraries allows people to access information, which guarantees that everyone has the same opportunities. The LOMCE law does not improve the previous law, and blurs the importance that reading and communicative language have in education (Trujillo-Sáez, 2016, p. 102).

Paying attention to both laws, it is clear that, while the LOE was more explicit when promoting a reading habit, the LOMCE seems to be vague – it pays attention to the written receptive skill, but it overlooks specific directions so as to provide teachers with clear instructions on how to proceed with regard to this topic.

Nonetheless, every Autonomous Region has its own Law and Order by which education is administered and handled. In the case of Castilla y León (Boletín Oficial de Castilla y León - BOCYL), according to the Order EDU 362/2015, issued on May 4, which establishes the

educational curriculum and regulates the deployment, assessment, and development of the Compulsory Secondary Education, the reading scope is reduced to a basic understanding of the plot, the characters, and their relationships on fiction stories. It is not up until 4th E.S.O. when the curriculum mentions paying attention to and understanding details about literary texts. As for literature in Baccalaureate, the curriculum adds understanding some implicit ideas, knowing how to express their opinions and ideas about a text, and identifying literary devices such as irony or humor.

It is important to mention that this curriculum does not only apply to the English language, but also to any other language students learn during secondary education (German, French, Portuguese, Italian). However, there is not an explicit way as of how to approach literature in high schools. This is the reason why, as it has been mentioned before, teachers usually set compulsory readings and then students take an exam on the text.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (2021) has developed several projects, on a national level, in which they include literature for children at different age stages and educational levels. Some of these projects are *Las sinsombrero*, in which they talk about several women literary authors and provide audiovisual materials, information about those writers, among other things. Another program is *Scratcheando*, which combines reading and creative writing with graphic design.

One of the projects for 2021-2024 is called *Crece leyendo conmigo crece*. The aims of this program are to (1) promote the reading of books within the children's family and school environment, (2) establishing and promoting a reading habit among children and teenagers, and (3) educate kids and teenagers through reading, writing and other subjects of interest, including social media, science, or mental health (*Crece leyendo conmigo crece*, 2021). The main target of this program is to establish a reading habit during the early stages of childhood and to maintain this habit throughout the following years.

Besides from having programs that involve literature, there is the Proyecto Lingüístico de Centro program, in which the improvement of linguistic communication skills is promoted and supported. In this program the acquisition of receptive and productive written skills and the learning of several languages apart from the mother tongue are some of the topics covered. Unlike the national project *Crece leyendo conmigo crece*, this project is of an autonomous

nature, and each school tailors it according to its context and circumstances, considering the Proyecto Educativo de Centro (CFP de Idiomas, 2017).

5.1. Reading competence assessment in secondary education

It is a well-known fact that the written reception skill assessment has been carried out by sitting students in front of a text, asking questions about it so as to check whether the students have understood what the text is about (usually true or false, or multiple-choice tasks), and making them search for synonyms, covering also the vocabulary aspect. This provides an idea of literature, or reading, being a superficial activity, a task you do solely to learn.

In summary, there is no other connection with literature or reading rather than that of learning, especially if it is about learning a second language. For this reason, students associate reading with studying or with school, and thus, they normally reject literary reading as leisure (Dueñas-Lorente, 2019, p. 100).

The only mention that the BOCYL, within the parameters of the LOMCE law, does regarding reading assessment criteria is in 4th grade of E.S.O. and is the following:

> Know, and use for text comprehension, sociolinguistic aspects related to daily life (study, work and leisure habits and activities), living conditions (habitat, socioeconomic structure), interpersonal relationships (generational, educational, occupational and institutional), and social conventions (attitudes, moral values), as well as general cultural aspects that allow understanding information and ideas present in the text (e.g., historical or literary). (p. 32255)

This, again, provides us with a view of how general and vague the current education law is concerning reading in a foreign language, and how it eventually affects the teaching-learning process, especially when it comes about teaching literature, or simply reading, and assessing this skill.

6.   Reading-communication relation

It is not unreasonable to think that reading goes hand in hand with communication. The text a person reads was written by a sender, who has an audience, i.e., readers. This is so regardless of the type of text. The sender, or the writer, wants to transmit information and convey some meanings in order for an audience to read them. This type of communication would fit the description of a public communication (see section 2.1.4 above).

The fact that someone is writing a text, implies that there is communication. For that person to write, they had to go through a period of reflection on what they wanted to write about (intrapersonal communication). This means that, even if no one reads that text, communication takes place. Furthermore, if that text has an audience, another type of communication is added to the process (public communication).

Some may argue that the act of reading as such is not actually communication because when the audience reads a text, they do not provide feedback to the writer, they simply receive the message conveyed by the writer. However, people read in order to gather data or information about a topic of their interest, especially in educational contexts. Readers always reflect on what they read, and some may write about what they read (reading to write – communication).

For this reason, it could be said that, in the academic context, both the reading skill and the writing skill should be taught together, since they are interrelated. However, this is not always the case. Hirvela states that there is no as much connection as it should between the reading and the writing skill in schools, and that it is due to the fact that teachers are not prepared to interrelate these two skills – they may not know how to interrelate them properly so as to teach them simultaneously (cited in Hadis-Habibi & Sarjit-Singh, 2015, p. 1118). Other authors argue that these skills are taught separately because they are different, and thus, should not be taught at the same time (Jackson, 2009, p. 145).

Having said this, it can be established that many people read so as to communicate, whether it is spoken interaction or a written one. This is so because whenever we read a text, we react to an external stimulus and we reflect on it (intrapersonal communication), we can have a conversation with someone else about that text (interpersonal communication), or we can talk or write about it for an audience (public communication). Some versed in this matter

state that writing or speaking about a reading helps develop critical thinking, thus, it enhances communication.

In fact, there are several studies which prove that students who read more in the target language (L2), acquire better oral and written production skills: speaking and writing (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Janopoulos, 1986; Salyer, 1967; as cited in Krashen, 1993, pp. 27-28). Krashen (1993, p. 32) states that the reading and writing relationship can be, to some extent, directly proportional. However, he considers that writers reach a point in which reading can no longer improve their writing skills, and some other elements come in to play, such as imagination. From this, one can infer that writing has also something else to offer than simply transmitting a message.

Another expert who supports the idea that reading enhances communication is Hedge (1985). She believes that extensive reading helps learners guess meanings of unknown words taking into account the context, and improves the students' overall comprehension, which eventually aids them with producing the language, either speaking or writing. In general, the more we read, the more exposed we are to a language, which is highly beneficial especially when dealing with second language learning.

7.   Literature in the ESL classroom

As it has been said in section 3 above, when teachers used the grammar-translation methodology, literature was their major source. Teachers used literary texts written in the target language students were learning, and students had to translate them into their mother tongue. However, this literature usage had no other role from that of being translated – nor teachers nor students paid attention to the literary aspect or the content. But, during the 1940s, teachers stopped using the grammar-translation methodology, which also ended the use of literary texts in the foreign language classrooms, and started to focus on linguistic aspects such as grammar or pronunciation.

Freeman (1991) defended that language teachers use to design their lessons, in this case English lessons, in the same way their teachers did. That is, language teachers copy what they saw and experienced as students. This implies that literature is hardly ever introduced in classrooms when it comes about secondary education.

It was not up until 1980s that language teachers began to consider introducing literature again in their lessons with the Communicative Approach methodology (Clandfiel, n.d.). This new teaching technique highlighted the importance of using authentic materials in the classroom in order to foster students' communication in the foreign language they are studying. One of the most authentic materials foreign languages teachers can find is literature. This is so because these texts are written by and for native speakers of that language, which means that when they are produced, the writers are not thinking consciously about the linguistic aspects of their native language with the aim of teaching it.

This literature can be included in the classroom in a variety of forms: short stories, novels, plays, poems, etc. Several experts recommend using literature when teaching a foreign language due to its numerous benefits. Reading literary texts exposes language students to real language used in meaningful and diverse contexts, allowing them to practice the four major-skills. This provides second language learners with examples of real English usage, which facilitates language acquisition since it is easier to pick up words or expressions when experienced within contexts. Furthermore, it "appeals to [the students] imagination, develops cultural awareness, and encourages critical thinking about plots, themes, and characters" (Trung, 2009, p. 2), which can result in extra motivation for learners to study the language with more enthusiasm.

In this same vein, when dealing with literature, students are in contact, through the text, with a culture different from their own. Besides, students get to see how people from different cultures react to several situations, and how they act in different contexts, which may vary from one culture to another (Lazar, 1993, p. 17), and fosters tolerance towards other societies and ways of life. Another advantage of using literature in the EFL classroom is the personal enrichment that the reader experiments – they develop emotional intelligence, and critical thinking, among others.

Although the benefits of introducing literature in the EFL classroom are various and evident, it also has some drawbacks, mainly for the teacher who is implementing it. Some of these disadvantages are the text selection process – texts should be suitable for both the purpose and the level and maturity of students, texts should not be longer or harder than advisable according to the students' English level –, the cultural load the text has (if knowing every bit of culture is essential in order to understand the text, students will not be able to understand it, and will get bored or feel discouraged), or the chance that some of the students may be offended by the chosen text.

7.1. Literature and major-skill practice

It is a well-known fact that the four major skills are taught in a traditional way: fill in the gaps, listening to monologues or dialogues, writing compositions about the students' favorite hobbies, or talking about them. Bringing literature to the foreign language classroom refreshes the traditional method of teaching these skills. To begin with, students listen to and read authentic texts, rather than those prefabricated language teaching materials, which results in students' exposure to real, descriptive language. It may not seem obvious to them when listening to these materials, but when reading, learners acquire vocabulary, or grammar and text structures, which leads to literature being a model to follow and imitate.

As for written and oral production, literature plays an essential role. Reading enriches us as individuals, it lets us understand how other societies and cultures were before, and are now, it inspires us with ideas, and makes us think. This is shown when we have the opportunity to express ourselves both orally and in written form. This is so because the more informed we are, the more we know about a topic, the better we communicate our thoughts, feelings and ideas, because we do it with a solid basis. As it has been already said, this will provide students with a meaningful learning process, and a rewarding learning experience.

7.2. Literature teaching approaches

Having seen the several benefits and some disadvantages that introducing literature in the ESL classroom has, it is important to comment on the different methods or approaches that teachers can use so as to carry out their proposals. Many experts have thought and written about this (Bibby & McIlroy, 2013; Carter & Long, 1991), but in this dissertation Lazar's classification will be taken into account (1993). According to Lazar, three approaches can be used when dealing with literature in foreign language teaching: language-based approach, literature as content, and literature for personal enrichment (1993, pp. 23-24).

The language-based approach emphasizes language and its study in detail. For this approach, literature is used simply as a material for the students to see words in context, and to analyze and learn them. Lazar states that "detailed analysis of the language of the literary text will help students to make meaningful interpretations" and that "students will increase their general awareness and understanding of English" (1993, p. 23). Thus, the goal this approach has is to teach the foreign language through the use of literature, and help students achieve the desired knowledge and proficiency level in English (p. 27). However, this approach may lead teachers to do the same that has been done for years in the classroom and it is too repetitive.

The second approach Lazar proposes is called literature as content, and she affirms that this method is the most traditional one. The aim of this approach is to teach literature as such, the focus moves from the language aspect towards characteristics of literary movements, the historical and socio-political background, and literary devices. In other words, students learn and discuss about literature, and through that learning process, they acquire the target language and may resort to their mother tongue if necessary or required.

Lastly, the literature for personal enrichment approach uses literature as a means to develop an individual personality. This method involves students and forces them to take an active role in their education. The aim is to make the learner engage with the text and find connections between the text and their personal experiences.

8. Didactic proposal

When dealing with foreign language teaching/learning, the most common and traditional contact students have with literature is through graded readers – short books that are adapted to the students' English level in an attempt to reconcile students and literature. Although implementing this is a valid effort so as to cover the literature aspect in the foreign language classroom, and the texts introduced are adaptations from usually classic books, they are still texts produced with the intention of teaching/learning a foreign language. Thus, obtaining prefabricated texts, even in literature.

The didactic proposal put forward in this dissertation aims to improve the amount of communication in the English as a Foreign Language classroom, thus enhancing the students' communicative competence. This will be done with the aid of a short story reading, and although oral discussion in the classroom will be the main goal, several skills will also be taken into account.

This proposal is aimed at students enrolled in the 4th year of secondary education (E.S.O.), and in the bilingual program. During my master's internship I observed that there is a general feeling of demotivation in the classrooms, especially in the first foreign language lessons – English. This may be due to the fact that lessons are usually teacher centered. That is why, for this proposal, the activities will be oriented so that the center of the lessons are the students.

The major aim of this proposal is to improve students' communication skills and competence in the English language through the use of literature in the classroom. Literature and reading have been chosen because they are a source of new vocabulary, grammatical structures, culture, ideas, and information among others.

In order to achieve this, students will use a text (a short story) as an excuse to communicate with both their teacher and their classmates, thus increasing their exposure to the foreign language, and practicing more. They will have to speak, write, read and listen more, which will eventually lead to an improvement in the students' communication competence.

This said communication will take place in written form and orally. The oral activities will be done in the classroom using conversational English, with no specific purpose in mind rather than that of interchanging opinions and thoughts, i.e., communicating. However, the written activities will be uploaded to the students' personal blogs, which will be created for this specific purpose.

Students are expected to be able to read texts suitable to their level, both in terms of foreign language and general maturity, as well as to be able to reflect, discuss and give their opinions on the reading orally and in writing. In turn, they are also expected to respect their peers' thoughts and opinions. Another aim is for students to develop a taste for reading, and through it, improve their communication skills by making use of the various knowledge acquired during the academic year. This paper simply presents an example of what could be done by introducing literature into the foreign language classroom in order to improve communication, in this case, in English.

8.1. Context

The school for which the didactic proposal has been designed is a hypothetical public high school located in Valladolid, where both E.S.O. and Baccalaureate levels are taught. This high school is placed in a neighborhood where there is a high immigration rate, and therefore, the diversity among the students is notorious. The student body is quite heterogenous, and it is this heterogeneity which provides a variety of socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds, but also interests, thoughts, and feelings.

The activities proposed are suitable for 4th-year students of secondary education, especially for those students enrolled in the bilingual program. These students are between 15 and 16 years old, and although they may not be motivated by the subject itself, they often see that acquiring a second language is essential for their future, as it will help them find a better job.

The fact that the student body is so heterogenous, provides the public school with a multicultural environment, which will allow to do more and varied activities, or, at least, provide the school with different points of view within the same community. Reading and understanding a reading "simply" requires knowing how to identify the words that make up a text. However, understanding the deeper meaning a text has requires more elements such as cultural background, or personal experiences, among others. Therefore, if students do not know about American history, or English history, it is best to entrust to students readings about topics familiar to them (technology, gender issues, etc.).

This course is composed of 24 students, 20 of whom obtain good-excellent grades, while the rest (4 students) pass the subject, but present difficulties sometimes. Said challenges often occur with activities that require a great deal of concentration. However, they perform well and

appropriately when they feel comfortable in the classroom. For this reason, the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) seems to be convenient for every student, but especially for those four students.

As for the amount of time per week each subject has, it is controlled by the education law, but every session lasts 50 minutes, independently of the subject, and of how many hours per week the students attend to each subject.

8.2. Legal Framework

The plan will follow the guidelines established in the Organic Law 8/2013 (LOMCE), the Royal Decree 1105/2014, issued on December 26, which establishes the basis of the Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate curricula, both laws operating on a national level, and the Order EDU 362/2015, issued on May 4, which establishes the educational curriculum and regulates the deployment, assessment and development of the Compulsory Secondary Education in Castilla y León. Also, the Order ECD/65/2015 will be taken into account.

According to the Order EDU 362/2015, the teaching load for English in 4th E.S.O. is 3 hours per week. However, since these students are enrolled in the bilingual program, they have two extra hours per week, in which these activities would be carried out, so that both teacher and students can follow the curriculum without any interference.

The Royal Decree 1105/2014 stipulates that the curricula competences for both E.S.O. and Baccalaureate are the following: linguistic communication, mathematical and scientific competences, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness and expressions (p. 172). All of them will be taken into account when carrying out the didactic proposal, with the exception of the mathematical and scientific competence since it is not applicable for the purpose. Although they are simply mentioned in the Royal Decree 1105/2014, they are explained in the Order ECD/65/2015, issued on January 21, which describes the relationship between the competences, contents and assessment criteria of primary education, compulsory secondary education and baccalaureate.

Besides, the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2018) affirms that students' progress on a foreign language is based on the acquisition of those competences, and describes which are the elements

or skills that students have to develop: oral reception, oral production, written reception, written production. That is, a combination of the competences and the skills provide students with a complete knowledge of the foreign language.

Everything that has been said in this subsection will be taken into account when developing the proposal activities, since these laws, royal decrees and orders are the ones that will allow teachers to set and formulate the main objectives they want to reach with their students, the contents they will include, and the assessment criteria that should be followed.

As for cross-cutting topics, the Royal Decree 1105/2014 establishes that all subjects should cover topics such as reading comprehension, oral and written expression, and ICTs. Other cross-cutting topics suggested are freedom, respect for both human rights and men and women equality, or peace, among others. Since the activities will involve literature, there will be room enough for this and other cross-cutting topics to be introduced – Literature allows teachers to include almost every topic that other subjects, aspects, or elements do not.

Lastly, I believe that attention to diversity not being included in this paper should be addressed. Since the activities suggested in this dissertation are designed for a hypothetical situation and context, my opinion is that it would not be completely useful to plan alternative tasks or assessments. This is so because I will not be able to try this proposal, and thus, I will not know whether students who need attention to diversity will be able to follow the sessions without inconveniences.

Nonetheless, since some of the activities will be carried out in groups, I believe that having the support of their classmates will allow these students, if any, to complete the tasks. Besides, having students whose origin differ from the rest can even be, in this particular case, completely beneficial as everyone will have a different background, from other culture's point of view, which will make the sessions or lessons more attractive and interesting.

8.2.1. Assessment criteria

Feedback, in any subject, is essential for students because it lets them know how they are performing, and it helps both teachers and students to assess the progress of the teaching-learning process. In this case, the assessment will take into account the progress in the foreign language subject (English), and according to the Article 28 in the LOMCE law, the assessment should be continuous, formative, and inclusive. Besides, the teacher, complying with the law,

must ensure the students that the assessment of their progress is objective and based on their performance.

In order to monitor or assess the students' overall progress in the language, their participation in the classroom will be facilitated and promoted, preventing the focus from being placed on the teacher. For this reason, participation in the classroom will be taken into account – students who participate will be given a point for the final grade for the term, while those not participating will not have a point added, nor subtracted.

So as to control this said progress and participation, the teacher will follow the students' daily interactions and take notes on positive and negative aspects of their expression both written and oral, because it will show whether they improve their communicative competence, as well as reflect their oral and written comprehension according to how they respond to the input they receive.

As for the final task proposed (TBLT), which is the creation of a blog with the students' activities on the texts, a rubric (see Appendix A) will be used to check whether students have achieved the intended goals, and a grade will be granted according to their work. This said rubric will be provided to them with the intention that they see what will be considered by the teacher when assessing. This will allow them to aim for the highest grade possible if they are interested in doing that.

Having in mind the instructions or guidelines given by the Order EDU/362/2015 for 4th E.S.O. (pp. 32252-32259), students will be assessed positively when able to implement the following in the oral reception skill (oral comprehension): identify the general meaning, essential information, main points and relevant details in short or medium-length oral texts […] in a formal, informal or neutral register; know and know how to apply appropriate strategies for understanding the general meaning, essential information, main points and main ideas or relevant details of the text; know and use sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects of everyday life to understand the text; recognize commonly used oral vocabulary related to everyday issues and general topics, or related to their own interests.

As for oral production, students should be able to do the following: produce short or medium-length texts, in face-to-face conversation […] in which information, ideas and opinions are exchanged; know and know how to apply appropriate strategies to produce oral texts; incorporate […] sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge; show good control, albeit

with some influence from the first language […] over a wide repertoire of common syntactic structures; know and use commonly used oral vocabulary related to everyday issues and general topics; pronounce and intonate utterances in a clear and understandable manner; maintain the pace of speech with enough fluency to make the message comprehensible.

Moving on to the written reception skill (reading), students will have to achieve the following objectives: identify the essential information, the most relevant points and important details in texts […] short or medium-length and well structured, written in a formal, informal or neutral register; know and know how to apply appropriate strategies for understanding the general meaning, essential information, main points and ideas or relevant details of the text; know and use sociolinguistic aspects related to everyday life so as to comprehend the text; recognize commonly used written vocabulary related to everyday issues and general topics, or related to their own interests.

Lastly, the goals they have to reach in written production so as to be assessed positively are: write […] short or medium-length texts, coherent and clearly structured […] in a formal, informal or neutral register, making adequate use of cohesion resources, spelling conventions and the most common punctuation marks, and showing a reasonable control of expressions, structures and a frequently used lexicon; know, select and apply appropriate strategies to produce short or medium-length written texts; show good control, albeit with some first language […] influences over a wide repertoire of common syntactic structures; know and utilize commonly used written vocabulary related to everyday issues and general topics, or related to their own interests.

These criteria are, in my view, essential so as to ensure that communication takes place without inconvenience, and that the students' communication competence and abilities are enhanced, which is what this paper pursues. Besides, considering my internship experience, I believe that 4th E.S.O. students enrolled in the bilingual program should be capable of doing this. However, as I see it, the law is still very vague when providing teachers with a guide on how to assess students. In section 8.5. below, some of the assessment criteria will be more specific according to the aims expected to achieve with every activity or session.

8.2.2. Aims

The Article 11 on the Royal Decree 1105/2014 (pp. 176-177), which establishes the basic curriculum for Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate, states the general aims for

students in Compulsory Secondary Education. The law mentions twelve objectives, but this proposal will focus on the following: b, d, g, i, and j.

When dealing with more specific aims, the law does not support the teachers, and does not provide guidelines so as to how to proceed. Thus, teachers have to set their own aims. For this proposal, the specific aims are: (1) that students increase their reading ability while developing a taste for reading, (2) that they learn new vocabulary in the process, (3) that they learn to express their thoughts and opinions, and how to do it in a respectful manner. However, in each session other specific aims may appear.

8.3. Methodology

Since the Order ECD/65/2015 regulates the relationship between competences, contents, and assessment, this proposal will be based on it. For this reason, the methodology followed here is oriented towards the promotion of reading, and of language learning based on competences or skills. Accordingly, students will take a more active role in the classroom, thus being autonomous and in control of their own learning process.

Considering this, and what has been said in subsection 3.1. above, the teaching strategies that seem to be appropriate for this proposal are Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The goal is to get away from methodologies based on presenting a grammatical aspect, making students practice with it to later allow them to produce within a given context what they have learnt (the PPP methodology). This will be done since, in such a controlled learning process, teachers may have the feeling that students have acquired and will know how to put into practice what they have been taught, when in fact, they might not be able to do so when involved in a different context.

The CLT methodology will allow students to take part in realistic interactions (real contexts) in both written and oral forms, to work their sociolinguistic competence, or to develop and improve their communication strategies. The TBLT will allow students to somehow determine what happens in the classroom (the new vocabulary, new structures, etc.), which they would hopefully find motivating, and also integrate ICT tools which will help them create the blog.

All in all, these two methodologies combined help to improve the student-student interaction, rather than continuing with the teacher-student one, and students will have the

chance to practice the language from an autonomous and meaningful point of view – the focus will be put on the functional aspect. Thus, students will work both individually and in groups, ensuring that communication takes place. Some side effects that may arise from applying these two methodologies are social relations, a good working environment in the classroom, or the loss of expressing themselves in a second language.

The purpose is to free students from the traditional way of teaching a second language, and allow them to practice the foreign language while communicating in real life situations and cooperating all together to achieve that communication. This will be done always bearing in mind that the task proposed must be meaningful and useful for students, as well as challenging, yet affordable.

8.4. Text selection

As it has been said before, schools and high schools propose graded readers to students so that they can connect with literature, and also have the opportunity to do this in the foreign language classroom. However, short stories are an alternative to these graded readers. Short stories are shorter than novels, but also are, usually, shorter than graded readers as well. This will probably engage students more, since they will spend less time reading, and if they do not like the story, they do not have to read for too long. Also, short stories do not require several hours of study in the classroom as poems do – students will have to pay attention to elements that are not included in the curricula, and there will not be time to do that probably – thus, poems are not usually a good choice in schools.

The text chosen for this dissertation is the short story *The Perfect Match*, by Ken Liu (2012). It presents an interesting topic for the students: technology controlling people's lives. It is a dystopian short story, although it somehow mirrors the reality we are living in. This topic is engaging, and will make them feel comfortable since they know how technology works, and are extremely familiar with it. Besides, in terms of length, this short story seems to be a good choice. If students focus on reading it, it should not take them longer than an hour, which is affordable in that level (4th year of E.S.O., bilingual program).

Based on my experience during my internship, in this level of secondary education, and within the bilingual program, students are more than capable of understanding this text, with the exception of a few words or expressions. Thus, the text is suitable for the students' linguistic

proficiency, and also cultural background because of what has been mentioned in the previous paragraph.

In regard to the text being suitable for the students' age and maturity, I consider that since they are familiar with the topic they will follow the story without any problem, and the subject matter should not be a source of discomfort for them. On the contrary, it will allow them to think about their technological use, and be critical of those who control the Internet and the devices.

8.5. Sessions

It is important to bear in mind that the sessions here are mainly designed to be implemented after the students have read the proposed text, except for the first activity. Also, they will be carried out during the two extra hours per week students have of English due to the bilingual program.

Each session will have a general chart, and the activities included in the sessions will be commented and developed in individual charts below the session they belong to. The general charts will include information related to contents dealt with in the session, the aims that students should achieve, the assessment criteria used in that session (according to what has been said in section 8.2.1. and 8.2.2. above). As for the activities' charts, the information included will be more specific: type of activity, classroom organization, timing, resources, specific aims, and an explanation

Activities belonging to the literature as content approach will not be included in this paper because here only an example of what could be do with literature to improve communication is presented. However, it would be interesting to introduce literature as content in the foreign language as well. This means that the activities proposed belong to the language-based and the literature for personal enrichment approaches.

SESSION 0.5: Pre-reading	
Aims	**Contents**
The students should be able to: ● Express their thoughts an opinions about the use of technology, by following an appropriate set expressions and collocations. ● Develop interest in the topic of the activity, while activating previous knowledge. ● Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of the topic. ● Apply communication strategies when not knowing how to use certain words, expressions, or grammatical structures.	- Lexical items (vocabulary) related to technology and everyday language. - Justification of their opinions and thoughts coherently.

Assessment criteria

The students will be able to:

● Produce at least one opinion, correctly structured and using collocations such as "as I see it" or "from my point of view".

● Explain and extend their ideas, justifying them.

Activity	Timing
Discussing technology	**25 min.**
TOTAL	**25 min.**

Activity/task 1 - session 0.5		
Discussing technology	**Type**: Development	**Timing**: 25 min.
Classroom organization: - Groups of 4 - Whole class	**Resources**: - None	

Aims:

The students should be able to:

- Express their thoughts an opinions about the use of technology, by following the appropriate set expressions and collocations.
- Understand oral texts produced by their classmates so as to be able to respond correctly.
- Develop interest in the topic of the activity, while activating previous knowledge.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary of the topic.
- Apply communication strategies when not understanding or not knowing how to use certain words, expressions, or grammatical structures.

Explanation:

This activity will take place within another session because it will simply serve as an introduction to the topic under study and it will only require 25 minutes. The previous 25 minutes of the whole session can be devoted to finishing what the students are working on, or as the teacher considers.

With the intention of activating the students' previous knowledge about technology and its use, the teacher will ask some questions so as to open a debate or discussion. Some of these questions may include the following: "What is technology?", "Do you use it?", "How often do you use it?", "Do you all have at least one cellphone, computer or tablet?", "Does everyone in your family have at least one electronic device?", "Do you think those devices are used more for work or for leisure?"

Students will firstly discuss this in small groups of four, so that they can brainstorm ideas and thoughts. This will allow students to gather more than just one idea to discuss about, and hopefully, people within the same group will have very different opinions, which will lead them to start the discussion earlier, and will serve as a warm-up for the whole-classroom discussion activity. Since it is a topic they are familiar with, it should not present a major challenge to them. Besides, the activity will be engaging.

After having 10 minutes to discuss about the topic in small groups, each group will choose a speaker, who will share the main ideas with the rest of the class. 5 minutes will be devoted to this part. The 10 minutes left will be used to discuss about what they have already said, they will have the opportunity to agree and disagree with their classmates.

In this activity we find three different types of communication: intrapersonal communication (students think about ideas, communication takes place within their heads, with themselves), group communication (students interact and work all together towards a common goal – sharing ideas), and a subtle case of public communication (students present their ideas to the rest of the class).

The task follows the CLT approach methodology, and includes both oral reception and production, covering thus these skills. Furthermore, it will serve as a base for the following sessions dealing with the short story selected.

The students' homework after this activity will be reading at home the short story *The Perfect Match*, by Ken Liu (2012), and creating a blog in the Blogger webpage, which is a free Google's feature. They will probably not need directions to do this because the web is user-friendly. However, in case they do need help creating it, the teacher should guide them.

SESSION 1: Post-reading

Aims	Contents
The students should be able to: ● Identify essential information provided by the text and their classmates. ● Apply communication strategies when not knowing how to use certain words, expressions, or grammatical structures. ● Write a medium-length fiction text coherent and clearly structured, showing control of expressions, structures and lexicon appropriate to their level.	- Lexical items (vocabulary) related to everyday language. - Distinction of the general meaning, essential information, main points and relevant details of a short story - Clear expression of the message adjusting it to the patterns of a fiction short story.

Assessment criteria

The students will be able to:

● Elaborate oral and written texts in a cohesive, coherent and structured manner, following the conventions for the texts in the target language.

● Demonstrate understanding of oral texts by responding appropriately to the statements.

● Define and infer meanings by paying attention to the context provided by the text.

Activity	Timing
Checking vocabulary	**5 min.**
Plot summary	**15 min.**

Compare with mates	**5 min.**
Alternative ending	**25 min.**
TOTAL	**50 min**

Activity/task 1 - **session** 1		
Checking vocabulary	**Type**: Warm-up	**Timing**: 5 min.
Classroom organization: - Whole class		**Resources**: - Short story (see reference list)

Aims:
The students should be able to:
- Define vocabulary of interest for them.
- Utilize their previous knowledge to infer meanings of words or expressions unknown to them.

Explanation:

This activity will be done in the classroom after the students have read the short story at home. It is important that students do the reading outside the classroom since, although it is not a difficult story to read, it requires the students to focus on what they are reading. Besides, they will have enough time to read, and to process the text.

The goal of this activity is to dispel any doubts that students may have about the vocabulary or expressions that appear in the text. When carrying out this type of activities, students may not ask any questions. This may be due to several reasons, being one of them the embarrassment of being the only student who does not know the meaning of a word, for example. In this case, the teacher should point out some words and expressions that they think that students may not know. By doing so, if any student feels embarrassed to ask, he or she will still be able to solve the doubt. Hopefully, some of them will be encouraged to ask questions so as to solve their doubts.

Initially, 5 minutes will be devoted to doing this activity. However, if students need more time to ask, the time spent on it can be extended to 10 minutes.

This activity belongs to the language-based approach of literature teaching, in which literature is seen as a means to teach the language. In this case, the short story is the channel, and the goal is to learn new vocabulary which will be useful for them, and that not

necessarily belongs to a certain scope (i.e., the goal is not to teach students vocabulary related to short stories, nor clothes, nor jobs, they are simply taught vocabulary that may be interesting for them to know). Using literature will allow students to see the words they are learning within a real context, which is beneficial.

As for communication, this activity requires group communication – both teacher and students work towards a common goal: learn new vocabulary. Furthermore, the task follows both CLT and TBLT methodologies. Regarding CLT, it is clear that everyone in the classroom has to communicate in order to get to know the meaning of unknown words, and reach an agreement on these words' definitions. In addition, this activity is the first step towards the final task (TBLT), which is the creation of a blog with the students' comments and reflections – they need to firstly understand what they are going to be working with.

Activity/task 2 - **session** 1		
Plot summary	**Type**: Development	**Timing**: 15 min.
Classroom organization: - Individual		**Resources**: - Blog / Internet conection
Aims: The students should be able to: ● Understand the general sense of the text, essential information, and relevant details (this aim could be understood as a while-reading aim, rather than a post-reading). ● Write a coherent and clearly structured summary in an informal register. ● Show a reasonable control of expressions, structures and a frequently used lexicon. ● Apply communication strategies when not understanding or not knowing how to use certain words, expressions, or grammatical structures.		
Explanation: For this activity, students will work individually since the target of the activity is not actually writing a summary of the plot, but checking whether students have understood what the story is about, since that will be the base of the following activities. They will have to do this in the target language. In order to complete this task, students will have 15 minutes to upload an entry to their own blog. While they work on this, the teacher will go around the classroom making sure that students are working on this task, and answering questions students may ask (monitoring role). Later, the teacher will read each student's entry in their blogs, and leave comments highlighting positive aspects, and things to improve from a grammatical point of view		

(spelling, word order, text structure). This will be taken into account when assessing the students' daily participation.

This activity belongs to the language-based approach, and it allows the teacher to confirm whether students have developed their reading comprehension ability. Although this and the previous task are quite traditional, they are crucial for the development of the proposal. Both of these activities will help students develop strategies that will allow them to understand words they do not know based on the context that the text provides. In addition, they will provide students with a foundation to work with the text later on. This approach also gives the learners the opportunity to practice

The written production skill is the one covered here, and the communication type that takes place here is mainly intrapersonal communication, since students have to think about what they have read at home, remember the main thread of the story, recall how to write a summary in English, and, finally, write it down. This process does not necessarily involve talking with other people in order for it to be done. The public communication type is also covered since students write for an audience (blog readers).

The main methodology used here is CLT, since the purpose is to use the language to communicate, in this case, the plot of the story. However, although the previous activity was the first step towards the final task, this is the first entry they would write in their blog.

Activity/task 3 - **session** 1		
Compare with mates	**Type**: Reinforcement	**Timing**: 5 min.
Classroom organization: - Pairs		**Resources**: - Their summaries

Aims:
The students should be able to:
- Identify essential information provided by their classmate.
- Use strategies so as to understand the main ideas expressed by their classmate.
- Produce a coherent conversation, if possible, with enough fluency.

Explanation:

This activity will require students to compare their summaries, but not in terms of grammar, amount of content, or so as to check who did it better. The main purpose is to verify that both have the same, or very similar, understanding of the actual story, the facts, not deeper meanings. They will have 5 minutes to do this orally, and in pairs. The teacher will go

around the classroom so as to monitor students, and confirm that they have understood the plot.

Since it will be done orally, both oral reception and production are practiced while doing this. It is expected for students to express themselves with enough fluency, and to maintain a well-structured conversation in the target language (English).

Again, the role of literature here is a passive one (language-based approach), it serves as a medium to an end. In this case, the text (literature) is the topic of the conversation, but the end is to communicate so as to see whether the students have understood the plot.

Since students have to talk to each other in order to achieve the goal of the task, the CLT method is followed, and the communication type that takes place is mainly interpersonal – between two people. They will have to exchange information and agree or disagree with what is being said.

Activity/task 4 - **session** 1		
Alternative ending	**Type**: Development	**Timing**: 25 min.
Classroom organization: - Individual		**Resources**: - Blog / Internet connection
Aims: The students should be able to: ● Write a medium-length fiction text that is coherent and clearly structured. ● Show some control of expressions, structures and lexicon.		
Explanation: To complete this activity, students have to open their blogs, and create a new entry each writing an alternative ending to the short story *The Perfect Match*. They will have a word-count restriction, between 200-250 words. They can approach the text from any point of view they want (e.g., they can write it in third person, as if they were one of the main characters, etc.). This will be done individually, but if they need help, they can ask their teacher or their classmates for it. Again, the teacher will later read the blog entries and leave a feedback highlighting positive aspects and things to improve, if any. At this level, they should be able to write that number of words, and also to do it without inconveniences such as notorious grammatical mistakes, or mother tongue transliterations or calques. They will have the rest of the session to do this (25 minutes), and they can continue at home if necessary. They can manage this time as they wish. However, the		

teacher should suggest that they first make an outline and a draft of what they want to say, so that they can organize their ideas (10 minutes approximately).

Literature here can play two roles: it can be a means to an end (the literary text supplies students with an excuse to write or talk about it, and improve their oral and written production, thus their communication competence), or it can be a source for personal enrichment (students may add their personal opinions even when writing fiction, they can connect with the text).

Regarding the language skills, the written production is emphasized here. Students will have to recall how to produce narrative texts in the target language, they will have to use discursive elements, and their texts have to be coherent, cohesive, and clearly expressed.

The type of communication present here is mainly intrapersonal communication, since the learners have to think about what they want to write, and structure it by themselves. Thus, communication takes place within the individual. However, interpersonal communication might take place as well if students decide to cooperate with each other. The other communication type involved is public communication because blog readers may read the students' entries.

This activity combines both methodologies again. CLT is used because the purpose of the task is to communicate a story, or the end of it. As for TBLT, this activity constitutes another step towards the completion of the blog created to discuss the texts proposed in the second language teaching classroom.

SESSION 2: Post-reading

Aims	Contents
The students should be able to: • Present and defend opinions in an intelligible, adequate and respectful manner. • Compile essential information about the characters to create a profile.	- Clear expression of the message adjusting it to the patterns and formulas of opinion-giving. - Justification of their opinions and thoughts coherently. - Lexical items (vocabulary)

Assessment criteria

The students will be able to:

- Produce at least one opinion, correctly structured and using collocations such as "as I see it" or "from my point of view".
- Display effectively, coherently, and intelligibly at least one argument to defend their personal opinion.
- Gather the missing information to create the dating profile by paying attention to the details in the short story.

Activity	Timing
Create a dating profile	**30 min.**
Debate	**20 min.**
TOTAL	**50 min**

Activity/task 1 - **session** 2		
Create a dating profile	**Type**: Development	**Timing**: 30 min.
Classroom organization: - Groups of 4		**Resources**: - Internet connection

Aims:
The students should be able to:
- Compile essential information about the characters to create a profile.
- Apply communication strategies and organize the group work so as to complete the task.

Explanation:

For this task, students will have to create a dating profile for each main character (Sai and Jenny). This profile should, at least, include the following: name, age, occupation, hobbies and interests, favorite book, physical appearance description, pets (if any), a playlist created to share with possible matches on the dating application, and favorite food. Students can choose how they will create the profile: on digital or physical support. They will share this information in their blogs for the rest of the students to see the others' dating profiles.

The students will have to make this information up since it is not provided in the short story. They can do it based on what they have read, or they can completely invent it. However, it must seem to be real. They will have 30 minutes, which will be challenging for them since they will have to compile all that information, discuss their decisions, and agree on what they are going to write. However, as I see it, it is also an opportunity for them to communicate effectively, delegate tasks, and work as a team. Nonetheless, if they do not have enough time to finish it, they can save what they have done, and continue in the following session.

In addition, this task covers all four language skills (oral and written reception and production), allowing students to practice them, and thus enhancing their communication skill and competence. Literature here, again, would be a source for the activity, but not the main content (language-based approach).

Both TBLT and CLT methodologies are included as well. The activity is part of the final project (TBLT) and also communication is crucial here since students will probably not have ample time so as to complete the task, and they will have to divide the tasks among themselves to finish, they will probably have to decide who will work on what, or who is better at a certain field (e.g., music).

Lastly, it could be said that the four different types of communication happen: intrapersonal (students have to remember what they have read, and think about possible information to create the dating profile), interpersonal (learners have to communicate with a partner to work on the assigned task), group communication (all four of them will have towards the same goal, and will have to work together as a team), and public communication (blog entry).

Activity/task 2 - **session** 2		
Debate	**Type**: Development	**Timing**: 20 min.

Classroom organization:	**Resources**:
- Whole class	- None

Aims:

The students should be able to:
- Present and defend opinions in an intelligible, adequate and respectful manner.
- Maintain the pace of speech with enough fluency to make the message comprehensible.
- Incorporate sociocultural and sociolinguistic knowledge.

Explanation:

This activity is simply a debate based on the situation presented in the short story with regard to technology and companies controlling technology users. Provided that the environment in the classroom is a good and positive one, the students will take part in the discussion or debate.

Some of the questions that may be posed by the teacher so as to start the debate are: "Do you believe that technology controls us?", "Do you think that companies take advantage of our use of technology to control us?", "What do you think about the online purchases we make? Are they made voluntarily, or are we influenced and encouraged to do so, thus spending money on things we do not actually need?", "What do you think about these virtual personal assistants such as Siri, Cortana, or Alexa?", "Do you think that we would reach to a point in which we are completely controlled by technology?"

Since it is a debate, the task will be done orally, covering both production and reception. It completely follows the CLT approach, and the literature for personal enrichment because students can relate to the topic under discussion and connect with it. Also, hopefully, the reading and the discussion will help them create and develop a critical thinking about it.

Finally, the type of communication used here is mainly interpersonal, since students, and maybe the teacher, share their opinions, information about the topic.

9.   Conclusion

Introducing literature as such in foreign language teaching is nothing but challenging, especially with such tight schedules as those in secondary education. This is so because in order to achieve this goal, a number of objectives must first be met: students first have to know vocabulary, grammatical structures, and also have an extremely good foundation in their mother tongue. It is a fact that the level of English is decreasing in classrooms. This hinders the introduction of literature in English as a foreign language.

However, I believe that doing this, but in a different way than it is currently done, although a bit innovative and risky, will be beneficial for the students. Some of those benefits are (1) bringing them closer to literature, which will hopefully make them want to read more, (2) they would experience some personal growth, (3) it will enhance their communication competence since it will improve their vocabulary range and grammatical and text structures, or (4) it will teach them about other cultures, among others.

All in all, introducing literature in the classroom proves to be beneficial, and combined with other methodologies such as CLT and TBLT is an interesting source of material for the lessons. I did not have the opportunity to try this proposal during my internship. Nonetheless, if this method works, it could continue to be implemented, not only in the English classroom, but also in Spanish, or French. It would even be possible, if students participate, to create a reading club, thus encouraging both reading in general, and reading in a foreign language, which would allow them to improve their communicative competence, whatever the language.

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Creating a blog!

Student's name: _____

CATEGORY	3	2	1	0
Content	The web site has a clear and well stated purpose and theme and is consistent throughout the site. You have uploaded every activity proposed, and they are perfectly written.	The web site has a clear purpose and theme, but has one or two elements that do not appear to be related. You have uploaded most of the activities proposed, and they are very well written.	The purpose and subject matter of the web site are somewhat unclear or vague. You have uploaded some of the activities proposed, and are ok.	The web site lacks purpose and theme. You have not uploaded any of the activities proposed.
Design I	The web site has exceptional appeal and a useful presentation. It is easy to locate all the important elements.	The pages have an attractive and useful presentation. All important elements are easy to locate.	The pages have a useful presentation, but may appear to be cluttered or boring. Most of the elements are easy to locate.	Pages look cluttered or confusing. It is often difficult to locate important elements.
Design II	Background colors, font and visited and unvisited links form a pleasing color mix and do not detract from the content and are consistent across all pages.	Background colors, font, and visited and unvisited links do not distract from the content and are consistent across all pages.	Background colors, font and visited and unvisited links do not distract from the content.	Background colors, typeface, and visited and unvisited links make the content difficult to read or distract the reader.
Grammar	There are no spelling, punctuation or grammar errors on the website. You have used correct and varied grammatical structures all the time.	There are 1-3 spelling, punctuation or grammar errors on the website. You have used mostly correct and varied grammatical structures.	There are 4-5 spelling, punctuation or grammar errors on the website. Some sentences are incorrect, and there are some basic grammatical mistakes.	There are more than 5 spelling, punctuation or grammar errors on the website. There are many basic mistakes in grammar.