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Internal Factors in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in Secondary Education

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. General overview

This project could be silhouetted for its full allegiance to introducing some of the vast number of distinct variables whereby the process of learning a Second or Foreign Language¹ is affected. Related to this, certain subjects which have being eagerly taught along the whole degree of English Studies, and which are straightforwardly associated to the present topic, should be mentioned, such as “Applied Linguistics”, “Methodology of the Communicative Skills and Linguistic Components of the English Language”, “The Teaching of the Spanish Language”, “Materials and Resources for the Teaching of English”, and “Planning and Evaluation of the English Language”, *inter alia*, given their strong educational and didactic nature.

Nowadays, English is being learnt by approximately one billion people around the world. In this respect, it is indisputable that apprentices do not learn a Second or Foreign Language (SL/FL, respectively) either in the same way or in the same amount of time. Therefore, students’ achievements in the process of learning, as well as their development, are obviously quite diverse. Certainly, this commonly happens when a new language is to be learnt (not just English necessarily); yet, in this project the focus will be on this West Germanic tongue and how it is influenced by personal or internal individual factors including age, aptitude, attitude, motivation, personality, learning/cognitive styles, hemisphere specialization and knowledge of the world; in other words, those features which are intrinsic to the learner, and which cannot be easily controlled.

1.2. Justification

This topic is extremely relevant as far as the acquisition process is concerned, forasmuch as most of the procedures, techniques, methodologies, types of activities, interaction patterns, and many more educational aspects employed by teachers will be closely related to these variables. Long gone are those traditional teacher-centred methods such as the Grammar-Translation or the Direct Approach, which turned out to be unsuccessful. Currently, language teaching should be rather based on learners’ needs

¹ In this project, no differentiation is established between the terms “Second Language (SL/L2)”, usually used to refer to the institutional and social role which a language plays in a given society; and “Foreign Language (FL)”, used when the new language is just another subject at school, but it does not play either a social or institutional role in the community.

and interests, and therefore an exhaustive and deep knowledge of learners' internal factors would constitute a huge guide and help for teachers, so as to pave their way to new and much more fruitful and updated lessons.

1.3. Objectives

As aforementioned, a significant amount of factors are involved in the learning and teaching process. In this sense, this project will attempt to provide a clear and concise explanation of their immediate effects. Hence, several general questions will rise, such as what should be the most appropriate age to learn a specific language? Is learners' attitude towards learning correlated to success? Is it possible for teachers to increase students' motivation? How does apprentices' personality affect their learning process? Should male and female students be treated in a different way? To what extent do learning and cognitive styles influence the process? Are students' prior experience and knowledge of the world important?

More precisely, some of the basic assumptions such as “the younger, the better” will be analysed, as well as the reasons why it should not be totally confirmed, given the fact that the kind of context –naturalistic or educational–, the amount of time spent in the acquisition process, as well as the type of learning –implicit or explicit–, together with further considerations such as the so-called Critical Period and Sensitive Period will affect learners in a distinct manner, and so, their respective success in learning. Moreover, aptitude components will be detailed, so as to highlight learners' strong points in learning, and therefore, make “learning victory” more attainable. Further issues concerning attitudes and motivation will be deeply examined, for instance the different types of motivation –intrinsic, extrinsic, integrative, instrumental, causative, resultative, and even machiavellian–, and their crucial relevance in the process of acquisition will be emphasized. In fact, motivation, alongside attitude and aptitude are considered to lead to learners' success. Additionally, personality traits such as self-esteem, extroversion/introversion, anxiety, risk-taking/sensitivity to rejection, empathy, inhibition and tolerance of ambiguity will also be dealt with, for students to take advantage of them as well as to be able to guide the learning process in the most suitable direction. Similarly, a detailed explanation for the widespread belief that girls are better students than boys will be provided. Another vital variable to take into account would be the great amount of learning/cognitive styles that learners may

display –field dependent, field independent, analytic, gestalt, visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, tactile, categorizers, reflexive, and impulsive–, which would not only determine the most appropriate kind of activities for them, but they would also serve as an extremely useful help both for teachers and students to do their best and increase their L2 achievements. Apart from that, it will be clearly proven that their knowledge of the world –different countries cultures, societies, or learning experiences– will make a difference; in addition to a more scientific explanation of the functioning of the human brain, which will clarify why left and right-handed learners tend to prefer different types of activities, as well as to develop different skills more deeply.

On balance, even though different learning and teaching techniques have been developed throughout the years trying to search for a successful acquisition process, perhaps one of the most important pieces of the puzzle –learners themselves– has not deserved very special attention. They cannot be considered in a vacuum, insomuch as they are one of the most relevant parts in the process of learning a SL or FL, and hence, each of their internal, personal features should be painstakingly analysed and evaluated in order to improve their learning experience and get favourable results.

As a summary, the main objectives of this project are:

- To provide a full and detailed explanation for the wide-spread but not totally true assumption “the younger, the better” in learning.
- To emphasize the different components of aptitude so as to clarify why there are not “good and poor” students.
- To highlight the crucial importance of motivation and attitude in the process of acquisition, as well as to define their distinct types.
- To carefully examine personality traits and their influence on the learning process.
- To justify why male and female learners should be treated differently.
- To discern the diverse learning/cognitive styles of students and their immediate consequences in their approaching towards learning.
- To analyse why apprentices with either left or right dominant hemisphere tend to prefer different types of activities.
- To silhouette the extreme relevance of students’ knowledge of the world in the acquisition process.

1.4. Some references and materials

Most references and resources employed in this project are closely connected, and they fundamentally deal with second and foreign language learning issues in addition to specific features which make the process, as well as their individuals, stand out. For this purpose, the main general material is that of McLaren and Madrid's *A Handbook for TEFL* (1996), as well as the later associated publication edited by McLaren, Madrid and Bueno's *TEFL in Secondary Education* (2005); together with some others such as Harmer's *How to Teach English* (2007). Moreover, certain specific works have been used as well, for example Abello-Contesse's "Age in L2 acquisition and teaching" (2006), and scientific journals and articles such as Oroujlou and Vahedi's "Motivation, attitude, and language learning" (2011), or Zafar and Meenakshi's "Individual learner differences and second language acquisition: A review" (2012). Significant internet resources, such as <http://www.macmillandictionary.com> (retrieved 11/6/2016), or <http://www.ldoceonline.com>, (retrieved 11/6/2016) cannot be overlooked either.

1.5. Structure

As to the structure of this project, it has been developed in a six-side way: in the first place, this introduction appears. It contains a general overview of the topic, together with a brief justification, and some crucial reference materials. Secondly, a conceptual framework including the main body of the project should be outlined, which is, in turn, sub-divided into minor sections: a brief definition of the main theme, and then a detailed explanation of the different types of factors influencing the learning process –both external and internal ones–, promptly focused on an exhaustive discussion of the considerable amount of inner learners' variables, and how they influence the process of acquisition, in the following order (age, aptitude, attitude, motivation, personality –including self-esteem, extroversion/introversion, anxiety, risk-taking/sensitivity to rejection, empathy, inhibition, and tolerance of ambiguity–, gender, learning/cognitive styles, hemisphere specialization, and knowledge of the world. In the third place, a practical application with a careful analysis of activities will be provided; then followed by some relevant and personal conclusions. Finally, in the fifth and sixth places, all the references employed, as well as some appendixes will be included.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. DEFINITION

The present variation in the acquisition of a new language is primarily due to the huge amount of variables affecting individuals, both external and internal ones, such as student's perseverance, hard-work or dedication, as well as their individual differences, or, in other words, those aspects beyond learners' control. This could be explained on account on the fact that people's minds tend to work in a completely different way, and likewise, a great number of distinctive personal features may be found among individuals, which make them completely unique. Moreover, from an educational perspective, these differences affect the learning process, concretely, in the fields of cognition, affection as well as social domains, and also student's final success. In this sense, (Ellis, 1994:471, in McLaren, Madrid and Bueno, 2005:80) states that "there's a veritable plethora of individual learner variables which researchers have identified as influencing learning outcomes".

Furthermore, from the late XIX century onwards, several studies have been carried out so as to give an answer to this "measuring of systematic inter-individual variations" (Fonseca Mora, 2005:79).

To go in depth, the section below will attempt to explain two of the main kinds of factors affecting the acquisition and teaching of a foreign language.

2.2.TYPES OF FACTORS

2.2.1. External factors

Among the vast amount of circumstances which are likely to influence the learning process, some of them are connected to the environment in which the acquisition takes place. It is important to mention that this project will be essentially concentrated on internal factors; notwithstanding, a brief description of external variables seems to be extremely relevant for a better understanding of the topic. In this respect, two main kinds of settings should be differentiated: natural/informal contexts and educational/formal contexts. The former generally refers to areas where the learning process does not tend to occur inside the classroom (chiefly through instruction), but rather in an environment where the learner is surrounded by native people of the target

language, and tends to interact and connect with the community and its speakers, as well as their customs, culture, political, educational and social systems. On the other hand, formal contexts are characterized by a process of instruction where apprentices are commonly taught inside the classroom, with the help of the teacher as well as the use of some school supplies (such as books, notebooks, audio-files, etc). Apart from that, further options included in the category of external factors may be student's curriculum, culture or status.

2.2.2. Internal factors

As aforementioned, a learning process could be strongly affected by a series of particular variables present in individual learners, which will determine their achievements and success. Those characteristics are not easily managed, insomuch as they are inherent to humans, or, in other words, learners are not able to control them, for instance, their age, aptitude, gender, some aspects of personality, and a wide number of options which will be more clearly explained (*vide infra*). These are personal features that tend to be shown by students in specific learning situations, and which will determine their path in the process of acquisition of a new language (for example, learning pace, difficulties and assets). These are widely known as “internal factors”.

Consequently, they are of extreme relevance for teachers to be taken into account, in that individual internal factors would serve as a useful guide and help in the teaching process as well. In this sense, the humanistic psychologist, (Maslow, 1968, in Fonseca Mora, 2005: 80), wrote about the huge importance of this type of variables. More precisely, “Maslow's pyramids of needs constitutes a perfect model for understanding how certain basic individual needs have to be satisfied before higher needs can be fulfilled”. Following this source, “Self-actualisation, [...] can only be reached if the other steps of the pyramid such as physiological needs, security, interpersonal closeness, self-esteem, cognitive and aesthetic needs are first met” (Fonseca Mora, 2005:80). (Figure 1).

For that reason, a fully detailed explanation and description of internal factors will be provided so as to attempt to clarify these general ideas.



Fig. 1. Maslow's Pyramid of Needs (<https://texashunger.files.wordpress.com>; retrieved 11/6/2016).

2.3. CLASSIFICATION OF INTERNAL FACTORS

2.3.1. Age

Regarding the acquisition of a new language, (Krashen, Long and Scarcella, 1979, quoted in Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991:155), pointed out that “older is faster, but younger is better”. Nevertheless, as (McLaughlin, 1992) suggests, further research about these common wide-spread beliefs needs to be carried out.

The topic of age in second or foreign language learning has constituted quite a controversial issue for decades. Therefore, the general assumption that younger learners tend to acquire a new language faster and more efficiently than older ones has been both strongly criticized and also supported throughout the years. The origin of this idea is thought to come from some naturalistic studies which showed that, in the long-term, younger apprentices obtain greater outstanding results. Notwithstanding, there seem not to be enough evidences for such common belief. *De facto*, findings supporting just the opposite idea have been found, for instance, “immigrant children's learning is slower than adult's” (Krashen, Long and Scarcella, 1979, cited in DeKeyser, 2013:54).

At this point, some explanation on these ideas will be needed. To begin with, it should be stated that, as to implicit learning is concerned, younger students seem to be better, for they may acquire high proficiency levels of the target language almost effortlessly. On the other hand, regarding explicit learning, adults tend to show better

outcomes, in that they are conscious of their learning process, and might benefit from the massive amount of input received and learning opportunities.

Another relevant point to take into account is the amount of time spent in the acquisition process. In this sense, it should be claimed that, although older students are generally faster in the rate of acquisition, young learners obtain better achievements in terms of the rate of attainment in the long-term. Forasmuch as this statement is too general, further details will be needed. Hence, a distinction in terms of skills will be presented: as to morphology and syntax is concerned, older students' high ability concerning vocabulary and reading comprehension should be silhouetted. Similarly, in terms of pronunciation and fluency, younger learners have shown a significant superiority. One explanation would probably be the low demand of cognitive aspects in this respect. Finally, as to grammatical issues, older apprentices are clearly better at the beginning, but outperformed later by the younger ones.

Moreover, regarding different kinds of contexts in which acquisition may occur, two basic broadly-generalized categories should be highlighted. The first one would be educational environments, in which teachers will be playing a role as monitors or guides of the learning process, and where a classroom context will be essential. In these conditions, older learners are remarkably superior (regarding literacy skills chiefly), in that they are most likely to take advantage of their prior experience and discipline. In this sense, they tend to be more mindful of the acquisition process and the reasons why they are learning, that is, they are deeply conscious of their main goals and, *ergo*, their motivation is stronger. Furthermore, older learners may have earlier experiences about teaching and learning methodologies, wherewith they might benefit and improve. As reported by Stern, Burstall and Harley (1975, quoted in Fonseca Mora, 2005:84),

[...] a study of 17000 British children learning French in a school context indicated that, after five years of exposure, children who had begun French instruction at age eleven performed better on tests of second language proficiency than children who had begun at eight years of age.

Another research carried out by Snow and Hoefnagle-Hohle (1978, cited in Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991:155),

studied the naturalistic acquisition of Dutch by 96 English-speaking children, adolescents and adults, measuring each group's performance on pronunciation, morphology, imitation

and translation task after three, six, and nine to ten months' residence in Holland. In general, the adolescent and adult groups outperformed the children after three months and six months in-country, but the children had caught up on most tasks by the time of the third testing.

The second kind of setting will be naturalistic contexts. Differently from the aforementioned environment, this one is characterized by a vast amount of exposure to the target language culture, society, customs and speakers. In this respect, younger learners tend to be clearly better in terms of pronunciation and phonological aspects, primarily; or in other words, they are most likely to achieve a native-like accent and fluency.

One more sub-component within the category of "age", and perhaps one of the essential and most widely discussed points, is the so-called Critical Period, or Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). This hypothesis was first proposed by Wilder Penfield and Lamar Roberts in 1959 in their book *Speech and Brain Mechanisms*, and later by Lenneberg, in 1967, and it claims that there is a concrete period before puberty (around 12 or 13 years old), when the most favourable conditions for acquiring a new language in a natural way are offered; and when this stage is finished, the task of learning a language would be hardly impossible. This idea is justified by a number of changes in the hemisphere specialization or dominance happening during these years of puberty (loss of brain's plasticity and transferring of specific functions from one hemisphere to the other), which would make the acquisition process be extremely challenging for learners. Nevertheless, thanks to some empirical studies, the CPH has recently been shown not to be just a matter of a chronological period, but rather, a consequence of a vast amount of variables influencing the learning process. A known fact proving the uncertainty of this hypothesis is provided by the case of Genie, an English girl who was completely isolated from all linguistic situations and opportunities of interaction until the age of thirteen, and who, despite indefinite efforts to remediate her situation, she was never able to develop any sort of linguistic knowledge neither skills for her mother tongue.

As a result, in 1982, the linguist Dan Isaac Slobin proposed an alternative to the Critical Period Hypothesis, called "Sensitive Period". This new version suggests the existence of a specific period in human's childhood life (around 15 years) in which the

acquisition of a new language is supposed to be enhanced. Slobin (1982, in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012:640) claimed that

the sensitive period of language learning is proven by the fact that the universal age of onset of production, rate of acquisition and age of completion of language learning is the same and it is relatively unaffected by the environmental variations and individual cognitive ability.

Thus, this Sensitive Period advocates a significant decrease in the natural ability to acquire a language, which makes the task more challenging, but not necessarily impossible, as the Critical Period proposed.

So, on balance, what would be the perfect age to learn a foreign language? Apart from the aforementioned aspects influencing second or foreign language acquisition, it is vital to mention other related variables, such as the sensory perception to distinguish sounds in spoken language or the amount of input received, *inter alia*. Thereupon, the wide-spread assumption presented at the beginning, “the younger, the better”, could not be totally confirmed, but rather, it would be influenced by a big number of diverse variables (for instance, adequate teaching and learning processes). As a result, starting earlier will not be a fair guarantee of success in foreign language learning.

2.3.2. Aptitude

Aptitude is frequently referred to as an innate ability or capacity to learn foreign languages; or “the rate at which adolescents and adults learn a foreign language” (McLaren, 1996:54). In other words, the individual possesses some state of capacity for learning a specific task. Along with that, and in consideration of the rising interest in this variable from an educational point of view, a number of tests measuring this factor have been developed throughout time. Amidst them, four notable names have to be pointed out: Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT), Language Aptitude Battery Test (LABT), Test Of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

By virtue of this growing enthusiasm for aptitude issues, two different explanation models have been proposed by two expert linguists, John B. Carroll (1981) and Peter Skehan (1998).

The first one was introduced in 1981, (Carrol, 1981:84, in Freeman and Long, 1991:167), and according to its author, “aptitude as a concept corresponds to the notion that in approaching a particular learning task or program, the individual may be thought of as possessing some current state of capability of learning that task”.

Thus, for this psychological linguist, the notion of aptitude should be considered multidimensional, that is, it comprises four prime abilities working in an independent manner:

1. Phonetic coding ability: it is commonly referred to as the capability to discriminate and code distinct sounds so as to form different associations between them, as well as to connect them with various symbols so that they may be recalled later. This capacity is completely different among individuals, yet it does not tend to lead to learning process success.
2. Grammatical sensitivity: it is generally defined as a capacity for the functional recognition of the grammatical aspects of different words in a sentence.
3. Associative memory: it is normally described by referring to the ability for the linking of language units with determined notions and contents, in an efficient and fast way. Nowadays, this sub-component of aptitude is not as relevant as it usually was, but rather the ability to retain and memorize auditory complex material as well as being able to organize that material.
4. Inductive language learning ability: it usually consists in being able to construe specific rules and relationship patterns given a particular set of language instances.

In relation with this model of understanding internal abilities for language learning, some years later, Howard Gardner, another eminent figure in the field of education, proposed his Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT), with the publication of the book *Frames of Mind* in 1983. He wished to find an explanation for the presence of creativity facets and diverse roles in society. As reported by Gardner, every human being is unique, different from the rest, and possesses various and distinct ways of thinking and learning. Furthermore, the concept of “intelligence” would be defined as a capacity to face and solve diverse problems and to create useful products for different cultures. Still, what is more important, according to this professor, intelligence is a capacity; hence, it could be developed and improved. In consonance with these general ideas, it is

relevant to mention that the MIT initially proposed seven types of intelligences, but more recently, more precisely, in 1999, another one has been included. The first original seven intelligences introduced by Gardner are the following:

1. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence: it is the ability to understand a given mother tongue and being able to use it in real contexts. This capacity uses both hemispheres of the brain.
2. Visual-Spatial Intelligence: it is the ability to perceive reality in three dimensions, that is, being able to place information in the space, as well as to be oriented.
3. Intrapersonal Intelligence: it is the ability for humans to recognise and get to know oneself and the whole race, in order to plan future decisions and fulfil specific pre-determined goals. This type of intelligence uses the frontal lobes of the brain.
4. Interpersonal Intelligence: it is the ability to put oneself in someone else's place, to be empathic.
Both Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Intelligences form together the so-called Emotional Intelligence.
5. Logical-Mathematical Intelligence: it is the capacity to understand abstract relationships and exchanges, which is used to solve mathematical and logical problems.
6. Musical Intelligence: it is the ability to perceive and discern musical sounds. It uses the right hemisphere of the brain.
7. Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence: it is the ability to use the human body so as to express different feelings and emotions, create varied activities, as well as to be able to solve diverse difficulties.

Nonetheless, as aforementioned, an eighth Intelligence was later introduced in 1999:

8. Naturalistic Intelligence: it is the ability to perceive natural forms, as well as geological features of the Earth, as particular plants or animals.

Moreover, this Multiple Intelligences Theory might be related to Carroll's (1981) aptitude model in some respects, some of which will be explained below:

Firstly, Gardner's (1983) Linguistic Intelligence may correspond to Carroll's (1981) Grammatical Sensitive and Inductive Language Learning Ability, given the fact that both are intrinsically concerned with the use of language. And in the same way, Gardner's Musical Intelligence may be considered similar to Carroll's phonetic coding ability.

The second model of aptitude was carried out by Skehan in the late XX century. As reported by him, "aptitude is not completely distinct from general cognitive abilities, as represented by intelligence tests, but it is far from the same thing" (Skehan, 1998, quoted in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012:641). He stated that the factor of aptitude will be constituted by three basic components:

1. Auditory ability: this capacity was called "Phonetic coding ability" by Carroll (1981); yet, in this case, it is commonly referred to as "the capacity to make sound discrimination" and "the capacity to code foreign sounds in such a way that they can be later recalled". (Skehan, 1998:200, in McLaren, Madrid, and Bueno, 2005: 84-87). This sub-component of aptitude is said to start to develop before birth. Alongside with that, it is extremely vital at starting levels of the language acquisition process, when it is utilized so as to transform acoustic amounts of inputs into processable information. In this sense, the more sounds decoded, the more input will be received.
2. Language analytic ability: this ability is in turn subdivided into two more parts, which are grammatical sensitivity and language analytic ability. It is generally defined as the essential stage in the process of information, which is supposed to make learners able to induce language rules and develop linguistic structures. The former sub-component enables apprentices to recognise the functions of words, whereas the latter facilitates the identification and linguistic analysis of specific patterns so as to infer their meanings.
3. Memory ability: it is the "capacity for retention of verbal material after a time interval" (Fonseca Mora, 2005:87). In other words, this ability is concerned with the possibility of retaining different words derived from received input, and how these linguistic units are stored in the human brain. This last capacity is strongly correlated with foreign language learning success. Furthermore, it is widely-thought that the better qualities for a good language learner are high memory ability plus good auditory skills.

2.3.3. Attitude

The factor of attitude is thought to be categorized within the group of socio-psychological variables influencing foreign language learning. A definition provided by McMillan Dictionary (<http://www.macmillandictionary.com>, retrieved 11/6/2016) refers to this concept as “someone’s opinions or feelings about something, especially as shown by their behaviour”. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (<http://www.ldoceonline.com>, retrieved 11/6/2016) adds some nuances in this respect: “the way that you behave towards someone or in a particular situation, especially when this shows how you feel”. In other words, someone’s attitude would be the way in which he/she decides to approach a new task, as for example the learning of a new language. Hence, following these criteria and focusing on a foreign language acquisition context, learners’ attitude, their way of behaving towards the learning of the target language, will straightforwardly influence their outcomes, either in a positive or negative way.

Another important aspect to take into account is the strong connection of this variable with the factor of “motivation”. Both would probably constitute the two main remarkable and influencing factors affecting learning processes. But now, how is that possible? What is the way in which attitude may affect the acquisition process? All this will be explained below.

Generally, positive attitudes tend to lead to learners’ success, for the fact that they are supposed to get more interested in the learning process, and thus, their motivation might be highly raised. This is more likely to occur when apprentices feel that the learning contents will be useful for their future; therefore, they would surely do their best to achieve their objectives. On the contrary, negative attitudes might give rise to some disincentives, as long as students’ motivation would be decreased as well. Notwithstanding, this situation may be completely changed into a positive one if both teachers and learners help each other and contribute to the learning process. In pursuance of this, a vast number of suggestions (mainly taken from Oroujlou and Vahedi, 2011:999) could be provided, as for instance, the creation of a relaxing and friendly environment inside the classroom, where students and teachers may feel comfortable and self-confident so as to maintain a conversation and interact with each other. Furthermore, a personalization of the classroom and materials led by learners may

also be extremely useful. A third idea could be the creation of situations where students may feel a sense of accomplishment, in order to increase their comfort and amusement in the classroom. It is also vital to mention the organization of different activities into pairs and groups, as well as to develop the idea of learning outside the classroom context.

Apart from that, the kind of context in which acquisition takes place would also influence learners' attitudes. Therefore, as to foreign language contexts –areas where apprentices are completely surrounded by native speakers of the target language, as well as their culture, customs, educational, social and political systems–, it is widely-thought that the earlier the time spent in that environment, the more positive the attitude towards the target language, given the fact that initial possible prejudices or stereotypes about the new language would probably change in contact with the foreign culture. In this respect, Hermann's Resultative Hypothesis (1980) will be briefly described. She studied a group of 750 German learners of English in a foreign context, among whom some had been studying English for five years, while the rest had spent just one year; and finally she declared that those younger learners who had been studying the target language for a longer period of time showed a more positive attitude and fewer prejudices towards it. As a consequence of this study, Hermann proposed her hypothesis, stating that the longer the time studying the target language, the higher the learners' success and hence, the more positive their attitudes.

Following these ideas, some other experts in linguistics made their own contributions, such as Gardner (1980, quoted in Freeman and Long, 1991:180-184), who suggested that variance in learners' attitudes would cause variance in their motivation, and in the same way, variance in FL/L2 proficiency would be affected as well.

One year later, Oller and Perkins (1981, in Freeman and Long, 1991:180-184) contributed to Gardner's proposal, and they argued that variance in FL/L2 proficiency would directly cause variance in learners' attitude.

Moreover, in 1983, Professor Emeritus H.H. Stern classified three basic types of attitudes in the learning process:

- i. “Attitudes towards the community and people who speak the foreign language” (what he called “group specific attitudes”).
- ii. “Attitudes towards the language to be learnt”.
- iii. “Attitudes towards languages and language learning in general”.

(Bazo, 1996:59).

In 1984, Le Mahieu added some nuances to those previous suggestions, and he reported that variance in learner’s attitude would provoke variance in FL/L2 proficiency levels, and just the other way round, that is, variance in FL/L2 proficiency would cause, at the same time, variance in learners’ attitude.

Alongside with these aspects, some further factors influencing attitude should be remarked:

- i. Parents: it is an indisputable fact that parents’ attitude towards a specific language would affect their children’s perspective about the same language, as well as the new culture. *De facto*, Gardner (1960, in Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991:178) showed that “Anglophone students learning French as a Second Language in Montreal possessed attitudes which were reflective of their parents’ attitudes towards French Canadians”.
- ii. Peers: noticeably and undoubtedly, learners of secondary education appear to be heavily influenced by their classmates’ attitudes and behaviours. As a matter of fact, Elias-Olivares (1976, cited in Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991:178) “related how second-generation Mexican-Americans prefer to use ‘calo’ dialect or to code-switch rather than to use the standard Spanish they were learning in their bilingual classroom”.
- iii. Teachers and learning situation: their expectations and educational perspectives could completely differ from the students’ ones, and hence, learners’ attitudes towards learning may be unfavourably affected.
- iv. Ethnicity: “one’s ethnic group membership might also determine attitudes and behaviour toward members of other groups” (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor, 1977, quoted in Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991:178). *Videlicet*, a given race’s beliefs and thoughts, the way they see reality, might influence its members’ perspective about a specific language, as well. At this point, Giles’s Social Accommodation Model, proposed in 1987, should be pointed

out. According to this theory, when people are interacting, changes in speech tend to happen, and as a result, either convergence or divergence arises. The former concept refers to a positive attitude on the part of the speaker, who appears to feel a strong connection with the foreign culture; *ergo*, he/she decides to modify his/her speech so as to make it more similar to the native listener. In contrast, the latter notion makes reference to a negative attitude towards the target language and culture, which tends to lead to some linguistic differences between speaker and listener.

2.3.4. Motivation

In order to be successful in the process of acquisition of a new language, one of the most influential factors would probably be motivation. This factor is highly connected to other variables, such as attitude and aptitude. Additionally, it is widely thought that the combination of them will lead to success in language learning.

Motivation would be defined as “some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action” (Harmer, 1991:3). Furthermore, Madrid et al. (1995:66), add some features to it and define motivation as

an state of the individual which is characterized operationally by an interest and desire to learn L2, that implies having positive attitudes towards L2 learning; an effort to learn L2 by means of a regular study; satisfaction while experiencing L2 learning, enjoying it and experiencing certain happiness and pleasure.

In addition, some theoretical L2 acquisition models of explanation have seemingly highlighted the huge influence of this factor in the learning process, such as Krashen’s Theory of Second Language Acquisition (1981, 1982, 1985); Reinforcement Model, by Carroll (1981); Acculturation Model, by Schumann (1978a, 1978b); Bialystok’s Model (1978); Socio Psychological Model, by Lambert (1974); Socio Educational Model, by Gardner (1979) or Social Context Model, by Clement (1980), quoted in Madrid (1999:47-50).

According to this, five main types of motivation should be defined and described:

- i. Intrinsic: it is a kind of individual inner wish in order to learn a new language, involving personal goals, according to his/her perception of success or failure in the target language. This motivation arises from the

necessity of communication in the new language and is achieved by means of students' self-determination.

- ii. Extrinsic: it is a kind of individual wish for effective target language learning, due to external factors, and not to individual goals or desires; in other words, the individual intention for the integration in the target community, society or culture so as to achieve a specific aim. This type of motivation is in turn subdivided into two other categories, which are:
 - a. Integrative: it is characterized by the desire of the individual to integrate him/herself in the culture of the target language, and to socialize as well as being identified with its native speakers, with the aim of becoming a member of the target community in the long term.
 - b. Instrumental: it is just the opposite to the previous one; that is, the kind of external wish for learning the new language, characterized by learners' functional and practical purposes, for instance to apply for a job, to read some technical instructions, to achieve higher social status, to travel, to communicate with foreign people, etc.
- iii. Causative: it is the kind of motivation characterized by being the main cause of success in L2.
- iv. Resultative: it is the kind of motivation as a consequence or result of success in L2.
- v. Machiavellian: it is the individual wish to hurt the target community or people; it is not very common.

Likewise, for several years, many linguists and investigators have been searching for the most appropriate conditions to make motivation arise. In his Socio Educational Model (Gardner, 1985, quoted in Fonseca Mora, 2005:89), Gardner states four main particular elements as the central features which would indicate whether a learner is motivated or not, and they are the following: the necessity to establish a specific purpose, the necessity to fulfil that goal, the precondition of showing a positive attitude toward the activity, and finally, being conscious about the need of putting efforts so as to achieve that goal. In the same way, this model establishes two kinds of causes for learning a new language, which are an integrative orientation or predisposition towards the target language community, and an instrumental orientation to learn the L2.

Furthermore, according to Gardner, language and culture might be united, they could not be separated.

Another relevant model of explanation for motivation would be Dörnyei's (1994, in Fonseca Mora, 2005:89-90), which is constituted by three essential levels: the first one is the language level, which takes into account learners' purposes from an external perspective; the second one is the learner level, which involves individuals' self-confident, anxiety, competence in the target language, and sense of self-achievement; and the third one, the learning situation level, which is composed of the motivational elements of the syllabus, the role of the teacher and his/her motivational style, and the group motivational elements, that is, the main characteristics of the group.

Additionally, Crookes and Schmidt (1985/1991, cited in Madrid, 1999:51-52) defend an approach focused on the classroom, and less influenced by social factors, as Gardner proposed. This model suggests the existence of a connection between motivation and L2 learning, divided into four leading levels, as follows: there is a microlevel, where attention is straightforwardly connected to learners' interests, disposition and expectations; then, the classroom level, which states that everything happening in the classroom context may influence learners' motivation, such as the type of interaction, the role of the teacher, the kind of materials, etc; the third stage is the curricular level, which contains a series of objectives and contents based on students' needs and interests, related to the language learning situation; and lastly, long-term learning outside the classroom, that is, a motivated students is expected to benefit from opportunities to learn in different contexts, not just inside the classroom.

Finally, William and Burden (1997, cited in Fonseca Mora, 2005:90) claim that motivation would depend on learners' previous experiences and preferences. According to them, learners need to connect their previous knowledge with the new one so as to create their own personal understanding of the target language. Furthermore, motivation would be explained by means of three fundamental categories: reason, sustaining effort and decision in order to achieve a specific goal.

The description of these models of analysis and types of motivation has given rise to other questions withal, as for instance, what would be the essential features of a motivated student? In this sense, Naiman et. al. (1978, in Ur, 1996) established some

essential points that a motivated learner should present: positive task orientation, ego-involvement, need for achievement, high aspirations, goal orientation, and perseverance.

In the same way, there is a great amount of motivational agents in the learning of a new language, for example the kind of relation between the class and the students' goals and interests; the degree of difficulty of the different activities, as well as their adequacy with respect to the apprentices' level; and the attitude of the teacher towards his/her students, among others. In relation with that, the perception about classroom tasks and their motivational factors tends to be quite distinct among teachers and students; for instance, learners of an L2 or a FL usually prefer watching videos they like, playing games, avoid individual work in favour of pairs and groups, activities outside the classroom, listening to music in English or the language they are learning, etc, that is, more dynamic tasks, enjoying themselves at the same time that they learn; whereas teachers usually opt for written and oral activities, vocabulary and grammatical tasks and exercises proposed by the students' textbooks.

Some useful techniques to increase learners' motivation would be the encouragement on the part of the teacher to make students aware of their capacities and cognitive competence, the creation of a positive atmosphere in the classroom, the importance of communication and socialization with other students in order that they can negotiate meaning, the practice of dynamic activities, such as singing songs, as well as paying more attention to fluency and intelligibility than accuracy in the target language, the negotiation with the teacher about the most appropriate and pleasant kind of activities, etc.

2.3.5. Personality

According to Macmillan Dictionary, personality is “the part of a person that makes them behave in a particular way in social situations”. (<http://www.macmillandictionary.com>, retrieved 11/6/2016). From an educational perspective, this variable started to be studied in the XX century, when certain linguistic studies focused chiefly on linguistic issues started to be centred on other social and affective factors influencing the language learning process. In SLA influential linguists such as Krashen (1985), Skehan (1989) or Gass and Selinker (1994) became interested in the relation between language acquisition and students' personality (cited in Zafar

and Meenakshi: 643). *De facto*, Earl Stevick (1990, in Fonseca Mora, 2005:93) states that “success [in language learning] depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses, and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom”.

Along these lines, learners’ personality is a very abstract term, in view of the great amount of circumstances and aspects which are involved, as for instance, learners’ social and linguistic proficiency, affective maturity or stability. Therefore, the task of determining to which extent it would influence the process of SLA, as well as the way it works, will depend on seven major personality components, which will be presented below.

2.3.5.1. Self-esteem

It is commonly referred to as the feeling of self-worth that learners have, that is, a personal evaluation and attitudes towards oneself.

In general terms, three main types of self-esteem should be considered, following a hierarchy from more general to more specific meaning: the first one is global self-esteem, which refers to how the individual considers himself in a global way, as a whole; secondly, specific or self-esteem, referring to how good or bad the individual believes him/herself in specific situations or aspects of his/her life; and thirdly, task self-esteem, which is commonly associated to the learner’s consideration of himself in the realization of particular tasks.

In 1982, Robert Reasoner established a self-esteem model including five main elements, as follows: the sense of security, both in a physical and an emotional sense; the sense of identity, or in other words, the image of themselves apprentices possess; the students’ sense of belonging to a group; and finally, the sense of purpose and competence, involving the setting of a specific goal and certain predisposition to achieving it. Consequently, many students may feel insecure when they are in front of other people, and the physical perception of themselves, as well as the knowledge of their inner capabilities of learning is normally very low. To solve these problems, some suggestions could be the creation of some rules inside the classroom to build up respect among classmates and teachers; to set up different and varied activities which give students the opportunity to explore and discover distinct forms of learning at the same

time that they become familiar with their capacities and abilities; and also the promotion of interaction and students' encouragement to set realistic goals.

Thus, in the process of second language acquisition, it would be essential to consider learners' sense of self-esteem, since it is directly correlated to learning success. Nonetheless, the variation regarding self-esteem in different points of the process should be taken into account, that is, individuals might change their feelings of self-worth as acquisition takes place.

2.3.5.2. Extroversion/Introversion

Extroversion is characterized by impulsiveness and the ability to be sociable. Hence, extrovert students are normally more participative and interactive in the classroom context, they like taking risks in the learning process and performing in public.

On the other hand, introvert learners are more likely to be quiet and remain silent; they tend to be more introspective, reserved and humble. In addition, they prefer not to speak in public.

These two variables have been considered to have some influence in the process of SLA, in that extroversion is commonly associated with more opportunities to communicate in the target language, and along with that, extrovert learners prefer working in groups and pairs, so that they can benefit from interaction and negotiation of meaning. On the contrary, introversion is connected with reading and grammar skills, as well as a better pronunciation in the FL, given that introvert learners tend to think what they are going to say before producing formulations, and they also develop more cognitive academic language abilities.

Nevertheless, these facts do not reveal any clear conclusion about the influence of extroversion and introversion in the learning process, for there are neither corresponding nor coinciding results. In connection with that, Eysenck (1992, quoted in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012:643) claimed that extrovert apprentices were not correlated with learning success because of the functioning of the human brain; just the opposite to some SLA theorists, who argue that extroversion might have a positive effect on acquisition.

2.3.5.3. Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as “negative feelings, such as uneasiness, frustration and self-doubt experienced by language learners in the second or foreign language learning process” (Arnold and Brown, 1999, in Indrianti, 2012:276). Thence, it generally has a negative effect in language learning, but this feeling might be reduced or disappear as learners become more confident about their capacities.

Many investigators, such as Sparks and Ganschow (1993), or MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), in McLaren, Madrid and Bueno (2005:94), claim that the origin of this feeling could be a poor performance in the target language, or the process of language learning *per se*, in that it usually involves many challenges for learners, such as difficulties with the syntax of the FL, which may cause frustration, or not being able to understand the target language. Other causes of anxiety would be a certain fear for giving wrong answers and therefore, being ridiculed or humiliated in public, as well as fear for tests and negative evaluation. All this might have a straightforward negative influence on learners’ motivation as well.

In relation with these studies, Heron (1999, cited in Indrianti, 2012:277) classified anxiety into three main types:

- i. Acceptance anxiety: “one’s fear of not being accepted, liked or wanted by one’s peers”. In other words, it is the fear for the negative aspects about oneself that other people could be thinking of.
- ii. Orientation anxiety, referring to the sense of identity with one specific group, that is, the feeling of one’s identification and acceptance in some groups of people.
- iii. Performance anxiety: it is the individual’s thought of not being capable of performing a specific action.

Likewise, four other kinds of anxiety should be pointed out:

- iv. Trait anxiety: it is the permanent feeling of being anxious and worried about something.
- v. State anxiety: it is the temporal feeling of being anxious and worried about something related to a specific situation or event.

- vi. Debilitating anxiety: it is a harmful feeling which prevents students for coping with the learning situation; it is a behaviour of avoidance which makes the learner feel too anxious to process the information.
- vii. Facilitating anxiety: it is a helpful feeling which encourages learners to deal with the learning situation; it is an approval behaviour which makes students capable of achieving their learning goals and challenges.

In view of this situation and the great influence anxiety might have on the acquisition process, some suggestions so as to solve this situation should be silhouetted, as for example: helping students to become aware that anxiety can and must be overcome, trying to improve learners' self-esteem and confidence about the process of learning, decreasing the feeling of competition among students and facilitating a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere in the classroom, helping students to develop learning strategies, and providing exercises related to students interests and needs.

2.3.5.4. Risk-taking/Sensitivity to rejection

These two concepts are opposite, although clearly connected at the same time. The first one, risk taking, is "the ability to make intelligent guesses" (Rubin and Thompson, 1994, cited in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012), that is, the individual wish for taking risks in learning, to communicate and interact with other people without any prejudices or embarrassment, to investigate the new linguistic frame so as to create personal knowledge and meanings and thus, be able to progress in the process of acquisition. Alongside that, learners characterized by risk-taking behaviour are generally considered good language learners, as long as they tend to use more complex language with disregard of making some mistakes. Nevertheless, a great number of apprentices usually feel some degree of fear for taking risks in classroom, probably due to circumstances such as obtaining poor marks, misunderstandings with teachers, punishments or strict discipline, as well as angst for seeming ridiculous or losing their identity.

The second one, sensitivity to rejection, is normally referred to as the individual fear for negative thoughts and actions of other people towards him/herself. Learners characterized by this kind of behaviour are most likely to avoid communication and interaction in class; therefore, success in SLA is more difficult to achieve.

That is the reason why the creation of a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom where students may feel relaxed should be the responsibility of the teacher, as well as the establishment of favourable conditions for learning a second language.

2.3.5.5. Empathy

It is the “individual’s ability to put oneself in another’s place” (Freeman and Long, 1991:189). *Videlicet*, the capacity to understand others’ feelings, thoughts, ideas, anxieties and worries in a specific situation. In the field of SLA, this type of attitude is not straightforwardly correlated with language success, yet empathic learners are supposed to concentrate more on meanings than forms and errors in the L2.

In this sense, it would be convenient to mention the existence of the so-called language ego (Guiora, 1972, in Freeman and Long, 1991:190). According to this professor, in the process of growing up, all human beings develop their personal sense of identity, that is, their ego. Seemingly, in the process of second language acquisition, a language ego is also acquired, since learners need to get familiarized with a new culture, society, customs, *ergo* they need to acquire a new sense of identity, a new ego. In this sense, when apprentices are young, their language ego boundaries are relatively flexible, which permits them to adopt a new accent efficiently and almost effortlessly. However, these ego boundaries become more rigid, and therefore, inflexible, when they are adults, so that the acquisition of a good pronunciation in the target language is more challenging. This is what is called permeability of language ego boundaries.

As a whole, no significant connections between empathy and SLA success are found, although the empathic variable would have a positive correlation with pronunciation.

2.3.5.6. Inhibition

This feeling is characterized by a lack of self-confidence and a sense of embarrassment and shame which prevents individuals from acting in a specific way, saying what they want to or being relaxed. It is related to language ego boundaries as well, since inhibition serves to build up differences with respect to other people and environments, in order to protect personal egos.

This personal affective factor might have a negative influence on SLA, in that it would prevent learners from participating in a dynamic way, as well as communicating with other people.

In order to diminish the effects of inhibition in the acquisition process, some experiments were carried out (Guiora et. al, 1972, in Fonseca Mora, 2005), which included the use of some chemical substances, as for instance alcohol or benzodiazepine, so as to make learners feel relaxed, as well as hypnosis procedures. Notwithstanding, no conclusive results were found. Yet it is an indisputable fact that teachers' attitudes and behaviours towards students would be essential to reduce or increase inhibition.

2.3.5.7. Tolerance of ambiguity

Ambiguity normally refers to something which is not expressed in a clear way, which may have more than one possible interpretation. In the learning process, apprentices usually have to face new situations, which sometimes are not precisely clear. These circumstances are likely to lead learners to frustration states and misunderstandings, and as a result, production as well as performance in the target language would be considerably lowered.

Some possible suggestions to solve and decrease this negative feeling might be giving students clear explanations about the contents of the course, as well as avoiding obscure, excessively complex ones, so that learners may feel relaxed and confident that understanding and clarifications will come later.

In this sense, learners characterized by a significant tolerance of ambiguity would not be either disrupted or frustrated by confusing situations, and thus, success in SLA would be more reachable.

After having described most of the relevant aspects concerning personality, and their respective correlations with the process of language acquisition, it would be convenient to conclude by highlighting those fundamental features which, in general, lead to L2 success, as follows: high self-esteem, some degree of extroversion, low anxiety, and risk-taking behaviour. Empathy and tolerance of ambiguity should be strongly encouraged, whereas introversion, sensitivity to rejection and inhibition should be conveniently avoided.

2.3.6. Gender

This variable is frequently referred to as an innate biological human state, although in the educational frame, it is commonly associated to the distinct roles, attitudes and actions played by female and male learners in the process of learning a second language.

Distinctions in gender were already pointed out since ancient times, as it is possible to appreciate in the Grammar of Cicero (1722), and so, nowadays, investigations about this factor are still being carried out.

In addition, the assumption that girls are better students than boys is widely spread. *De facto*, in 1999 the GCSE examination committee (in Barton and Downes, 2003) studied the main differences between males and females secondary students of modern foreign languages in the UK. That project selected adolescents who were about 15-16 years old to test their language achievements. The preliminary results of the project displayed that 47% of female students obtained an A-C grade, in comparison with the 31% of males. Similar results were shown by a series of consecutive studies, such as Gardner and Lambert (1972), Brustall's longitudinal research (1975), Boyle (1987), Spolsky (1989) or Nyikos (1990), in Madrid (1995:62-63).

Notwithstanding, is there a logical explanation for all these conclusions? What are the central reasons why female students tend to perform better than males in foreign language learning?

The most logical answer could be found in their childhood experiences, both at home and school, which normally place boys in a somewhat unfavourable position with respect to language learning. In other words, the way parents normally dress their children, as well as their toys, make a clear distinction between girls and boys and thus, encourage them to adopt different learning styles. Furthermore, regarding school, males are most likely to show more resistance and indifference than girls, so as to maintain their "masculine" appearance. Another extremely relevant aspect influencing gender in language learning is parents' attitudes, in that parents tend to be more approving concerning their daughters than their sons.

Apart from that, several significant differences in terms of gender in SLA should be highlighted; they are going to be divided into two main groups, the first one

corresponding to general differences in the process of acquisition, and the second one would be related to variations in specific skills. In this respect, it would be relevant to mention that these gender differences tend to be more evident at the age of 13-14.

In the first place, it is generally stated that female learners are more advantageous in terms of pace and rate of acquisition, at least, in the first stages; likewise, they tend to be more motivated toward the process of learning and they are usually more reflective, which strongly correlates to positive accuracy in the second language. On the contrary, male students are characterized by a greater impulsiveness, and therefore, less accuracy. Additionally, boys frequently opt for auditory material and explanations, as well as dynamic activities, whereas girls tend to prefer visual exercises. Along with that, females normally interrupt more, so that they obtain higher marks in linguistic activities, just the opposite to males, who generally prefer spatial tasks. Another relevant aspect is that girls enjoy the process of acquisition much more than boys, who are most likely to feel demotivated, for their expectations about language usefulness are lower. As far as language problems are concerned, such as the phenomenon known as aphasia, they regularly affect boys more than girls. One of the central causes might be the greater amount of larger interhemispheric connections found in women than in men.

In the second place, variations in gender may also affect specific language skills, for instance speaking, insomuch as “female learn to speak earlier than male” (Zhuanglin, 1989, in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012). Nonetheless, it is widely claimed that males tend to enjoy speaking more. In fact, the HMI (How Much Information) study, in 1983, (Jiménez Raya, 2003:25), confirms that the majority of male learners chose oral activities as their favourite tasks. Similar outcomes were found in Batters’ (1988) and Aplin (1991) works. Furthermore, males usually dominate conversations, although females tend to initiate communication processes much more frequently, as well as the negotiation of meaning. Another significant aspect in speaking is that women generally use conversations to promote comprehension, whereas men are more willing to promote performance. As to language differences, feminine students tend to use a more polite and indirect speech than men, and, what is more, they are more likely to achieve native-like proficiency.

Another linguistic skill where variations in genders may be emphasized is reading, as long as females usually show a more positive attitude towards reading activities, and

they commonly prefer books. On the other hand, males tend to convey lack of interest by cause of dreary and unattractive material or the need for individualization and isolation in order to read, among many others reasons. In addition, they prefer comics and computer screens rather than books, and they lack the necessary predisposition to look for the meanings of unknown words.

Thirdly, regarding writing, boys find this skill more challenging than girls, so they display a more negative attitude. One possible suggestion to diminish this problem would be the combination of writing and visual materials, or the use of writing to perform a play which students would like.

2.3.7. Learning styles/Cognitive styles

These factors have been forthrightly associated to motivation and attitude variables. Some definitions have been provided as follows: “individuals’ natural, habitual, preferred ways of absorbing, processing, and retaining information and skills which persist regardless of teaching methods or content area” (Kinsella, 1995:225 cited in Fonseca Mora, 2005); “the way a person prefers to learn” (Srichanyachon, 2011:15). In other words, cognitive or learning styles refer to the manner in which individual learners process the contents and linguistic information in approaching a specific activity.

There may be disparate ways for the classification of these variables, but in this project three are going to constitute the essential groups² in which these factors are to be organized:

- i. Cognitive learning styles, which refer to the mental processes involved in the processing of information for the fulfilment of a given task. They are classified into four subcategories:
 - a. Field dependent: students who are not able to understand certain concepts without their respective contexts. They fundamentally use the right hemisphere of the brain, and they prefer observing the situation as a whole, they have a global perception. Likewise, they are sociable

² The three aforementioned groups for the classification of cognitive/learning styles have been established on the basis of Freeman and Long (1991), McLaren and Madrid (1996), Fonseca Mora (2005), Zafar and Meenakshi (2012), and Madrid (2013).

empathic people, who tend to opt for natural, informal contexts in order to learn. Field dependent learners, could in turn, be grouped into passive or concrete learners, characterized by an interest for language as a tool for communication and a preference for group and pair work; and active or communicative learners, interested in language use, willingness to take risks, and communication outside the classroom context.

- b. Field independent: students who feel self-confident and are capable of appreciating details and parts of a whole. They possess an analytical perception, yet they are not so empathic and they generally prefer a formal context to learn. Field independent learners might be also subdivided into passive or conformist learners, who prefer learning about the language in a systematic, organized way, still they are not very self-confident and so, tend to rely on authoritative figures; and active or converger students, characterized by being analytical, solitary, independent and confident apprentices, who perceive language as an object.
 - c. Analytic: learners who are willing to gather information by means of individual analysis. They are generally very fluent, yet not accurate.
 - d. Gestalt: students characterized by a wish for creating rules for language learning, and the understanding of general ideas rather than details. They are more hesitant than analytic learners, although much more accurate in the use of language.
- ii. Sensory or perceptual learning styles, which refer to learners' preference for the gathering of information. Four essential types should be outlined:
- a. Visual: apprentices who tend to learn by means of observable, perceptible material, such as images, pictures or photographs, as well as written texts.
 - b. Auditory: learners who are most likely to rely on listening activities, and who customarily prefer exercises consisting of dialogues or discussions about songs or audio-files.
 - c. Kinaesthetic: learners who tend to learn by physical movements, and therefore, they generally prefer activities involving dramatizing, group projects, theatre, etc.

- d. Tactile: students who use their hands to manipulate learning material, that is, they need physical objects so as to create meaning in the target language.
- iii. Affective learning styles, which refer to the influence of learners' personality in the processing of learning, and in turn, they might have significant consequences in the processes of cognition. Within this group, two important sub-categories should be mentioned:
 - a. Categorizers: this type of learners are commonly characterized by a strong tendency to include a great amount of items into one group (broad categorizers), or to exclude certain elements from certain categories (narrow categorizers).
 - b. Reflectivity / impulsivity: the former type includes those students who tend to reflect on the contents and information of the new language before making any choice; whereas the latter refers to just the opposite concept, in other words, learners who normally act in an impetuous and instinctive manner, without considering any further aspects of language.

Notwithstanding, different models for the presentation of these factors have been broadly proposed, such as Kolb's Learning Style Inventory (LSI), in 1985, who grouped learning styles into four main categories, as follows: diverging style, assimilating style, converging style and accommodating style (general terms extracted from Srichanyachon, 2011). Similarly, some years later, in 2002, the Ehrman-Leaver cognitive styles construct was introduced, which presented nine minor components as the immediate constituents of the distinct cognitive styles, and they were classified as: field dependent/field sensitive, random/sequential, global/particular, inductive/deductive, synthetic/analytic, analogue/digital, concrete/abstract, levelling/sharpening, impulsive/reflective learners (dichotomies extracted from Ehrman and Leaver, 2003).

At this point, it would be essential to underline that the aforementioned cognitive learning styles do not involve success or failure in the process of acquisition, but they simply describe some of the great amount of diverse and assorted types of ways to approach a new language.

2.3.8. Hemisphere specialization

According to Macmillan Dictionary, a hemisphere is “one half of the brain, divided between left and right” (<http://www.macmillandictionary.com>, retrieved 11/6/2016). At this point, it would be convenient to clarify that the dominant hemisphere would correspond to the opposite side to the hand people normally use.

In addition, in the process of acquisition these parts of the human brain are directly involved, and thus, each hemisphere would have different functions in learning. That is primarily due to a process which Lenneberg, in 1967, called dominance or lateralization, described as “a process whereby each of the two hemispheres of the brain becomes increasingly specialized” (Freeman and Long, 1991:197), and which is strongly correlated with the so-called critical period. In this sense, when learners are young, the potentiality for learning languages is supposedly being developed in both sides of the brain, yet as they grow older, this capacity starts to be mainly centred on the left hemisphere, a process which tends to finish around puberty. One of the essential consequences of this procedure is loss of brain plasticity, which, in turn, involves a noticeable increase in the difficulty for learning foreign languages. Similar hypotheses were proposed by eminent specialist such as Scovel (1981, 1988) or Walsh and Dillor (1981, mentioned in Freeman and Long, 1991:198-199). Nonetheless, most of these outcomes were considered inconclusive³.

As aforementioned, each of the two sides of the brain is presumably specialized on distinct functions, so that the left hemisphere would be in charge of the logical, analytic thought, as well as the abstraction from different fields. Furthermore, these learners would be better in speech, writing, temporal-order assessments, reading, associative thoughts, calculations and right visual field. On the other hand, the right hemisphere would control appositional thoughts and spatial associations, especially from a specific part to a whole. Likewise, those apprentices would benefit most from nonverbal skills, recognition and memory of melodies, and left visual field.

Additionally, it would be fundamental to consider some possible damages in the brain, concretely, in the right hemisphere, which would lead to problems in order to remember the order of specific actions, difficulties to understand linguistic phenomena as metaphors or ambiguous terms, as well as troubles with intonation and stress.

³ The following three paragraphs contain general ideas based mainly on Freeman and Long (1991).

Hence, brain hemispheres functioning clearly determines the way learners would approach the task of learning a second language, and so, teachers should appreciate those differences so as to improve learning conditions and students' situation in the acquisition process.

2.3.9. Knowledge of the world⁴

That is another extremely significant factor affecting the acquisition of a second language, which is generally referred to as the learners' cultural and pragmatic knowledge of the different situations where the learning process might take place. More concretely, this concept would involve all the experiences and circumstances that learners might have acquired as a result of societal, communal, cultural and political influences in their L1. Consequently, if apprentices possess a limited or low knowledge of the world, the pace of the learning process could diminish; *ergo*, additional problems would arise. On the contrary, a higher knowledge of the world would lead to an increase in the acquisition process rate, and therefore, a decrease of learners' difficulties. This has also been referred to as learners' prior experience, and many theorists state that it would have a straightforward positive or negative influence on the SLA process. Some authors, such as Blum-Kulka (1982), or Kellerman and Sharwood-Smith (1986) claim that students should base their L2 learning experience on their previous L1 acquisition process, and therefore, that influence would be positive; nevertheless, others, such as Labov (1972), or Olshtain, Stavans and Kupferberg (2008) state that this earlier learning experience would have negative effects on the new situation.

As a whole, results are inconclusive, albeit teachers should consider these factors as essential for the learning process, so as to guide students in the right way, as well as encourage them to benefit from all their previous experiences for the L2 acquisition process.

⁴ General ideas extracted from McLaren and Madrid (1996) and Madrid (2013).

3. PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Having explained some of the main variables affecting the acquisition of an L2, it would be vital, especially for teachers, to be able to put them into practice, that is, to know their students' inner characteristics well, so as to discern or design the most suitable activities for them, as well as being able to guide the learning process depending on learners' need and interests.

Hence, in this section, a set of distinct exercises extracted from different textbooks of the four levels of Compulsory Secondary Education (CSE) and Official Schools of Languages –more precisely, from A1 to B1 levels according to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*– will be briefly analysed and classified according to their degree of appropriateness with the aforementioned factors, as follows⁵:

1. AGE (cf. Appendix 1): this activity is designed for beginners, who are supposed to think about some celebrities they like so as to write and speak about them briefly. This kind of exercise would be perfectly suitable for the factor of “age”, since it is clearly of learners' interest; in other words, it is not a “boring” or “serious” topic, insomuch as apprentices are widely familiar with actors, singers, bands, artists and so on. In addition, they are not asked to use specific vocabulary or grammar –which they would probably find challenging–, so learners will feel free to provide as much information as they can as well as to enjoy themselves while doing the activity.

2. APTITUDE (cf. Appendixes 2, 3, and 4): in the first activity, students are asked to practise a given conversation until they can remember it, so it is clearly associated to the aptitude sub-component “associative memory” or “memory ability”. In the second one, a text containing some grammatical mistakes in order to be corrected is presented to learners; thus, the sub-component of “grammatical sensitivity” or “language analytic ability” will be worked. Finally, the third exercise is concerned with English pronunciation aspects, in which apprentices are asked to pay attention to different phonemes so as to associate them with the syllables of different words. This last activity is connected to the “phonetic coding ability” or “auditory ability”.

⁵ All the appendixes mentioned below, with their respective images and references, are included in section 6 of this project.

3. ATTITUDE (cf. Appendix 5): in this activity, students are asked to work in pairs; therefore, they would have a more positive attitude and enjoyable perception of the task, for the fact that it could be seen as a game with friends. Furthermore, what they have to do is the creation of a story or tale based on some pictures and vocabulary that they are provided with. For these reasons, this exercise is quite appropriate to encourage students to have a more positive attitude towards the learning process.

4. MOTIVATION (cf. Appendixes 6 and 7): these activities are strongly motivating for students who are learning an L2, since the topic with which they are supposed to deal with –music– is very pleasant and close to them as well as their interests. Likewise, learners do not need to work individually, which they might probably perceive as a boring task, and, therefore, a demotivating one, but rather, in pairs. In addition, this exercise will be complemented with a song that learners will listen to and work on it.

5. PERSONALITY:

a. *Self-esteem* (cf. Appendix 8): this exercise would be appropriate to develop students' self-esteem for two essential reasons. Firstly, because as they are asked to work in pairs and groups, interaction between them is taken for granted; and secondly, the setting of realistic goals that the activity presents; that is, students will possibly need to be able to carry on a conversation in a restaurant, since it is a very usual activity in our daily life, and, therefore, the practice of this type of task will extremely encourage them to feel self-confident.

b. *Extroversion / introversion* (cf. Appendixes 9 and 10): activity *d* in appendix 9 would be perfectly associated to extrovert learners, for the fact that they are asked to work in pairs in order to perform a sort of game in public. Notwithstanding, introvert students would feel uncomfortable in that position, and they would rather prefer an individual and passive-skills-oriented activity like the one in appendix 10, in which they are supposed to fill in the gaps with words from the box.

c. *Anxiety* (cf. Appendixes 11a and 11b): in this exercise apprentices are involved in a reading task in which they are asked to complete the text with some specific words. Anxiety could be decreased, inasmuch as they would be working with a familiar and interesting topic –sport–. Along with that, the sense of competition is not introduced, as the activity would be individual, so learners would have the opportunity to learn English while decreasing their anxiety in the process.

d. Risk-taking / Sensitivity to rejection (cf. Appendixes 12 and 13): the first task is to be done in groups so that students may talk between them and give their opinions about different questions. Therefore, it would be appropriate for risk-taking students, in that they tend to like communicating and discussing with other people. On the contrary, some students who may feel a sense of rejection prefer to avoid interaction, and that is why activity 2 in appendix 13 would not be the most suitable for them, for the fact that personal information about them and their families is asked. A possible solution would be to write a composition about the same topic, instead of speaking in public.

e. Empathy (cf. Appendix 14): in this exercise, students are asked to work in pairs and talk about different topics –hobbies, likes and dislikes, interests, and so on– which might be debatable, given the fact that they involve personal information and thus, each learner may have a different opinion with respect to the rest of colleagues. That is the reason why this activity requires a great degree of empathy on the part of the apprentice, in order to understand and respect different arguments as well as being able to put themselves in someone else's place.

f. Inhibition (cf. Appendixes 15a and 15b): as aforementioned, inhibited students would prefer neither to speak in public nor to participate in dynamic tasks; hence, the activity presented here would suit this type of learners, due to its passive-skills-oriented nature. More concretely, apprentices would have to read some pieces of texts, and then, fill in the gaps with some words.

g. Tolerance of ambiguity (cf. Appendix 16): forasmuch as this activity deals with some confusing verbs in English, such as “know-meet” or “borrow-lend”, students would probably feel frustrated. Consequently, if their degree of tolerance of ambiguity is low, they would find certain complications in the learning process. Thus, teachers should clear their explanations up for their students to understand the differences between these verbs, by means of the provision of more examples in context, gestures, pictures, or whatever technique which might help them.

6. GENDER (cf. Appendixes 17, 18, and 19): the activity in appendix 17 would be considerably appropriate for male students, for the fact that it deals with comics, a quite compelling and dynamic topic for them. Contrary to that, females tend to opt for reading tasks, so the one presented in appendix 18 would perfectly suit them. Nevertheless, a mixed class is the commonest situation nowadays, so a combination of

writing and activating exercises should be implemented so as to please both boys and girls. Activity in appendix 19 might constitute a suitable example, in which firstly, students are supposed to prepare a sort of card with some information about them, and secondly, a role-play should be made using those data.

7. LEARNING STYLES/COGNITIVE STYLES:

a. *Field dependent* (cf. Appendixes 20a and 20b): this activity would satisfy field dependent students, since some vocabulary is provided so that they could fill in the gaps, paying attention to the context.

b. *Field independent* (cf. Appendixes 21a and 21b): in this task, learners are asked to read a given text in depth, so as to be able to answer a list of questions in detail.

c. *Analytic* (cf. Appendix 22): this activity deals with collocations. Students are supposed to read a given article, and then, link some words from different columns. This task would suit analytic learners, since they are generally good at individual analysis.

d. *Gestalt and reflective* (cf. Appendixes 23a and 23b): this time, learners will need to read a specific article paying special attention to the use of grammatical structures in order to answer a list of questions dealing with the creation of certain rules, as well as some other content points. In this respect, Gestalt apprentices will be exploiting their wish for creating norms in the process of L2 learning; and reflective students, on their own, will need to reflect on the information before replying.

e. *Visual and categorizers* (cf. Appendix 24): in this activity students are provided with a list of words which they should associate to a series of pictures. Hence, as observable and perceptible material is presented, visual learners would probably find it attainable to complete the exercise without great difficulties. Likewise, categorizer apprentices would play a significant role here, since an exhaustive classification of words will be carried out.

f. *Auditory* (cf. Appendix 25): this task should be addressed to apprentices who tend to opt for listening material, for the fact that a brief dialogue is presented, which they are supposed to listen to and complete.

g. Kinaesthetic, tactile and impulsive (cf. Appendix 26): in this exercise, learners are asked to work in groups in order to represent a situation in which a waiter and two customers are holding a conversation, that is, a role-play will be performed, in which impulsivity and creativity will be required as well. As a result, physical movement is ensured, and thus, kinaesthetic and tactile learners will considerably enjoy the learning process.

8. HEMISPHERE SPECIALIZATION:

a. Left hemisphere (cf. Appendixes 27 and 28): activity in appendix 27 would suit left-hemisphere-specialized students in view of its reading component. In the same way, in the task presented in appendix 28 they are supposed to write an email using certain expressions and phrases provided by the textbook, so that reading and writing skills are conveniently developed.

b. Right hemisphere (cf. Appendixes 29, 30a, and 30b): the first exercise is concerned with an oral conversation, which students are supposed to listen to carefully so as to mark which utterances the interlocutors use. Therefore, associative memory, characteristic of right-hemisphere-specialized learners, will be required. Alongside with that, visual and auditory skills will be developed in the second task, in which some directions are given to students on the basis of a map.

9. KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD (cf. Appendix 31): this activity would be directed to students with a certain degree of cultural and socio-cultural knowledge of the world, given that a series of questions regarding The United Kingdom will be presented to students. Moreover, this type of task could be regarded as a quiz or play, and so, learners will enjoy the learning process much more.

4. CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, it is indisputable that internal factors, those inherent to apprentices, play an essential role in order to fully understand the acquisition of a SL or FL. Even if teachers have been thought to be crucial figures for decades –not least the most important ones–, the learning process could not be adequately understood if learners themselves were not taken into account. As a matter of fact, at present, they are and they must be considered key elements in education. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that

every human's mind works in a markedly different way, which clearly affects both the process of acquisition and learners' respective success. In this respect, all the distinct variables mentioned in this project handsomely contribute not only to a better understanding of this current and primordial academic issue, but also to help teachers, investigators, and experts on this topic to become aware of the utmost urgency to heed these factors in real schooling.

On balance, regarding *age*, it could be claimed that starting to learn a new language earlier will not be a firm assurance of success, given the vast amount of disparate circumstances involved. Thence, as far as implicit learning is concerned, younger students are clearly superior; but it is not the case in explicit learning, where adults show better outcomes. Regarding the amount of time spent in the learning process, older students are considerably faster, but younger ones will obtain much more significant results in the long-term. Different skills should also be considered, for the fact that adult learners tend to lead adolescents in morphology, syntax and grammar, but not in pronunciation and fluency. The same happens depending on the context; older learners are normally better in educational environments, while younger students in naturalistic ones. As a consequence, the most appropriate age to learn a given language cannot be clearly established, but it will be rather based on these influencing circumstances.

Similarly, *aptitude* cannot be considered as a fixed factor, but rather a capacity which can be developed and improved; in other words, no student should be labelled as "more or less intelligent" than other, given the distinct sub-components of this variable –phonetic coding ability, grammatical sensitivity and memory ability, in general– which make each student work in a very different –but not better or worse– way.

In addition, central aspects would be learners' *attitude* and *motivation*. These two variables, together with the aforementioned one, aptitude, will straightforwardly lead to language learning success, since learners will be enjoying themselves at the same time they learn. Expressed differently, the more positive the attitude, the higher the motivation, and thus, the more possibilities to get better results. In this respect, a very striking kind of motivation among the different existing types –intrinsic, extrinsic, integrative, instrumental, causative or resultative– would be the machiavellian one, characterized by the individual's very first objective to learn the new language so as to hurt the target society.

As to *personality*, varied types of self-esteem would influence the process as well; although generally speaking, this factor tends to affect learners in a negative way if it is low, or in a positive way if it is high. Additionally, it is closely connected to extroversion and introversion or inhibition, as well as risk-taking and sensitivity to rejection aspects, in that extrovert learners usually like performing in public and taking risks, and so, their self-esteem tends to be elevated. Opposite to that, introvert learners opt for avoiding communication, and their self-esteem is usually quite low. However, no clear correlation between extroversion/introversion and learning success is found. Concerning anxiety, it generally has a negative effect on acquisition. Nonetheless, the existence of a special kind of this variable should be silhouetted, that of facilitating anxiety, which helps learners to deal with the learning situation. Moreover, the more empathic and tolerant the learner, the more success in the process of learning, concretely in pronunciation and fluency terms.

Alongside that, concerning *gender*, even though equality between female and male students is fiercely defended at present, abundant evidences prove that they learn neither in the same way, nor in the same time. In fact, boys tend to show more resistance toward learning; they are more impulsive and thus, less accurate, and they commonly prefer auditory activities and spatial tasks. Concerning pronunciation, they are less polite and not so native-like. On the other hand, girls usually show more positive attitudes toward the process of acquisition; they are more reflective and therefore more accurate. Likewise, they tend to prefer visual exercises, as well as reading activities, and their pronunciation seems to be closer to the target one.

Another vital factor to take into account is the type of *learning/cognitive style* the learner presents. Consequently, some students would prefer to work in pairs or groups, while others would opt for individual tasks. In the same way, certain apprentices would be able to appreciate more details than others, or to create specific rules instead of general ideas. In the same way, there will be apprentices who would prefer to learn by means of either visual or auditory material, physical movements, or manipulation of elements. All these styles must be taken into account for teachers to be able to prepare suitable and different activities for all of them, and give favourable opportunities to improve their learning experiences. Related to that, hemisphere specialization should be mentioned. More precisely, those students whose dominant hemisphere is the left one, skills such as speech, writing, temporal-order assessments, reading, and calculations

would be more developed; while those associated to the right one are nonverbal skills or memory.

All these features, as well students' *knowledge of the world*, would crucially influence their learning experience, and in turn, their success in the L2 or FL acquisition. For that reason, internal factors should be well known by teachers and experts in education, in order to be able to prepare suitable and specific activities for each type of learner, and hence, guide the learning process in the right direction.

Apart from that, and despite the alleged general knowledge of educational current issues, the remarkable ignorance or just disinclination found among many teachers concerning these aspects nowadays cannot be denied. In other words, even if huge didactic progress has been achieved through the years, it is irrefutable that certain teachers are most likely to teach in the traditional way –perhaps because they have become accustomed to teacher-centred lessons, or due to lack of information and knowledge–. As a result, progressively more students become demotivated, unsuccessful, and eventually decide to leave school.

This is the reason why higher consciousness about these internal factors is extremely relevant for the learning process. That is, if teachers know their students well, and students know their pros and cons deeply, personalized teaching and learning would be possible, and, consequently, different and varied activities could be prepared so as to satisfy each learner's characteristics, as well as motivate and encourage them to enjoy acquisition, and thus, lead to success. Not only teachers and students, but also parents, editorials, and educational institutions as well should be conscious of these features due to the overwhelming influence in teaching and learning processes. Were lessons adapted to students' needs, interests and inner characteristics, positive results and success would undoubtedly fall among this field. Thence, textbooks, parents' attitudes toward their children, peers' behaviour and apprentices themselves must prioritize and focus on internal factors in the process of acquisition; they must become aware of the sheer necessity of these ideas to be spread for success to be achieved.

The elaboration of this project has been an arduous and thorough task, in which long, but well-spent time has been devoted to reading and design of activities. At this point, it could be said that the main objectives introduced at the beginning have been safely attained. Furthermore, from a training perspective, I would say that this project

has provided me with an enormous and extra amount of linguistic, technical, academic and profound knowledge which has encouraged and helped me to develop my personal autonomy in a conscious manner. On a personal basis, it has contributed to build real critical awareness; but above all, this project has substantially increased and clarified my willingness to become an English high school teaching professional, and so, have the opportunity to apply these ideas in real education.

To conclude, I would like to underline a particular idea which has marked me along this project: there is no either a perfect or inept student; each person, each learner, each human being possesses a series of personal, inner, inherent features which make them unique, which make each one be the best in something. It is just a matter of knowing how to make the most of ourselves. As Einstein said: “Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid”.

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6. APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1

3 Talk about it *My favorite celebrities*

Write the names of your favorite celebrities below. Then talk about them with a partner. How many things can you say?

actor	Johnny Depp	band	
singer		team	
writer		artist	

"My favorite actor is Johnny Depp. He's so good-looking. His new movie is great."



(McCarthy et al., 2005:23)

APPENDIX 2

- 10** **a)** Work in groups of three. Practise the conversation in **7a)** until you remember it.
- b)** Close your book. Practise the conversation again.

(Redston et al., 2005:35)

APPENDIX 3

a Read the e-mail. The computer has found ten mistakes. They are either grammar, punctuation, or spelling. Can you correct them?

From: Alessandra [alessandra@andes.com.ar]
 To: Daniel [dani2199@yahoo.com]
 Subject: Hi from Argentina

Hi Daniel,

My name's Alessandra. It's an italian name, because my grandmother was from Italy, but I'm Argentinian and I live in Mendoza, a big city in the west of the country. I live with my parents and my two brothers. I have 19 years old, and I'm at university. I'm studing computer science. I'm in my first year and I really like it.

I'm going to tell you about myself. As you can see from the foto, I have long hair – it's quite fair – and greens eyes. I wear glasses, but I want to get contact lenses soon.

I think I'm a positive person. I'm quite extrovert and frendly. My mother says I'm very talkative – I think she mean that I talk too much!

In my free time I love reading and going to the cinema. But I dont have much free time becuase I have classes every day, and a lot of work to do even at weekends. I also go to English classes on friday afternoon.

Please write soon and tell me about you and your life.

Best wishes
 Alessandra



b Read the e-mail again from the beginning. Then cover it and answer the questions from memory.

- 1 Where's Alessandra from?
- 2 Why does she have an Italian name?
- 3 Where does she live?
- 4 Who does she live with?
- 5 What does she do?
- 6 What colour are her eyes?
- 7 Is she shy?
- 8 What are her favourite free time activities?
- 9 When does she go to English classes?

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:13)

APPENDIX 4

3 PRONUNCIATION /e/, /əʊ/, /ʌ/

a What are sounds 1–3?



1



2



3

b What sound do the pink letters make in each sentence? Write 1, 2, or 3.

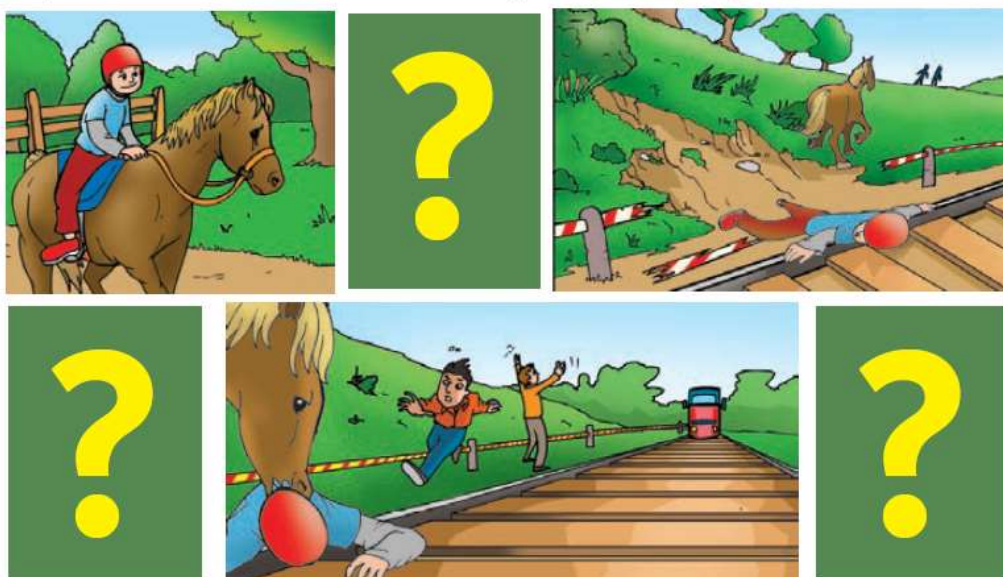
- 1 Nobody **knows** where he **goes**. ☐
- 2 Somebody's coming to **lunch**. ☐
- 3 I **never** **said** anything. ☐
- 4 I've **done** **nothing** since **Sunday**. ☐
- 5 Don't tell **anybody** about the **message**. ☐
- 6 There's **nowhere** to go except **home**. ☐

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:89)

APPENDIX 5

SPEAKING

Work in pairs. Make up a story using the pictures and the words/phrases below and your imagination. Then, tell your story to the rest of the class. Start like this: *It was a nice day so Bob went horse riding.*



railway fall off track unconscious faithful nearby get help in the distance rescue last minute

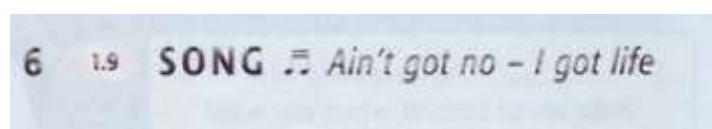
(Mitchell and Malkogianni, 2015:31)

APPENDIX 6

b) Work in pairs. Talk about the types of music you like and don't like. Who are your favourite bands, singers or composers?

(Redston et al., 2005:56)

APPENDIX 7



(Redston et al., 2005:19)

APPENDIX 8

6A  **5.8** Listen to the customers in a restaurant. Are they polite or impolite?

B Work in pairs and take turns. Student A: say customer sentences from Exercise 5A. Be polite or impolite. Student B: say if Student A is polite or impolite.

(Eales and Oakes, 2011:52)

APPENDIX 9

CALLING RECEPTION

a  **2.17** Cover the dialogues and listen. Who does Allie phone? Why?

YOU HEAR	YOU SAY
Hello, reception. How can I help you?	Hello. This is room 419. I have a problem with the air-conditioning. It isn't working, and it's very hot in my room.
I'm sorry, ma'am. I'll _____ someone up to look at it right now.	Thank you.
_____ service. Can I help you?	Hello. This is room 419. Can I have a tuna sandwich, please?
Whole wheat or _____ bread?	Whole wheat, please.
_____ or without mayo?	Without.
With _____ or salad?	Salad, please.
_____ to drink?	Yes, a Diet Coke.
With _____ and lemon?	Just ice.
It'll be there in five minutes, ma'am.	Thank you.



b Listen again. Complete the YOU HEAR phrases.

c  **2.18** Listen and repeat the YOU SAY phrases. Copy the rhythm.

d In pairs, roleplay the dialogues. A (book open) you're the receptionist / room service, B (book closed) you're Allie. Swap roles.

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:24)

APPENDIX 10

b Complete the dialogues with a phrase from the box.

call back come back give it back pay me back take it back

- 1
A I love that shirt you gave me for my birthday. But it's a bit small.
B Don't worry. I'll _____ to the shop and change it.
- 2
A Can I speak to Bart, please?
B I'm sorry. He's not here at the moment.
A OK. I'll _____ later.
- 3
A Excuse me. Could I talk to you for a moment?
B I'm really busy at the moment. Could you _____ in five minutes?
- 4
A That's my pen you're using!
B No, it's not. It's mine.
A No, it's mine. _____!
- 5
A Can you lend me 50 euros, Nick?
B It depends. When can you _____?
A Tomorrow. I'll go to the bank first thing in the morning.

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:33)

APPENDIX 11A

b Read the article and complete it with a word from below.

champions	fans	goal	match	pitch
players	referee	scored	stadium	team

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:59)

APPENDIX 11B



Your most exciting sporting moments...
This week, Duc from Vietnam writes:

The most exciting football ¹ *match* I have ever seen was the 1999 Champions' League Final between Manchester United and Bayern Munich in the Nou Camp ² in Barcelona.

After 90 minutes Manchester United were losing 1-0. The Bayern Munich ³ in the stadium were already celebrating their ⁴ victory. The Manchester United fans in the stadium and millions around the world were watching in despair.

There were now just three minutes of added time. 20 seconds passed and United got a corner. The atmosphere in the stadium was incredibly intense. All the Manchester United ⁵ (including their goalkeeper) were in the Bayern Munich penalty area. David Beckham took the corner and Teddy Sheringham ⁶ . It was 1-1!

The Manchester United fans were ecstatic. There was only about one minute left now but United attacked again and scored another ⁷ . Now it was 2-1! Thirty seconds later we heard the ⁸ blow his whistle. The match was over. United were the ⁹ ! Many of the Bayern fans and players were crying. They had lost the match in less than three minutes.

The next day I read that the UEFA president missed both Manchester United's goals. He was going down to the ¹⁰ to give the cup to the German team when United scored their first goal and he was going back up to his seat when they scored their second! He missed the most exciting and unforgettable three minutes of football I have ever seen.



(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:59)

APPENDIX 12

Discussion

6 In small groups discuss the questions.

- 1 Which countries would you like and not like to go and work in?
- 2 What problems do you think people who work abroad have?
- 3 Do you think working abroad is essential for a successful career? Why / Why not?

(Emmerson, Sharma and Richardson, 2008:7)

APPENDIX 13

- 2** Write six sentences about you, your friends and your family.

My sister doesn't wear any make-up, but she's got a tattoo on her arm.

(Davies and Falla, 2007:15)

Appendix 14

- b** Work in pairs. Choose five things to talk about from the list below.

a job you **don't mind** doing in the house
a sport you **enjoy** watching
something you **like** doing with your family
something you **love** doing in the summer
something you **hate** doing at work / school
something you **spend** a lot of time doing
somebody you **dream of** meeting
something you **don't like** doing alone
a country you are **interested in** visiting
something you are **thinking of** doing this weekend
something you have **stopped** doing
something you are not very **good at** doing

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:55)

APPENDIX 15A

a Read the description and complete it with words from the box.

cathedral completed designed roof steps statue view windows

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:85)

APPENDIX 15B

1 The most beautiful building in my town is the ¹cathedral (the Duomo). It is in the centre of Milan, in the Piazza del Duomo.

2 Nobody knows who it was ²_____ by, but people think it was an architect from northern Europe. Construction began in 1386, but the building wasn't ³_____ for another 500 years.

3 It is one of the largest cathedrals in the world and it has 135 spires and 3,400 statues. On top of the Duomo there is a gold ⁴_____ of the Madonna which watches over the city. The statue is called the 'Madonnina', or the little Madonna, although it is four metres tall.

4 Inside the Duomo it is quite dark. There are beautiful big ⁵_____, and a lot of interesting statues and monuments. In the chapel of St Fina there are some wonderful frescoes by Ghirlandaio.

5 One of the best things you can do in Milan is to go up to the ⁶_____ of the Duomo. The ⁷_____ is fantastic – on a clear day you can see the Italian Alps. You can get the lift, or if you are feeling energetic you can walk up the 250 ⁸_____.

6 It is free to go in, but you must dress appropriately.

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:85)

APPENDIX 16

2 VOCABULARY confusing verbs

a What's the difference between *know* and *meet*, and *borrow* and *lend*? Underline the right verb.

- 1 You'll know / meet my beautiful daughter Nicoletta
- 2 Do you know / meet my sister's boyfriend?
- 3 Can I borrow / lend your newspaper?
- 4 If I borrow / lend you my newspaper, we'll start talking.

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:64)

APPENDIX 17

Unit 1

Reading 1

7 Read the text quickly. What do you think it is about?

a) Heroes in comics b) Comics in different countries

Around the world on a comic

The two big American comic companies, DC Comics and Marvel, are from New York City in the USA. American comics are usually in colour and they're full of superheroes like Superman, Batman and Spider-Man. Lex Luthor and the Joker are also American comic book characters but they aren't heroes. They're villains!

Manga comics are from Japan. They're very different from American comics. Manga comics are small, you read the comic from right to left and they aren't usually in colour, they are in black and white. The stories are for boys and girls: Shōnen manga, like Naruto or Dragon Ball, are action stories, but Shōjo manga are normally about people and romance.

The comic industry is also big in France and Belgium. Asterix is French and Tintin is Belgian. These characters are very popular all over the world.

Which comic book characters are popular in your country?

8 Read and listen. Then complete the sentences.

- 1 Superman is from ...
- 2 Naruto is from ...
- 3 Tintin is from ...

9 Read the text again. Are the sentences true or false?

- 1 American comics aren't in colour.
- 2 Comic characters in the USA are all heroes.
- 3 Manga comics aren't big.
- 4 Dragon Ball is an example of Shōjo manga.
- 5 Asterix is Belgian.

Word Tip Learn words with their antonyms so you've got a bigger vocabulary.

10 Read the text again. Match the antonyms.

1 big	a) black and white
2 heroes	b) small
3 left	c) villains
4 colour	d) right

11 **CLASS VOTE** Who is your favourite comic book hero? Who is your favourite villain?

Rozumienie tekstów pisanych – Prawda / Fałsz

7

(Heyderman, Mauchline and Howarth, 2011:7)

APPENDIX 18

Reading and vocabulary

2 Read the extracts from an article on living abroad. Find the correct heading for each extract.

health ☐ opening a bank account ☐ mobile phones ☐ accommodation ☐

3 Read the texts again and use the words in the boxes to fill in the spaces.

bills notice contract deposit apartment

1 Perhaps the most difficult thing to organize is where you are going to live. Your employer might help you find an (1)_____ or it might even be provided for you. The best advice is to start looking before you go. Use the Internet to look for places to rent and post your own advert on bulletin boards. It is important to view anywhere though before you sign a (2)_____ and give a large (3)_____ to a landlord. You also need to check whether or not the utility (4)_____ are included and how much (5)_____ you need to give when you want to move out. Many people choose to live with a local family as a way to learn about the culture of the country they are in.

credit cards salary overdraft

2 To open a bank account in another country you will need to show your passport, proof of earnings, proof of your address and residency. It is also likely that you will be expected to show proof that your monthly (6)_____ will be paid into this account. Remember that rules regarding banks are not the same in every country. You have to pay for an (7)_____ on your account in France, and the rules on (8)_____ can differ greatly, make sure you check before you sign up!

(Emmerson, Sharma, and Richardson, 2008:8)

APPENDIX 19

Roleplay

3 You are at a party in London. Think of a new identity. Complete the role card.

Name:	Job:
Work in:	Live in:
Speak:	Like:

4 Stand up. Talk to people at the party.

Hello. I'm _____.

Hi. I'm _____.

Do you live here?

(Soars and Soars, 2010:38)

APPENDIX 20A

B Match pictures A–K to the words in the box below.

bar	A	bottle	bag	cup	can/tin
packet		jar	tube	mug	carton
					roll

(Eales and Oakes, 2011:50)

APPENDIX 20B



(Eales and Oakes, 2011:50)

APPENDIX 21A

Reading for detail

3 Read the article and mark the sentences *T* (true) or *F* (false). Change any false sentences to make them true.

- 1 To have a successful career these days you need to have experience of working abroad.
- 2 A work placement abroad will help your application attract attention.
- 3 Nannette Ripmeester thinks that the Euro CV is the best kind of CV to use when looking for a job.
- 4 You need to check that your employers will recognise your degree subject.
- 5 CVs are more important than cover letters.
- 6 A cover letter in France may be studied by a specialist.
- 7 Sarah Hall withdrew her application for a job in Spain because she didn't like the questions in her interview.
- 8 When working abroad you should behave in a similar way to those around you.

(Emmerson, Sharma, and Richardson, 2008:6)

APPENDIX 21B

CULTURAL **Chameleons**

IN today's competitive job market, not spending time abroad can seriously damage your chances of climbing the career ladder. It is no surprise then that more and more graduates and professionals are looking for opportunities to live and work in a foreign country.

With record numbers of workers hoping to relocate, it is no longer enough to have done a work placement abroad or to speak a foreign language. "This is no longer something that makes you different," says Nannette Ripmeester, director of Expertise in Labour Mobility. "It is something employers expect."

But even if you are a strong candidate, the application process for foreign jobs is far from straightforward. The EU has introduced the Euro CV to standardise application procedures throughout Europe, but Ripmeester believes that a culturally adapted CV is better. "What do I mean by that? For example, in the UK, it is customary to add hobbies and interests at the bottom of the page. In Italy however, that information is not necessary."

When you write your CV it is also a good idea to check whether a photo is necessary and whether an English-language CV should be written in American or British English. Another point to think about is whether or not employers will recognise your degree subject, especially when you have studied a subject, such as Wireless Network Systems, which doesn't necessarily translate into another language and culture.

You also need to consider the cover letter, the first thing that an employer will read. Approaches differ from country to country: get the CV right but the cover letter wrong and you destroy your chances of getting short-listed for interview because the cover letter is the first thing that an employer will read. The

mirror the kind of messages you get about communication and appearance

British usually write long letters to draw attention to relevant sections on the CV, the Italians want one or two sentences and the French expect candidates to handwrite detailed letters which may be analysed by handwriting experts.

When it comes to interviews, make sure you know about the work culture and understand the importance different countries place on language and speech. For example, the French use short sentences and hate silence, while Scandinavians have a deep respect for pauses. You may think these points are not important but by not paying attention, you are showing that you do not respect the culture of the country you wish to work in.

Making a mistake at the interview is something Sarah Hall knows all about. She is from Liverpool in the UK and has worked in Germany, Sweden and Spain.

"My advice is be aware of 'culture dash.' In Britain there is usually a maximum of two interviews. In southern Europe they will call you back for a third or fourth interview. I lost a very good job in Spain when I thought they weren't serious. I withdrew my application because they asked me to go for a fourth interview. Looking back, I now realise they were doing as they always do. I behaved wrongly."

"It's important to show that you understand the working culture. Adapting a similar style of dress to your co-workers, eating the kind of food they eat, enjoying similar activities - these things help to win trust and respect."

"Think of yourself as a cultural chameleon, mirror the kind of messages you get about communication and appearance. People like people who remind them of themselves, and nobody likes what they don't understand."



(Emmerson, Sharma, and Richardson, 2008:6)

APPENDIX 22

Collocations

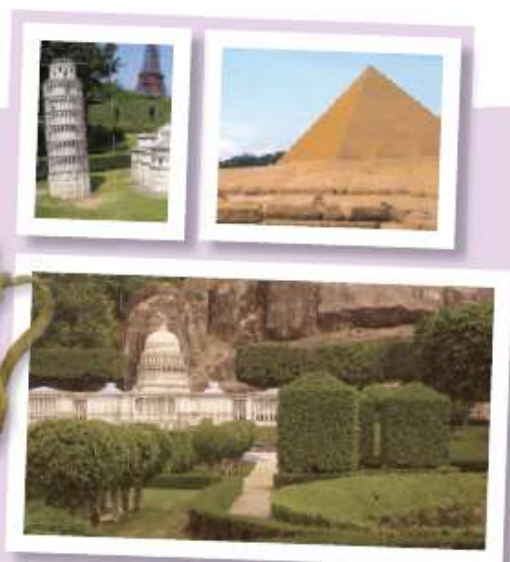
2 You are going to read an article about how to get a job abroad. Before you read match a word on the left with a word on the right to make a collocation.

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1 career | a) process | 5 degree | e) letter |
| 2 work | b) language | 6 cover | f) an application |
| 3 foreign | c) placement | 7 short | g) subject |
| 4 application | d) ladder | 8 withdraw | h) list |

(Emmerson, Sharma, and Richardson, 2008:6)

APPENDIX 23A

It's a Small World!



This week, in our series on the world's most famous theme parks, we are visiting The Window of the World theme park in Shenzhen, China.

This certainly is a theme park with a difference. The Window of the World contains over 130 **replicas** of the most famous natural and man-made sites in the world, all **squeezed onto** about 480,000 square metres. Some of the replicas are the actual size of the sites while others are smaller. In one afternoon, you can visit the Eiffel Tower, walk around the Grand Canyon and **marvel at** the Egyptian Pyramids. The Acropolis is here along with Niagara Falls. One of the most interesting features of the park is the International Street, which features the Islamic Street, where you can see mosques, buildings and markets that look exactly like those found in the Arab world.

'We want visitors to see and **experience** places and cultures they may not be able to actually get to in person. Not everyone can visit every famous landmark in the world in one lifetime and that is why this park is attractive to many visitors, both Chinese nationals and foreigners,' commented Mr Chin, one of the managers.

The Window of the World theme park **combines** both fun and education. There are regular exhibitions about famous people in history, and the park often **holds** festivals which focus on different countries and cultural themes. Visitors also have the opportunity to try out food from all over the world in one of the many restaurants.

'This week we are holding Indian Week,' explained one of the organisers. 'Visitors can learn all about Indian culture, customs and traditions. We are offering Indian food all week and there is also a special exhibition on famous Indians in history.'

Visitors to the park not only have the opportunity to see many famous sites and learn a lot about different world cultures, but they also have the chance to take part in many adventure trips in the park.

'We are waiting to go down the Colorado River by boat and some friends of ours are skiing in the Alpine Ski Resort,' said one visitor. 'We actually come from Shenzhen and we think this park is a great benefit for our region. We will probably never be able to visit all of these places ourselves, so it is really interesting for us. Some friends of ours are visiting us next week from the USA and we are going to bring them to see the park, too!'

In this theme park it really is a 'small world'!

(Mitchell and Malkogianni, 2015:6)

APPENDIX 23B

A. Look at the article on page 6 and answer the following questions.

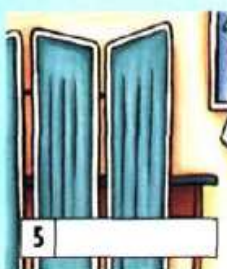
1. What does the Window of the World theme park combine? Which tense is used? Why?
2. What are some visitors doing now? Which tense is used? Why?
3. Which tense is commonly used with adverbs of frequency (e.g. *often*, *sometimes*)?
4. Why does the manager use the Present Simple when he says 'We want visitors to see and experience places....'? What is 'special' about the verb *want*?

(Mitchell and Malkogianni, 2015:7)

APPENDIX 24

1 Match the jobs and the pictures.

a police officer a nurse a student ~~a teacher~~ a shop assistant a taxi driver a businessman a doctor



(Soars and Soars, 2010:18)

WHAT'S YOUR JOB?

Negatives and short answers

1 **T 3.6** Listen and complete the conversation.



A Is *your* name Jeff?

J Yes, it is.

A _____ from England, Jeff?

J No, I'm not from England. I'm from Houston, Texas.

A _____ a police officer?

J Yes, I am.

A _____ 23?

J No, _____. I'm 25.

A _____ married?

J Yes, _____.

(Soars and Soars, 2010:20)

APPENDIX 26

- 11** **a)** Work in the same groups. Look at the menu. Write a conversation between a waiter and two customers.
- b)** Swap conversations with another group. Correct any mistakes.
- c)** Practise the new conversation. Then role-play it for the other group.

(Redston et al., 2005:35)

APPENDIX 27

- b** Read the article about crocodiles and mark the sentences T (true), F (false), or DS (doesn't say).
- 1 The Australian crocodile is bigger than all other kinds.
 - 2 Crocodiles can run faster than horses.
 - 3 Crocodiles only attack you if you are in the water.
 - 4 The German tourist didn't know that there might be crocodiles in the lake.
 - 5 The crocodile also attacked the girl's friends.
 - 6 The Australian boy was killed when he and his friends went swimming in a river.
 - 7 His friends escaped by climbing a tree.
 - 8 Norman Pascoe's aunt was attacked by a crocodile.
 - 9 She hit it on the nose, and it opened its mouth.

(Oxenden, Latham-Koenig and Seligson, 2005:67)

WRITING TASK

A friend of yours will be visiting your city/town and has sent you the same e-mail. Read the e-mail and the notes again. Then, look at the map below and write an e-mail answering your friend using all the notes. You can use Ali's e-mail as a model, but you must use your own ideas and other expressions/phrases (100-150 words).



(Mitchell and Malkogianni, 2015:17)

APPENDIX 29

- 1 T 5.12** Alessandra and Woody are at a party in London.
Listen to the conversation. Tick (✓) what Woody says.



(Soars and Soars, 2010:38)

APPENDIX 30A

- 3 T 8.10** Listen to the directions. Start from YOU ARE HERE on the map. Follow the directions. Where are you?
Go down King's Road. Turn right at the Grand Hotel into Charles Street. It's next to the cinema.

- 1 At the chemist.
 2 _____
 3 _____
 4 _____
 5 _____

Look at the tapescript on p116. Practise the conversations.

(Soars and Soars, 2010:38)

APPENDIX 30B



(Soars and Soars, 2010:63)

APPENDIX 31

1 Do the quiz.

The United Kingdom (The UK)

1  Which four countries are in the UK? a) Scotland d) Northern Ireland b) Norway e) Iceland c) England f) Wales	2  This city is the capital of Scotland. What is its name? a) Cardiff b) Edinburgh c) Belfast	3  Which famous English person lives here? a) The Queen b) The Prime Minister c) Elton John
4  These famous people are from the UK. What are their names?	5  His father's name is Charles and his brother's name is Harry. Who is he? a) Prince William b) Prince Andrew c) Prince Edward	6  Which famous English football team play in red and white? a) Newcastle United b) Liverpool c) Manchester United

(Davies and Falla, 2007:16)