

APPENDIX 3: TEXT RECONSTRUCTION (TEXT FOR TASK)

Please work on the following task with your partner. Reconstruct the text inserting all the necessary grammatical words and changing verbs where necessary to produce a **meaningful** and **grammatically correct** paragraph. Explain why you make those changes.

TEEN SUICIDE

Teen suicide increasing source concern today society. Health professionals attribute reaction unresolved conflict within family and stress, real or perceived. Last twenty years incidence suicide teenage boys double, while girls fall. Trend explain two ways, one immediate and objective, other more interpretive. Firstly, fact boys usually choose violent ways kill themselves. Secondly, broken families, where children usually stay mother rather father, loss of father make greater impact boy than girl, leading greater probability psychological injury.

(Extracted from Ur, 1990: 101)

THE INTERNET AND COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION (CMC): NEW TRENDS IN ESP/EFL COMMUNICATION¹

JORDI PIQUÉ-ANGORDANS

Universitat de València

SANTIAGO POSTEGUILLO

ELENA ORTELLS

M^a LLUÏSA GEA

JOLANTA KOWALSKA

Universitat Jaume I

IN 1996, Jacques Chirac was asked what he thought was the greatest risk for humanity. His interlocutor must have thought he would answer something in the line of cancer, AIDS, or obesity. Chirac's answer, however, was quite surprising: the Internet, he said (*The Observer*, December 21, 1996). The anonymous author of this report insisted on the impact of such an important medium in today's society and particularly because of the number of people it reaches.

1. THE POWER OF THE INTERNET

In recent years, the literature has emphasized the fact that the Internet constitutes a phenomenon that moves between the technological and the social realms, and that it is necessary to understand both, at least minimally, in order to see its full importance. As Yates (1996:106) puts it, it is the largest and most expensive system of connections of data that exists, since it connects the computer communications of commercial businesses and local area networks (LAN) as well. It is also used to connect universities,² governments and

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2. Moll i Soldevila (2003: 27) speaks of the importance of the world of literature and literary studies at the universities in the development of the Internet and that it was at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya where in 1993 the first Web page in Spain was created, and where she is part of the research group "Hermeneia: Estudis Literaris i Tecnologies Digitals".

multiple corporations, all of which constitutes what is commonly known as some kind of a 'networked society' (Moll i Soldevila, 2003: 28; also Castells, 2001). Cebrián (2000: 74), in turn, envisions the Web as a search tool for world-wide information. He writes:

La nueva arquitectura de las redes –basada en la conexión entre el usuario y los servidores– facilita que millones de personas puedan consultar casi a la vez el mismo servicio electrónico de información y obtener respuesta con relativa rapidez.

In addition, Crystal (2001: 13) sees the World Wide Web as a series of computers connected to the Internet that holds "documents that are mutually accessible through the use of a standard protocol (the HyperText Transfer Protocol, or HTTP)".

What is most surprising about the possibilities of the Internet is that its users come to acquire a role potentially active which adds to the Web a whole amount of new complexities and contents. The Internet users actually add to the Web complexity, as was already pointed out by Clément (2000: 40), who says that in the 20th century we have passed from the "paradigme de la simplification à celui de la complexité". And he adds: "L'invention de l'hypertext apparaît comme une tentative pour maîtriser la complexification et la croissance exponentielle de l'information".

The Internet, however, needs an adequate tool to make this communication possible. Talbot et al. (2003: 4-5) clearly establish the existing relationship between language, the media and power in the modern world. They go a step further in saying that language not only plays a vital role in what people perceive as reality, but also the fact that power is exercised through language in ways which are not always obvious. Thus, the union of these two major forces, language and the Internet, results in power. The Internet, indeed, produces a vast amount of the information many of us obtain.

Modern times are characterized by an ever-increasing social demand of information. Barbadilla (2002) attributes this fact to several reasons: on one hand, the fact that we are in a society based on science and technology; on the other, the eagerness with which learned men want to obtain objective non-specialized information, about several topics related to decision making. Quoting data from Forrester Research agency, he adds that 30% of the American cybernauts visit weekly the Internet sites that deal with medical and health topics. The Internet is, obviously, a practically endless source of information, whether it be on popular topics or on specialized scientific information. To this plethora of specialized and non-specialized information anybody connected with a computer to the network can have access.

Barbadilla (2002) adds, however, a word of caution to the user, particularly because of the amateurish character of many of the contributions hung on the net, mainly because of lack of depth, because analysis is often omitted, and because it often lacks the full thinking process of a scientific essay.

2. INTERNET AND LANGUAGE

The incidence of language in the Internet and vice versa has been recently underscored by many authors; their particular emphasis has focused on the effect of the possible changes language will undergo throughout time. The Internet has almost become the number one source of information, particularly for students, and ESP/EFL teachers have been taking note of this communication tool. Recent conferences, such as the 1st International Conference on Internet and Language recently held in Castelló, Spain (ICIL 2003, September 18-20), has shown the use that is being made of the Internet in class. New Web pages are being created daily with teaching and learning in mind, both for use in class and also for self-learning, such as the case of the recently opened page from Universitat Jaume I for advanced learners of English, "English on line at UJI" (<http://www.uji.es/cd/mediateca/en/index.thtml>), through a combined effort between teachers at the Castelló and València Universities. This Web page offers, particularly for advanced students of English a good selection of links towards information on general linguistics, sociolinguistics, dialectology, phonetics, ESL/EFL teaching and second language acquisition, English for Specific Purposes, history of English language, translation, corpora, and also links to the literatures in English language. Other universities, for instance, the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) (<http://uoc.edu>), with its "e-learning facilities" and "Escola virtual d'idiomes"; or the Universidad de La Rioja (<http://campusvirtual.unirioja.es>), to name just two. They have also opened a wide range of Web-page facilities for students with the aim of providing students materials and teacher coordinators who have designed the contents, focus and structure of the different subjects contained therein, and also links to other resources, always having in mind the students as their main target (Díaz Cuesta, 2003).

In the area of Web-derived class materials, Bovea (2003) provided, in a paper presented at the ICIL 2003 conference, a series of links for Web materials in the humanities classroom. Along with these, she introduces a corpus of topics resulting from her research; it offers teachers and students the possibility of choosing from such topics the most appropriate materials they may need according to specialities. From her research we can draw the conclusion that topics on the sciences, history culture, language and art, in this

order, are the most frequently found materials over the Internet (Bovea, 2003: 81-89). In the area of ESP and at the same conference, Luzón Marco (2003) gave ideas, based on the Web, on research activities for ESP. Her contention is that the Internet offers a wide range of opportunities for ESP teaching and learning, although she also passes on the responsibility to teachers for the preparation and adaptation of the Internet-drawn materials and for the creation of related tasks (Luzón Marco, 2003: 130). In addition, she says, these tasks need to be highly structured so that they may be fully effective in class. Similarly, García Laborda (2003) makes a selection of online resources for students, particularly students of tourism who are engaged in research projects. He contends that these projects will "imply important role changes between students and instructors"; hence mastering how to obtain information via the Internet will help students in assuming "their own academic growth" (2003: 220).

Although more in the self-learning category, Rosell Aguilar (2003) also offers his own perspective of the Web as a basic resource for language learning. The study is based on a research project through which he provides the results of student feedback when looking for information related to a particular task they have been asked to complete: students' perceptions of the Web and strategies they used. The study, aimed at three specific areas, namely how they performed their searches, whether or not they liked using the Web, and to what extent they paid attention to the language. Three issues which may help hesitant teachers decide favorably about the use the Web as a useful tool in their classrooms. As Rosell Aguilar (2003: 443) reminds us, the use of the Web "still depends on the individual lecturer or tutor to find the appropriate materials and to promote Web-enhanced language learning". The use of the Web is not institutionalized as a resource means for language materials, but he contends, based on the positive results of his study, that it is time to change. In addition, De Gregorio Godeo (2003: 404) also emphasizes the importance of the Internet as a source for self-study and how little it has been considered so far compared to other computer applications, particularly interactive CD-ROMs. The Internet indeed provides references and practice materials specifically designed for and devoted to students of different levels.

One of the most practical papers presented at the above-mentioned conference was Dueñas et al.'s (2003) report on Internet writing tools. In the preparation of this paper, they seem to have had in mind that old academic aphorism that says "publish or perish", and particularly the members of the "academia" who often have the challenge of writing in a language that is not their own. Their aim was to provide them with the necessary tools for sound academic writing in English:

Para cualquier miembro de la comunidad universitaria que desee traspasar sus fronteras nacionales resulta ... altamente aconsejable el adquirir una relativa familiarización con los mecanismos y géneros básicos de este tipo de escritura (Dueñas et al., 2003: 180).

In addition, they further insist on the need of a wise selection of resources for the academic writing class. Their annotated selection of webpages does indeed provide very useful material for students' work in class, and particularly for self-learning. It is also a good source of information for teachers in their preparation of the writing class; this list covers such tasks as the argumentative and expository essay; the research paper and its structure, types, and conventions; the reviews and a good sample of different types of reports, summaries, abstracts, and résumés. A very useful tool, particularly for graduate students preparing their final projects, is the selection of web on theses and dissertations, and also on how to compile bibliographies, with particular emphasis on annotated bibliographies.

3. THE INTERNET AND LINGUISTICS

In recent years, the Internet has also had a very strong impact in the field of linguistics. As evidenced at the 1st. International Conference on Internet and Language, there is a growing concern with the study of emerging digital genres or cybergenres. Among these, e-mails, web sites (especially commercial) and on-line dictionaries have been the focus of much research, which in general terms aims to determine the influence of the internet on the linguistic and rhetorical features of these genres, and also on the form and conventions of traditional ones.

Therefore, a redefinition of the concept of genre may be necessary. As Fernández (2003: 291) points out, "[t]he use of digital media has given rise to novel or transformed genres, which might be regarded as variations of traditional genres within a new medium such as the World Wide Web". In order to prove this, Fernández focuses on the commercial bank web site to determine whether it is the digital counterpart or modified version of an 'old' paper-based genre such as the brochure.

But the Internet genre which has attracted the attention of most researchers today is the e-mail. Undoubtedly, the e-mail has become one of the most common forms of interpersonal communication in our everyday life, replacing or at least reducing other traditional types of communication such as the conventional letter or the phone call. The orality and immediacy which characterise the e-mail clearly influence the language used in these exchanges.

Montesinos (2003), for instance, analyses the strategies used in both the e-mail and the chatgroup to substitute face-to-face communication elements and to provide the resulting messages with the spontaneity and informality typical of oral discourse. Also in this line, Rivens (2003: 288) discusses the nature of the e-mail (must we consider it as spoken discourse despite being transmitted through a written form?) and defines it as a “third term between oral and written discourse”, which explains the wide range of communicative strategies, lexical creation and language playing employed by its participants. Roboredo (2003), who carries out a comparison between the e-mail and the traditional epistolary genre: the letter, sustains that, although both can be considered as asynchronic forms of communication, the e-mail presents numerous features that indicate the spoken nature of the medium. Of the same opinion is Benito (2003), who also argues for the use of the e-mail in the classroom, that is, for pedagogical purposes, mainly as an activity to generate authentic language products and to enhance communicative strategies among users.

Another interesting study is the one by Turney et al. (2003), who explore the online forums of three different newspapers, especially focusing on the linguistic features of the messages posted by subscribers in English, Catalan and Spanish. The findings confirm the hybrid nature of CMC (computer mediated communication), where “interpersonal and group exchanges of information and opinion” are carried out constantly (Turney et al., 2003: 412), and point at a similar use of informal expressions and conversational features in the three forums.

The study of digital genres covers many fields, ranging from business e-mail messages to telecommunication web sites, from advertising on the net (netvertising) to user guides in computer-mediated dictionaries. But another important aspect to be explored is the dominance of the English language in the internet and its influence on other cultures and languages. In this sense, the papers by Tseliga (2003) and Timofeeva (2003) are very revealing, since they both deal with the problems of using non-Latin alphabet languages such as Greek and Russian on the internet. Similarly, Rodríguez (2003) analyses the changes in the Spanish syntax in telecommunication web sites due to the influence of English in the world wide web.

Finally, the dangers of internet must not be disregarded: as Elorza and Bromber (2003) remind us, plagiarism in academic essays written by undergraduate students, who fail to acknowledge the source of the information offered, is becoming a problem in the university context. As these authors rightly state:

Internet es un arma de doble filo (...), anticipémonos en enseñar a nuestros estudiantes no sólo a hacer un uso efectivo, sino sobre todo un *buen uso*, de las

herramientas que les permiten acceder al conocimiento (Elorza & Bromber, 2003: 481).

4. THE INTERNET AND LITERATURE

Technology has certainly affected literature and its study. The massive presence of literary resources in the Internet as well as their proteic and changing nature make necessary the establishment of a certain type of structural organization as an essential guide “against chaos” (Moll i Soldevila, 2003: 27). This is the task undertaken by the research group Hermeneia –from the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)– who are actively working in the development of a literary cybermap and who strongly vindicate the active role of universities as promoters of an efficient exchange of information and of scientific knowledge through the creation of “subject gateways” (Abadal and Estivill, 2000: 7).

The changes occurred in the digital medium call for a reconsideration of such traditional concepts as “writer”, “text” and “reader”. Thus, after discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the different forms of e-book presentations (PDF format, text mode, hypertextual editions and multimedia hypertexts) and their influence on the reader’s response, García-Peña (2003) underscores the need to study the politics of rewriting in this era since digitalization of literary works will contribute to the persistence and canonization of many literary texts. In addition, Goicoechea (2003) discusses the metaphorical implications of understanding the writer, the text and the reader “as cyborgic entities” (2003: 73) and analyses the ritual of reading in the digital era through two texts which can be defined as representative of Cyberculture: Stuart Moulthrop’s hypertextual novel *Victory Garden* (1995) and its predecessor in print Thomas Pynchon’s *Gravity’s Rainbow* (1973) (2003: 76-83).

The Net has also clearly affected the diffusion of literary journals of minority languages. In fact, Catalan literature journals have experienced conceptual changes that affect not only the presentation of the product but also the possibility of presenting and receiving information –that would otherwise remain hidden. In order to illustrate this issue, Climent (2003) offers a contrastive analysis between the traditional journals on Catalan literature and a selection of web pages which intend to inform and reflect upon literary aspects. Using the parameter of “officiality” to review the journals about Catalan literature on paper, she observes how they range from the more official and consolidated to the smaller editorial houses. This spectrum is also paralleled in the web pages of official institutions,

universities, digital newspapers and editorial houses. However, certain authors, who would otherwise have scarce opportunities of being published on paper, are given the possibility of presenting their works through independent web sites.

The Internet is also an excellent source for materials, particularly for the literature classroom. Today the Internet is considered a useful resource in literary research. It is not uncommon to see that anybody willing to study and analyze a literary work by any author, takes a first look at the Web to find out who that author is and what he or she has published recently. Ráez Padilla (2003) presents such a possibility in his research on the Irish poet Seamus Heaney, a 1995 Nobel prize winner in literature. He provides an enormous list of URLs in which you can find bio-bibliographies, Heaney's poems, critical analyses of his works, multi-link Web pages, and audio and video recordings. The author finds some drawbacks, such as frequent typographical and orthographic errors and the fact that some Web pages are closed after some time. However, he especially underscores, among other characteristics, the quantity and variety of information gathered; the easy, economic, direct, and quick accessibility; attractive formats; audio, video and printing possibilities of the writer's poems (2003: 47).

Similarly, Botella Rodríguez (2003) proposes a series of activities for the practical use of the Net in the teaching of English language and its literature for students of Humanities. The use of web pages about the social context, the author –Tennessee Williams in this case– and the literary work, previously selected by the teacher, is proposed as an alternative to a teaching-system primarily based on lectures (2003: 62). Among the advantages he cites are the development of the students' critical sense and the encouragement of self-teaching and collaborative learning (2003: 68).

5. THE INTERNET AND TRANSLATION

For the last decade or so, the technological advances along with the globalization and integration of the world markets have increased the demand for high quality translation services, as well as have given the rise to the creation of new businesses related to translation such as, for example, the software localization industry (see Sprung, 2000). This situation has put translators, as Lang and Bennett assure (2000), under the constant pressure on the part of customers and growing competition obliging them to deliver translations in even shorter periods of time. To do so and meet the rising demand many software tools have been developed in the language service sector in order to support the translators in their endeavor.

The new technologies have radically transformed not only the methods employed by translators so far, but also their work organization. Many of the professionals in the translating industry started working on freelance basis using word processing software as well as electronic mail, which has been progressively replacing fax or conventional mail. Also, the development of and common accessibility to the Internet enriched the toolkit of translators by devices such as: web search engines to identify background documents or technology; on-line machine translation programs; dictionaries, multilingual terminology data-bases and glossaries; discussion mailing lists; encyclopaedias and other data-bases; bibliographical information; and last but not least, the electronic mail as a channel for reception and transmission of the source and target texts (Fulford & Granell, 2003). The Internet has also permitted wide-spread access to various sources, such as dictionaries, etc., which were formerly out of reach for an average freelance translator because of their high costs.

On the other hand, this frenetic development of new technologies causes that translators nowadays need to acquire a range of skills in order to be capable of exploring and taking the advantage of the Internet resources in full. Otherwise, the attempt of using the Internet may turn out time consuming and even frustrating. The Internet, if applied properly, may help not only to improve the quality of translation output, but also to increase the levels of job satisfaction, since a translator does not feel completely isolated having within his or her reach all the possibilities of direct or semi-direct communication with his or her colleagues through discussion mailing lists and translators' associations.

The new technological advances have also automated many aspects of translation process, and although there is not yet a totally reliable machine translation system able to do without or substitute completely a human translator, it is evident that the automation helps substantially in many aspects of the translation process. In fact, there numerous programs of machine translation, such as for example: *Déjà Vu* of Atril Software, *Logos* of Logos Corporation, *Translation Manager* of IBM, *Transit* of Star Ag, or *Translator's Workbench* of TRADOS Corporation just to mention few (Gonzalez & Orizales, 2003). As Valero and De la Cruz (2001) assure, the memories of translation programs consist of data-bases which store excerpts of texts in source and target language and which can be easily regained. Nevertheless, they should be used cautiously if a high quality translation is to be obtained as a final product. Namely, the majority of the existing programs are effective in case of short, technical text, which leave a tiny margin for a possible interpretation of meaning, on the contrary, a human translator must step in.

As it was mentioned before, the integration of the world markets have caused the increased demand for fast translation, especially from English into other languages. Since the Internet goes beyond all borders, it therefore eases this complex task. Nevertheless, the existence of the great volume of varied information on the web pages concerning glossaries, dictionaries and other useful sources, on the one hand is extremely helpful, on the other, may lead a translator to "easy" solutions and provoke the expansion of incorrect translations including Anglicisms or different versions of the same word or expression.

6. CONCLUSION

The Internet represents a major advancement and a complete revolution in human communication. More specifically, in this paper, we have revised how the Internet has affected the use of language and language learning in the last decade: in relation to language learning, the net provides an extensive network of resources to guide language learners in their task; in fact the variety of resources is so wide in some languages that teachers' major undertaking is to somehow classify and organise these resources to guide students in their use of them. Linguistically speaking, we have seen how the fact that the Internet is an English-language oriented device has affected the use of other languages in this worldwide network (e.g., we have looked into such languages as Russian or Greek). There are other relevant issues in relation to linguistic features and the net, such as the tendency towards informalization or the mixture of spoken and written features that require further research. Finally, we have outlined how the net has increased the resources for literary studies as well as for translation studies. In the case of translators, we have seen how these resources are a tricky improvement for the professions, since, although these professionals have now more resources to improve their final results, they also have more pressure from their clients to submit their translations.

Internet is advancement that has far reaching implications in human communication and the use of language. We are now only in the inception of this new world. Linguists, translators, language teachers and literary researchers need to pay special attention to the developments of this medium. Many of the new tools to be included in this network will have positive implications, but not all of them. A better knowledge of this communication system will help us to identify positive and negative effects of the net.

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