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Task motivation and performance in adult EFL learners: collaborative versus individual writing and the effects of task repetition

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Abstract

In spite of the essential role that task motivation plays in second language learning, there is a dearth of studies in this area, especially regarding writing tasks in the case of adult learners. The present study attempted to address this gap, by focusing on aspects related to task motivation — with special focus on a writing task — in adult learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) preparing for the C2 level in an official school of languages located in Spain. Motivation thermometers and questionnaires were used to analyse the motivation levels of two groups of students, who performed the same writing task — an essay — either individually (individual group) or in pairs (collaborative group). Task performance was also evaluated through complexity, accuracy and fluency measures (CAF) and a holistic rubric. Furthermore, both groups underwent procedural task repetition, in order to assess the influence of task repetition on motivation and performance. The most important findings revealed a lower motivation towards writing tasks compared with other tasks, an increase in the motivation levels after having performed the tasks, the positive effects of collaborative writing and task repetition on motivation, and some evidence that pointed towards the possibility of the collaborative group benefitting more from task repetition. Regarding performance, we obtained a disparity of results in the CAF measures, and the statistical analysis failed to show a correlation between task motivation and task performance.

Keywords: Task motivation; task performance; task repetition; collaborative writing, individual vs. pair work

Resumen

A pesar del papel esencial que juega la motivación hacia las tareas en el aprendizaje de segundas lenguas, hay una escasez de estudios al respecto, especialmente en cuanto a tareas de modalidad escrita en la enseñanza para adultos. Por tanto, en el presente estudio nos propusimos investigar la motivación hacia las tareas escritas en alumnos adultos estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera en preparación para el nivel C2 en una escuela oficial de idiomas en España. Se emplearon termómetros de motivación y cuestionarios para analizar los niveles de motivación hacia una tarea escrita (una redacción) en dos grupos de alumnos que trabajaron individualmente o en parejas. El rendimiento (la calidad de las redacciones) se evaluó usando tanto una rúbrica como indicadores de complejidad, precisión y fluidez. Ambos grupos repitieron el procedimiento de la tarea (otra redacción sobre un tema similar). Los resultados revelaron una motivación más baja hacia las tareas de índole escrita en comparación con otras tareas, un incremento en los niveles de motivación después de realizar la tarea, el impacto positivo de la repetición de la tarea y de trabajar colaborativamente sobre la motivación, y ciertos indicios que sugieren que el grupo que trabajó en parejas se benefició más de la repetición. Por otro lado, no encontramos un patrón claro en los indicadores de calidad de los

escritos, y el análisis estadístico tampoco reveló una correlación entre la motivación y la calidad de las tareas.

Palabras clave: motivación, rendimiento, repetición de una tarea, escritura colaborativa, trabajo individual/cooperativo

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that motivation is one of the main factors that leads to success in a learning environment, and second language learning is no exception. Thus, the extent to which a certain task or activity manages to engage the students proves to be essential (Dörnyei, 2019a). However, and as it has been mentioned in several articles, there is not enough research into the field of task motivation in second language teaching (Dörnyei, 2019a; Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020; Wang & Li, 2019). One of the reasons for that is the dominance of research into aspects related to the cognitive nature of the learning tasks (Winne & Marx,1989, as cited in Dörnyei, 2019). As stated by Dörnyei (2019), a negative consequence that derives from this fact is the limited ecological validity concerning the results of these studies in terms of the L2 task performance of the learners, since we cannot take for granted students' engagement in a task. Thus, he emphasized the relevance of undertaking more studies in this field.

Bearing in mind the need for further research into this topic, the present study attempts to contribute to this field of knowledge. In order to do that, we will focus on the following aspects: general motivation towards English and towards different tasks — with special emphasis on the writing tasks — in a group of adult learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), the effects of collaborative writing and task repetition on motivation and on the achievement of these students in the tasks, and the relationship between task motivation and task performance.

These aspects will be dealt with in more detail in the literature review. We will begin with a brief overview on motivation in general and its relevance for second language acquisition (SLA), then we will delve deeper into the concept of task motivation in second language teaching in relation to collaborative writing, task repetition and task performance — addressing the main gaps and further lines of research — and, finally, the research questions for this study will be formulated.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Motivation in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and learning tasks

Motivation and its relevance when learning a foreign language have been widely investigated, and there are several studies that hint at a correlation between L2 motivation and L2 achievement (such as Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003).

According to Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) theory, motivation is composed of three elements: the "ideal L2-self", which captures what a person hopes and dreams to achieve as a language learner, the "ought-to L2-self", which refers to the external demands that the learner feels s/he has to fulfil, and the "L2 learning experience", which is focused on the learning context in itself and the students' attitudes towards it.

The L2 learning experience has been deemed in many studies as the "most powerful predictor of motivated behavior" (Dörnyei, 2019b, p.22). In spite of its relevance, and as it is explained in Lázaro-Ibarrola and Villarreal (2021), it has not been easy to conceptualize the learning experience in measurable terms that can be analysed in empirical studies.

It is here where the concept of the learning tasks comes into play. Dörnyei (2019b) described the L2 learning experience in terms of the students' engagement with different features of the language learning process, which allows us to focus on more measurable items such as the learning tasks in order to analyse this experience. Thus, he highlighted the usefulness of the learning tasks as a tool for measuring the learning experience in a more specific way.

2.2. What we know about L2 task motivation in relation to task repetition, collaborative tasks and task performance

The relevance of studying task motivation in second language teaching can be best illustrated with the findings of Wang and Li's (2019) study concerning the relationship between task motivation and L2 motivation, in which it was shown that "the learners' attitudes towards the task are separate from the more generalized (...) mindset of learning English" (p.67). This means to say that the nature of a task — whether it is engaging or not — has the potential to influence the learner's attitudes towards it, regardless of their levels of motivation towards the L2 in a general sense.

Another important finding in this area resulted from the study done by Al Khalil (2016), in which the motivation of adult learners of Arabic as a foreign language in the United States towards a series of oral tasks was investigated. The relevance of this study is two-fold. Firstly, it provided a useful tool for measuring task motivation in quantifiable terms: the motivation thermometers. Thanks to this tool, students can easily indicate their motivation towards a certain task on a scale from zero to ten, and it has become a common methodological tool in this field of research due to its practicality. Secondly, in this study it was also shown that the motivation of these learners towards the tasks was constantly changing and that it was often different to the students' beliefs before carrying out the task.

Regarding writing tasks and motivation, some studies have shown positive attitudes of young EFL learners towards dictogloss tasks (Calzada & García Mayo, 2020; Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020) and describing picture stories (Roothooft et al., 2022), as well as the positive effects of collaborative writing and task repetition on motivation (Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal, 2021). However, there has not been much research into the motivation of adults towards writing tasks, since most studies with adults have focused on performance in relation to writing tasks (such as Amiryousefi, 2016; Kim, Kang, et al., 2020). Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the motivation of learners towards other type of tasks — such as oral tasks — has been studied in adults (for instance, in Al Khalil, 2016).

When it comes to what we can find in the literature about task repetition and motivation in writing tasks, the following aspects should be mentioned. On the one hand, it has been stated in some articles that repeating the same task and topics could be demotivating for learners (Nitta & Baba, 2014), and this is the reason why Nitta and Baba (2014) opted for procedural task repetition — the repetition of the same type of task — when analysing the effects of repetition over long periods of time (thirty weeks), whereas the same task and topic were repeated only twice.

Thus, we can see that the literature makes a distinction between identical and procedural task repetition, but we would like to mention that, for clarity purposes, we will not make a distinction between the terms task repetition and procedural task repetition (that is, when we just use the term task repetition, we will be referring to the procedural task repetition that we carried out in our study).

On the other hand, the findings obtained in other studies have shown the opposite effect regarding task repetition and motivation. For instance, task repetition and corrective feedback in relation to task motivation and performance were investigated by Roothooft et al. (2022). In this study, it was shown that teachers should not be afraid of repeating a task in class, since the findings indicated that learners were not demotivated by task repetition. Other studies, such as the one by Lázaro-Ibarrola and Villarreal (2021) have also focused on task repetition and its impact on task motivation. High motivation levels were detected among students that repeated a writing task — describing a picture story — three times. This bears important pedagogical implications, since — as it is mentioned in Roothooft et al. (2022) — the relation between task repetition and the performance of students in writing tasks has been investigated in some studies with results that hint at an improvement on the learners' outcomes in the writing task, something that needs to be investigated in more depth.

In regard to collaborative writing, research has shown its positive effects on task motivation in young EFL learners (Azkarai & Kopinska, 2020; Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal, 2021). For instance, Kopinska and Azkarai's study (2020) analysed the motivation of students towards dictogloss tasks, as well as individual versus pair work. The results that were obtained in this study indicate a preference of students towards collaborative tasks, as is shown by the better attitudes that the learners displayed when performing the task in pairs. Also, the study concluded that there was a positive attitude of students towards the dictogloss task in general.

As it was previously mentioned, while studies on motivation towards writing tasks in adult learners are scarce, when it comes to task performance we can find plenty of examples in the literature, especially in relation to task repetition (Amiryousefi, 2016; Kim, Kang, et al., 2020; Nitta & Baba, 2014). The evidence provided by these studies does not follow a clear pattern when we compare the results obtained: some studies have shown that the performance on the writing tasks improves with same task repetition (Amiryousefi, 2016; Kim, Kang, et al., 2020), whereas other studies — such as the one by Nitta and Baba (2014) — have failed to observe an improvement with same task

repetition (although it did show improvements in lexical and syntactic aspects with procedural task repetition). This variability in the results was also put forward by Sánchez et al. (2020), who referred to the difficulty of predicting the effects of task repetition on task performance. As for collaborative writing and performance, research has also been conducted both in young learners (Hidalgo & Lázaro-Ibarrola, 2020; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Hidalgo, 2021) and adult learners (such as Storch, 2005; Teng, 2020). Storch (2005) found that learners writing collaboratively produced texts with better grammatical accuracy, complexity and task fulfilment. As for Teng (2020), the writings produced by students working collaboratively presented greater accuracy regarding target structures, such as phrasal verbs.

2.3. Gaps and further lines of research

As it can be deduced by looking at what we commented in the previous subsection, one of the main gaps that can be observed when reviewing the literature is the scarcity of research into the motivation of adult learners towards writing tasks. Bearing this in mind, the present study attempted to address this gap by analysing task motivation in adult EFL learners.

In the aforementioned studies (Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020; Wang & Li, 2019), some of the limitations of their investigation that could serve as lines of research were also highlighted, one of these being the fact that task modality differences were not investigated as a variable. Therefore, and as it is stated in several articles (Imaz Agirre & García Mayo, 2020; Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020), further research that explores the influence that task modality could exert on task motivation is needed.

In a similar vein, Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal (2021) emphasized the need for further research in collaborative writing, "with students working through similar tasks in pairs and individually to investigate if peer work per se can be the trigger to get students engaged" (p.47).Thus, in the present study we focused on two task modalities (individual versus collaborative work) of a writing task. Furthermore, in an article by Azkarai and Kopinska, (2020), the need for investigating task motivation in a different collaborative writing task — they used the dictogloss task in this study — was also emphasized. This is precisely what we did in the present study, since we analysed the effects of collaborative work when writing an essay.

Regarding task repetition, what we mentioned in the previous subsection about the disparity of results obtained when studying whether the quality of the writing tasks improves with task repetition justifies the need for further research into this topic. Furthermore, it is also stated in Lázaro-Ibarrola and Villarreal (2021) that future studies that investigate the effects of task repetition in other populations and in other task modalities should also include motivation measures, which is what we did in our present study.

Finally, it is also explained in the literature that another important factor should be explored in more depth in this field of research: the performance of the students on the different tasks in relation to their motivational levels (Imaz Agirre & García Mayo, 2020; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal,

2021; Wang & Li, 2019), contributing in this way to the existing body of literature (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Robinson, 2011) that considers that there is a correlation between the general motivation and achievement when learning a foreign language (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003), as well as a few number of studies that refer specifically to the relationship between task motivation and performance, such as Dörnyei & Kormos (2000) — who showed that motivational factors had an impact on the learners' task engagement and language output — and Robinson (2011), who offered a review of proposals on task-based language learning and the stimulation of acquisition processes.

In light of the aforementioned facts, we could say that further research into the field of task motivation in relation to task performance, collaborative writing and task repetition is needed, which brings us to the aim of my master's thesis.

2.4 Research questions

The present study attempted to address the gaps in this field of research by analysing task motivation towards different tasks — with a special focus on the writing task — in adult learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in an official school of languages located in Navarre, Spain. Thus, these were the research questions that guided our study:

1. What is the motivation of these students towards the L2 (English) in general, and towards the different tasks — with special emphasis on the writing tasks — that are used in their English lessons in particular?

2. Are there any differences concerning task motivation and task performance between students that work individually and those who work collaboratively?

3. Does repetition of the task exert an influence on task motivation and task performance? If so, in what way (positive or negative influence)?

4. Is there a correlation between the task motivation and task performance of the students when carrying out a writing task?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

In total, 25 students from the Official School of Languages of Pamplona — a language teaching centre for adults located in Navarre (Spain) — took part in this study. The age of the participants was highly varied, ranging from nineteen to sixty-six years old. The participants in this study belonged to two different classes and they were all preparing for the C2 level. In this centre, there are two C2 courses: at the end of the C2.1 students can advance to the next course — the C2.2 — if they obtain a successful result in the final evaluation. It is at the end of the C2.2 when students can aspire to the C2 certificate by doing the C2 exam. Both classes in this study belonged to the C2.1 course. For the

purposes of this study, each class was assigned a different role when it comes to the elaboration of the writing tasks. Thus, the first class (n=13) was labelled as the collaborative group, in which the students did the writing task in pairs. The second class (n=12) will be from now on referred to as the individual group, since they performed the writing task individually. Spanish was the first language for the majority of the students, with English being a foreign language. The study was carried out in the month of April, near the end of the course, so the majority of participants had been attending lessons of about four hours and a half per week (two lessons per week with a duration of about two hours and a quarter) for several months. In these lessons, great emphasis was placed on speaking tasks in which students had to express elaborate ideas about a wide array of topics. Furthermore, many tasks focused on the learning of highly specialized vocabulary, mostly through gap-fill exercises as well as reading and listening tasks. Grammar and syntax were also very important, and they usually practised these skills through sentence transformations (the rewriting of certain sentences).

3.2. Procedure and instruments

Before carrying out the study, the teacher was asked a few questions about the main writing tasks that these students have to carry out in the course, mainly, the types of writing tasks that they usually do, whether they are used to writing in pairs or not, and the place where they usually do the writings (that is, at home or inside the classroom). Through these questions we learned that they usually do the writing tasks individually and at home, and that they mostly practise the types of writings that they will be asked in the exam, such as formal letters, articles, essays and reports, among others. Thus, it was decided — in order for the study to resemble as much as possible their usual learning conditions — that the essay would be the type of writing task that was to be selected. Furthermore, the essay was part of the content of the unit that they were working on in their textbooks at that time.

It should be mentioned that in this study the writing tasks were integrated in the lessons, more specifically, in the second half of the lessons, taking advantage of their long duration (of about two hours and a quarter). Furthermore, since the master's degree students have to give a certain number of lessons during their placement at a learning centre, we also decided that I would be teaching them the main guidelines for writing an essay as well as useful grammar and vocabulary.

In order to obtain an answer to the first research question, students had to fill in a 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire (see Appendix 1) composed of thirty-five questions ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree, based on questionnaires previously elaborated and proven to be useful in research belonging to the field of motivation in an EFL context. The main sources that were taken into consideration for the elaboration of the questionnaire were Lasagabaster and Doiz (2016) and Kopinska and Azkarai (2020), which was in turn based on Doiz et al. (2014). Furthermore, some of the questions that were included in the questionnaire referred to the tasks that they usually do in class. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first part contained eleven questions related to their

motivation towards English in a general sense, while the second part consisted of twenty-four questions related to their motivation towards more specific skills and the tasks that they perform in their English lessons.

Motivation thermometers were also used to further investigate the motivation of students towards the task, both pre- and post-task (see Appendix 3). This tool, based on Al Khalil (2016), contained a scale from 0 to 10 and a series of statements meant for the students to indicate their feelings before and after performing the task. The students had to explain their answer to their motivation thermometers, and they were also required to answer five multiple-choice questions (based on Al Khalil, 2011) related to the students' perception towards their performance on the task. Furthermore, the students from the collaborative group were given three additional post-task questions that were open-ended with the aim of obtaining further insight into their feelings towards writing in pairs.

A summary of the procedure is presented in table 1. In the first place, the pre-task motivation thermometers with their corresponding questions were handed to the students. Then the two groups performed the task (collaborative group: in pairs, individual group: individually), and afterwards the students had to fill in the post-task motivation thermometers in order to see whether the motivation levels had changed after carrying out the tasks. The task consisted in writing an essay of about 240-280 words based on a given prompt (see Appendix 2). The collaborative group was given about forty minutes to do the task, whereas the individual group, thirty minutes, in accordance with previous research that has shown that students that write in pairs need more time to complete the tasks (Shehadeh, 2011; Storch, 2005). Furthermore, in order to assess the influence of repetition, both groups were required to write another essay based on a similar prompt following the same procedure in their next class (two days later). Therefore, this was a procedural task repetition. The prompts for the essay were taken and adapted from their textbook (Bandis et al., 2017). The following week (Wednesday 13th April) students were asked to fill in the general motivation towards English and towards different tasks questionnaires.

Table 1. Procedure.

	Collaborative group	Individual group
Day 1 (Monday 4th April)	- Motivation thermometers and questions before doing the task - Write an essay of about 240-280 words based on a given prompt - Motivation thermometers and questions after doing the task	

	• Time given for doing the essay: 40 minutes	• Time given for doing the essays: 30 minutes
	• Motivation thermometers and questions before doing the task	
Day 2 (Wednesday 6th April)	• Write an essay of about 240-280 words based on a similar prompt (similar topic)	
	• Motivation thermometers and questions after doing the task	
	• Time given for doing the essay: 40 minutes	• Time given for doing the essays: 30 minutes
Wednesday 13th April	• General motivation towards English and towards different tasks questionnaires	

3.3. Data analysis

In this study, we obtained both quantitative and qualitative data, so it followed the mixed-method approach. When it comes to quantitative data, it consisted mainly in the motivation levels obtained in the motivation thermometers, the answers to the Likert-scale questionnaires, and the assessment of performance on the writing assignments, which was analysed with CAF —complexity, accuracy and fluency — measures and with a holistic rubric (in which 10 was the maximum possible score). The rubric that we used was the one that is employed to correct the writings of this level in the official school of languages where this study was carried out (see Appendix 6). The qualitative data that we obtained were the students' answers regarding their reasons for choosing a certain level in the motivation thermometers, which consisted both in their answers to open-ended and multiple-choice questions (with *a*, *b*, *c* and *d* options).

Regarding complexity, we took into account the following measures. When it comes to syntactic complexity measures, we focused on four indexes that are widely used in this field of research, as explained by Kyle (2016): mean length of a sentence (MLS), which refers to the average number of words in a sentence, mean length of a clause (MLC), which indicates the average number of words in a clause, mean length of a T-unit (MLT) — that is, number of words that can be found in an independent clause and in its dependent clauses —, and the dependent clauses per clause (DC/C) index, which allows us to measure the quantity of dependent clauses per clause — that is, the quantity of clausal subordination — in a text. We used the tool TAASSC (Tool for the Automatic Analysis of Syntactic Complexity) developed by Kyle (2016) for calculating these measures.

When it comes to lexical complexity, we focused on the measure of textual lexical diversity (MTLD) and the HD-D index (which refers to the hypergeometric distribution function), since both measures have been proven to be effective for measuring the level of lexical diversity in a text

(McCarthy, 2005; McCarthy & Jarvis, 2007, 2010). We used the tool TAALED (Tool for the Automatic Analysis of Lexical Diversity) developed by Kyle et al., (2021) for measuring these indices.

Accuracy was measured by counting the number of mistakes per total number of words in the writings, obtaining an error ratio. Thus, the lower this number, the higher the accuracy of the writing task. We took into account grammatical, lexical and spelling errors. As for fluency, this was measured by considering the total number of words in a text, following the argument that is exposed in Roothooft et al. (2022) concerning the comparable nature of productivity as an indicator of fluency in both speaking and writing tasks that have time constraints.

As for the qualitative data, this was quantified in the following way. In the first place, students' reasons for their scores in the motivation thermometers (as well as the open-ended answers that were contained in the post-task motivation thermometers of the collaborative group) were analysed with the aim of identifying common themes that were in turn codified as positive and negative aspects, in a similar fashion to what Kopinska and Azkarai did in their study (2020). Regarding their answers to the multiple-choice questions in the thermometers, the average percentages of each response (*a*, *b*, *c* or *d*) were calculated for both groups under study.

Finally, in order to determine whether there was a correlation between the motivation of students towards the task and their performance, we carried out a basic linear correlation test using the statistical computation website VassarStats. For the sake of clarity, the items that were used as indicators for motivation and performance were the post-task motivation levels obtained in the thermometers and the holistic ratings, respectively.

4. RESULTS

4.1. General motivation towards English and task motivation questionnaires

The answers to the first part of the general motivation questionnaires of both groups are illustrated in table 2. The results reflect the means of the Likert scale scores for each question. In other words, they represent the global extent to which the students agreed with a series of statements that indicate their motivation towards English. For clarity purposes, the results of the collaborative and individual groups are represented separately.

As it can be seen in table 2, both groups presented high levels of motivation towards English. Thus, the mean scores of their answers to the majority of the questions is well above three, with a global average of 4,12 and 4,24 for the collaborative and individual groups, respectively.

Table 2. Mean scores obtained in the first part of the general motivation questionnaire (with standard deviations in parenthesis).

Questions	Collaborative group		Individual group	
1. I really enjoy learning English.	4,91	(0,30)	4,63	(0,52)
2. Studying English is an important part of my education.	4,36	(0,81)	4,50	(0,76)
3. Studying English is important for me because it will be useful in getting a job.	3,91	(1,04)	4,38	(0,92)
4. Studying English is important for me because it will be useful for keeping my job.	3,45	(1,13)	3,75	(0,89)
5. Studying English is important for me because I can meet and talk with more people.	4,09	(0,70)	4,50	(0,53)
6. Studying English is important for me because I'll need it for my future studies.	3,18	(1,40)	3,50	(0,76)
7. Studying English is important for me because it will be useful to be able to travel abroad.	4,27	(0,79)	4,63	(0,52)
8. Studying English is important for me because I enjoy meeting and talking with people from other countries and other cultures.	4,36	(0,81)	4,50	(0,53)
9. I enjoy my English class.	4,45	(0,52)	4,38	(0,74)
10. I put my best effort into learning English in my English language class.	4,45	(0,52)	4,25	(0,71)
11. I work hard in my English class even when I don't like what we are doing.	3,91	(0,83)	3,63	(1,06)
TOTAL	4,12	(0,31)	4,24	(0,18)

Regarding their general motivation towards the different skills and classroom tasks — that is, the second part of the general motivation questionnaire —, table 3 represents their responses to the items related to motivation towards the writing tasks and towards working in groups, in other words, the variables under study. The full record of their answers to all of the questions can be found in Appendix 4.

Table 3. Means of the scores for questions 3, 13, 15, 18 and 19 of the second part of the general motivation questionnaires (with standard deviations in parenthesis).

Questions	Collaborative group	Individual group
3. Writing in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,27 (0,79)	4,50 (0,53)
13. I like to work in groups in these classes.	4,09 (1,14)	4,25 (0,71)
15. I like to do autonomous learning (work on my own or in groups without the teacher).	3,18 (0,98)	3,75 (0,89)

18. I would like to have more practice with the writing tasks inside the classroom, even if it's tiresome, instead of just doing the writings for homework.	2,55 (1,21)	3,13 (1,36)
19. I prefer doing the writings for homework, and dedicate the time of the class for doing other kind of tasks (speaking, reading, listening, etc.)	3,82 (1,08)	3,88 (0,83)

This table shows the students' preference towards doing the writings at their home rather than inside the classroom (3,82 versus 2,55 in the case of the collaborative group; and 3,88 versus 3,13 in the case of the individual group). The mean scores for questions thirteen and fifteen would also seem to indicate that these students favour working in groups to autonomous learning, the contrast being more evident in the collaborative group. It is also worth noting that, in spite of the seemingly high acknowledgement on the part of the students of the relevance of the writing tasks (as indicated by the mean scores for the third question), if we look at the comparison of the importance attached to other skills in table 4, we will see that the mean scores of the perceived relevance of the writing tasks is lower than that of the majority of the other skills in both groups. In fact, the only tasks with lower scores are reading and grammar in the collaborative group, and only grammar in the individual group.

Table 4. Means of the scores for questions 1 to 7 of the second part of the general motivation questionnaire (with standard deviations in parenthesis).

Questions	Collaborative group	Individual group
1. English grammar should be important in the English lessons.	4,09 (0,94)	4,00 (0,76)
2. Reading in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,00 (0,77)	4,63 (0,52)
3. Writing in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,27 (0,79)	4,50 (0,53)
4. English vocabulary should be important in the English lessons.	4,55 (0,52)	4,63 (0,52)
5. English pronunciation should be important in the English lessons.	4,55 (0,52)	4,63 (0,52)
6. Listening in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,36 (0,67)	4,75 (0,46)
7. Speaking in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,82 (0,40)	4,63 (0,52)

4.2. Thermometer scores and motives

The mean levels of motivation that the participants from both groups selected on the motivation thermometers (on a scale from zero to ten) are represented in table 5. As it can be seen, in general the motivation towards the tasks is rather low, especially if we compare it to their answers in the general motivation questionnaire. Nevertheless, in both groups the motivation levels increased after having done the task, and this applies to both the first and second tasks. When it comes to the effects of task repetition on their levels of motivation, it should be noted that it is different in the collaborative and individual groups: the students that did the task in pairs (collaborative group) seem to present higher motivation levels in the second task, whereas in the individual group (students that did the task individually) there is a slight decrease in the motivation levels of the second task (from 5,75 to 5,20 before doing the task, and from 6,63 to 6,35 after doing the task).

Table 5. Means of the task motivation levels selected in the motivation thermometers (with standard deviations in parenthesis).

	First task		Second task	
	Pre-task	Post-task	Pre-task	Post-task
Collaborative group	4,14 (1,79)	5,41 (2,13)	4,61 (1,83)	6,94 (2,01)
Individual group	5,75 (2,05)	6,63 (1,30)	5,20 (1,40)	6,35 (1,60)

The percentages of the positive and negative reasons that the students gave for their levels of motivation are displayed in table 6 (6a for the first task, 6b for the second task). Several facts can be drawn from this data. To begin with, the percentage of positive reasons given by the students is higher after doing the tasks in all of the cases. Furthermore, the group that did the task in pairs gave a greater number of positive reasons than the one that did it individually: 31,82% (before the task) and 50% (after the task) versus 18,75% (before the task) and 46,15% (after the task) in the case of the first task. This tendency is maintained in the second task, in which case the differences are even bigger, especially before doing the task (see table 6). When it comes to the effect of task repetition, we can see that the percentage of positive motives is larger the day in which they did the second task, with the exception of the group that did the task individually in the case of the pre-task, which presented a slightly lower percentage than that of the first task (17,65% versus 18,75%). These levels are reversed after doing the task, with a higher percentage of positive reasons (62,50% versus 46,15%).

Table 6a. Percentage of positive and negative reasons for task motivation in the first task.

	First task	
	Pre-task	Post-task

	Positive reasons	Negative reasons	Positive reasons	Negative reasons
Collaborative group	31,82%	68,18%	50,00%	50,00%
Individual group	18,75%	81,25%	46,15%	53,85%

Table 6b. Percentage of positive and negative reasons for task motivation in the second task.

	Second task			
	Pre-task		Post-task	
	Positive reasons	Negative reasons	Positive reasons	Negative reasons
Collaborative group	38,46%	61,54%	69,23%	30,77%
Individual group	17,65%	82,35%	62,50%	37,50%

Regarding the specific reasons that the students gave for their motivation levels in the thermometers, the most frequent ones are presented in the following table (table 7) alongside their percentages, as well as some reasons that bear a relation to the research questions of this study (mainly those related to collaborative writing and task repetition). The symbol (+) is used to refer to a positive reason, and the symbol (-) to a negative one. It should also be noted that several students who enjoyed writing in pairs mentioned that it allowed them to learn from their partners. You may find the full summary of all their motives in Appendix 5.

Table 7a. Summary of their reasons for task motivation in the first task.

	First task	
	Pre-task	Post-task
Collaborative group	(-) 18,18% did not like the prospect of writing in pairs versus (+) 13,64% who did like it. (-) 18,18% said that they do not like writing tasks in general or find them difficult, in comparison to (+) 4,55% who do like them.	Assessment of the experience of writing in pairs: (+) 20% who enjoyed it versus (-) 10% who did not.
Individual group	(-) 18,75% referred to the perceived difficulty of the task, (-) 18'75% to the need for more time to do the writing, and (-) 18,75% did not feel like doing the task.	(-) 37,77% thought that they did not have enough time.

Table 7b. Summary of their reasons for task motivation in the second task.

	Second task	
	Pre-task	Post-task

Collaborative group	(-) 30,77% do not like writing tasks in general or find them difficult. (+) 7,69% are looking forward to writing in pairs. Prospect of task repetition: (+) 15,38 thought that the fact that they had already done the task before would make it easier for them to do the second task, whereas (-) 7,69 did not find the prospect of repeating the task appealing.	(+) 30,77% enjoyed doing the task or did it better than they had thought. Assessment of the experience of writing in pairs: (+)23,08% enjoyed it versus (-) 15,38% who did not. Prospect of task repetition: (+)7,69% thought that the task was easier after doing it a second time.
Individual group	(-) 17,65%: need for more time. Prospect of task repetition: (+) 11,76% who liked it and (-) 11,76% who did not.	(+) 37,50%: enjoyed doing the task or did it better than they had thought.

The main findings that were obtained through the multiple-choice questions that were included in the thermometers (both pre- and post-task) are illustrated in table 8. For the sake of brevity, the percentages that appear in the table combined the scores of answers *c* and *d*, since these correspond to the strongest statements . For instance, in the case of the second post-task question, the number that appears in the results is the sum of the scores of difficult (answer *c*) and very difficult (answer *d*).

Table 8. Percentages of the combined scores of *c* and *d* answers to the post-task questions 2, 3, 4 of the motivation thermometers for both groups and both tasks.

	First task		Second task	
	Collaborative group	Individual group	Collaborative group	Individual group
Post-task 2: How difficult did you find this task?	70%	83,33%	33,33%	62,50%
Post-task 3: How much effort did you put into this task?	80%	83,33%	66,67%	50%
Post-task 4: How well did you do this task?	50%	33,33%	77,78%	62,50%

As can be seen in the table, the students that did the task individually found both tasks to be more difficult than the group that did it in pairs. In other words, the individual group had a higher percentage of *c* (difficult) or *d* (very difficult) answers to the second post-task question. Regarding the third post-task question ("how much effort did you put into this task?") we can observe a different pattern between the first and the second tasks: while the individual group had a similar percentage (albeit slightly higher) to the collaborative group in the case of the first task, this is reversed in the

second task, with a lower percentage of students in the group that did the task individually (50% versus 66,67%) responding that they had to put much effort (answer *c*) or their very best (answer *d*) for the completion of the task. Regarding the fourth post-task question ("how well did you do this task?") the group that did the task in pairs had a higher percentage of students answering that they had done it well (answer *c*) or very well (answer *d*) in both tasks: 50% and 77,78% versus 33,33% and 62,50%. Thus, it would seem that overall — with the exception that was mentioned above — the group that did the task in pairs had a better sense of their achievement, had less difficulties when doing the task and put more effort into it than the group that did the tasks individually. Last but not least, both groups thought that they had performed better in the second task, as well as finding it less difficult and requiring less effort, which would seem to support the benefits of task repetition.

Finally, the responses to the open-ended questions 6,7 and 8 that the students belonging to the collaborative group had to answer are shown in table 9. It is worth noting that all students replied that they usually did the writing tasks individually (question 6). As for their preferences (question 7), they seem to have changed from the first to the second task. Thus, whereas after the first task a small number of students (10%) replied that they preferred to write in pairs as opposed to the 40% that would rather do this kind of task individually (and 50% responding that they had no clear preference), after the second task the number of students that said that they preferred to write in pairs was much higher than those who would rather do it on their own (50% versus 12,50%). In a similar vein, when asked if they would like to do more writing tasks in pairs in the future (question 8), after the second task more students responded affirmatively in comparison with their answers after doing the first task (87,5% versus 66,67%). In fact, it is worth noting that after the second task not a single student responded that they would not like to write in pairs in the future, in contrast to the 11,11% that responded the opposite after the first task.

Table 9. Percentages of answers to the post-task questions 6,7 and 8 in the collaborative group (only the collaborative group had to answer these).

	Task 1		
	Individually	In pairs	It depends/both/no clear preference
Post-task 6	100%	0%	0%
Post-task 7	40%	10%	50%
	Yes	No	I would not mind
Post-task 8	66,67%	11,11%	22,22%
	Task 2		
	Individually	In pairs	It depends/both/no clear preference
Post-task 6	100%	0%	0%
Post-task 7	12,50%	50%	37,50%

	Yes	No	I would not mind
Post-task 8	87,50%	0%	12,50%

4.3. Task performance: CAF and holistic ratings.

The mean values of the CAF measures and the marks obtained through the holistic rubric of both groups and in both tasks are shown in tables 10 (collaborative versus individual writing) and 11 (first task versus second task), with the standard deviations in parenthesis. It should be noted that, due to the absence of some students in either of the days in which the tasks were done, the elimination of some data became necessary when analysing the effects of collaborative writing and task repetition on performance in order to avoid ambiguity in the results caused by the influence of more than one variable at the same time. This is the reason why the data are presented in two tables depending on the factor that we want to compare, and it explains the slight differences in certain mean values of the same groups in the different tables. For instance, when comparing the effects of task repetition on performance in the case of the collaborative group, if there were students who did not do either the first or the second task (or they did it with different partners), the data belonging to these students should be eliminated when comparing performance in task 1 versus task 2. However, there is no need to do that when we want to compare the performance between the collaborative and individual writing groups in the day of the first task, since in this case we would not have the added variable of task repetition. The main facts that can be gathered when looking at these tables are exposed below.

Regarding the comparison between the collaborative and individual groups (table 10), an interesting fact that can be drawn from this table is the reversed pattern depending on whether we are focusing on the first or in the second task. Thus, in the first task the individual group presents higher complexity and fluency measures than the group that did the task in pairs, which is reflected in the slightly better result of the former in the holistic rubric (7,29 versus 7). Accuracy, however, seems to be slightly worse in this group (presenting an error ratio of 0,06) than in the collaborative group (with an error ratio of 0,04). As it was previously mentioned, the opposite pattern can be observed in the second task, with the collaborative group presenting better results in three out of the four syntactic complexity measures (MLS, MLT and DC/C) and a better result obtained with the holistic rubric (7,9 versus 7,64). Lexical complexity, however, is higher in the individual group. Regarding accuracy, just as it happened before it seems to be slightly worse in the group with higher syntactic complexity (that is, the collaborative group), although the differences in the error ratios are small (0,054 versus 0,049).

Table 10. Collaborative versus individual writing: descriptive statistics for complexity, accuracy and fluency measures (CAF) and holistic ratings. Means and standard deviations (in parenthesis).

	First task	Second task

		Collaborative group		Individual group		Collaborative group		Individual group	
Syntactic complexity	MLS	17,96	(4,41)	18,95	(5,13)	20,13	(2,88)	18,32	(3,88)
	MLT	16,44	(3,41)	18,56	(7,02)	18,04	(3,61)	17,15	(3,22)
	MLC	8,79	(1,61)	9,50	(1,94)	7,98	(0,95)	8,76	(1,47)
	DC/C	0,41	(0,15)	0,48	(0,14)	0,54	(0,07)	0,43	(0,14)
Lexical complexity	HD-D	0,81	(0,02)	0,83	(0,02)	0,80	(0,02)	0,81	(0,03)
	MTLD	82,39	(19,31)	88,23	(23,27)	70,41	(6,27)	77,47	(19,39)
Accuracy	ErrR	0,04	(0,03)	0,06	(0,02)	0,054	(0,04)	0,049	(0,02)
Fluency	Text length	128,33	(48,79)	183,43	(61,98)	175,00	(44,88)	249,86	(67,68)
Holistic rating		7	(1,64)	7,29	(1,82)	7,90	(2,04)	7,64	(2,41)

The comparison between the results obtained in the first and second tasks within each group are shown in table 11. In the first place, we can see that the marks obtained through the holistic rubric are higher in the second task in the case of both groups (from 6,88 to 7,88 in the collaborative group, and from 7,29 to 7,64 in the individual group), as well as higher fluency. When it comes to the complexity measures, the collaborative group presents better results regarding syntactic complexity in the second task (with higher MLS, MLT and DC/C). In this group, however, accuracy is slightly worse in the second task (with an error ratio of 0,06 in the second task versus 0,04 in the first task). On the other hand, task repetition does not translate into better complexity results in the case of the group that did the task individually, although the accuracy does seem to be slightly higher in the second task (with an error ratio of 0,05 versus 0,06). Finally, another striking fact that results from the comparison between the first and the second task is that neither of the groups seems to improve their lexical complexity measures, although we should be careful to make this assertion due to the high standard deviations, as is shown in table 11.

Table 11. First task versus second task: descriptive statistics for complexity, accuracy and fluency measures (CAF) and holistic ratings. Means and standard deviations (in parenthesis).

		Collaborative group				Individual group			
		First task		Second task		First task		Second task	
Syntactic complexity	MLS	16,34	(3,16)	21,20	(1,83)	18,95	(5,13)	18,32	(3,88)
	MLT	16,07	(3,78)	18,59	(3,92)	18,56	(7,02)	17,15	(3,22)
	MLC	8,75	(1,62)	7,91	(1,08)	9,50	(1,94)	8,76	(1,47)
	DC/C	0,41	(0,18)	0,56	(0,05)	0,48	(0,14)	0,43	(0,14)
Lexical complexity	HD-D	0,81	(0,03)	0,80	(0,02)	0,83	(0,02)	0,81	(0,03)
	MTLD	80,11	(24,51)	71,44	(6,74)	88,23	(23,27)	77,47	(19,39)
Accuracy	ErrR	0,04	(0,03)	0,06	(0,05)	0,06	(0,02)	0,05	(0,02)

Fluency	Text length	123,00 (54,23)	171,50 (51,03)	183,43 (61,98)	249,86 (67,68)
Holistic rating		6,88 (2,02)	7,88 (2,36)	7,29 (1,82)	7,64 (2,41)

4.4. Effects of task motivation on task performance

Finally, and as it was mentioned in the methodology section, a correlation analysis was carried out in order to determine whether the motivation of these students towards the task translated into better task performance, taking the post-task motivation levels obtained in the thermometers and the holistic ratings as indicators. The correlation coefficients (r) that were obtained considering all the data as well as the collaborative and individual groups separately are displayed in table 12. The test did not reveal any correlation overall, with a low correlation coefficient (0,17) that was not significant. When we look at both groups separately, we can observe that the r value for the collaborative group (0,24) is slightly higher than that of the individual group (0,08) but it was not significant (with a P-value of 0,31).

Table 12. Correlation coefficients (r) of all data and of both collaborative and individual groups separately, alongside their P-values (two-tailed).

	r	P-value
TOTAL (N=37)	0,17	0,32
Collaborative group (n=20)	0,24	0,31
Individual group (n=17)	0,08	0,75

5. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate task motivation and performance in a group of students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in an official school of languages in Spain. More specifically, this study sought to obtain an answer to a series of research questions — already exposed in more detail in the literature review — related to their motivation towards English in a general sense and towards the different skills and tasks that they usually perform in class (with special emphasis placed on the writing tasks), whether task motivation and performance are influenced in any way by writing in pairs or individually and by the repetition of a task, and whether there is a correlation between task motivation and task performance.

Regarding the first research question — that is, the motivation of these students towards English and towards writing tasks —, the data obtained through the Likert-scale questionnaires revealed that the general motivation of these students towards English was very high, as was to be expected if we consider the fact that the subjects under study were C2 students. Similarly, the motivation towards the different skills and types of tasks was high in general (with mean scores above four in all cases), but it is worth noting that the writing tasks were among the least rated, only followed

by reading and grammar in the collaborative group, and grammar in the individual one. The questionnaires also gave us interesting information on their preferences towards doing the writing tasks at home rather than inside the classroom, as well as their enjoyment when it comes to working in groups.

The reasons that students gave in the motivation thermometers were also in line with their responses in the general questionnaire, with many of them commenting that they did not like writing tasks in general or found them too difficult. This is in contrast with previous research that has shown high levels of motivation towards L2 writing tasks (Calzada & García Mayo, 2021, 2020; Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020; Roothooft et al., 2022), although we should take into account that the aforementioned studies analysed task motivation in child or young EFL learners, and not in adult learners, as was the case of the present study.

Another frequently repeated motif was that of the time constraints, since many students argued that the time given was not enough for completing the writing assignments, and that this was an important demotivating factor — and in some cases even a source of anxiety — that influenced their score on the motivation thermometers. It should also be pointed out that in all cases (in both groups and both tasks) the motivation levels and the percentage of positive reasons given were higher after having done the tasks, which would seem to suggest that these students could have negative preconceived beliefs about the writing tasks and their own capacity to perform well in these tasks. This motivational gain after having done the task is in line with previous research, such as that of Lázaro-Ibarrola and Villarreal (2021), in which it was shown that task motivation was higher at the post-task stage.

As for the impact of writing individually versus writing in pairs, the results point towards an increase in the levels of motivation when writing collaboratively, in accordance with previous studies that have shown the positive disposition of students towards collaborative writing (Azkarai & Kopinska, 2020; Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal, 2021). This can be observed in the percentages of positive reasons given in the motivation thermometers of the collaborative group, which were higher than those of the group that did it individually (both in the first and second tasks). Furthermore, it is also worth noting that after doing the task, the opinion of the collaborative group towards working in pairs had changed for the better in both tasks. Thus, in the post-task there were more students who referred to their enjoyment related to working in pairs than those who had expressed the opposite before doing the task, which is also in line with the aforementioned notion of motivational gain. However, the strongest evidence that supports the argument of the benefits of working in pairs versus writing individually can be found in their answers to the post-task questions of the thermometers: in general, the group that did the task in pairs had a better sense of their achievement, had less difficulties when doing the task and believed to have put more effort into it

when we compare it with the answers of the students who did the task individually. As for the open-ended post-task questions of the thermometers that the collaborative group had to answer, it is worth noting that most students responded that they would like or would not be averse to doing more writing tasks in pairs, which is another piece of evidence in favour of collaborative writing.

When it comes to the analysis of the influence of the procedural repetition of a task, the following information can be extracted from the data. In the first place, if we look at their answers to the multiple-choice post-task questions, we will see that both groups thought that they had done the second task better and that it had taken them less effort than the first task. This is in line with the higher percentage of positive reasons given after doing the second task in comparison with the first task. These facts seem to indicate that their motivation towards the writing task, as well as their perception of their own performance, was maintained or increased with task repetition, in agreement with previous research that has shown the positive effects of task repetition on motivation (Kim, Choi, et al., 2020; Lázaro-Ibarrola & Villarreal, 2021; Roothooft et al., 2022). However, the levels of motivation and the reasons that students gave showed mixed results depending on whether we are focusing on the individual or collaborative group. Thus, whereas the collaborative group seemed to present higher motivation levels in the second task (from 4,41 to 4,61 in the pre-task and from 5,41 to 6,94 in the post-task), in the individual group there was a slight decrease in the motivation levels (from 5,75 to 5,20 before doing the task and from 6,63 to 6,35 after doing the task). These facts could lead us to hypothesize that the collaborative group benefits more from task repetition when it comes to motivation than the individual group. The positive effect of task repetition in the collaborative group can also be observed in students' answers to the open-ended post-task questions: while after doing the first task there was a small percentage of students (10%) who replied that they preferred writing in pairs to writing individually (40%), this was reversed after doing the second task, with a much higher percentage of students who would do it in pairs rather than on their own (50% versus 12,50%). Therefore, the aforementioned facts seem to indicate that task repetition boosts motivation in those students that work in pairs, whereas this is not so clear in the case of individual writing, since we obtained both positive and negative results when it comes to the effect of task repetition on motivation. Further research that compares the effects of task repetition on individual versus collaborative groups could be undertaken in this area.

Not only did we aim to investigate motivation in this study, but also the performance of both groups of students in these writing tasks. There are many studies in the literature that have shown an improvement in the written products of learners through task repetition (Amiryousefi, 2016; Hidalgo & Lázaro-Ibarrola, 2020; Kim, Kang, et al., 2020; Roothooft et al., 2022), as well as through collaborative writing (Díaz Vega, 2016; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2007; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009, to name a few). In the case of the present study, the patterns that can be observed vary depending on whether we are

focusing on the first or the second task: in the first task, the essays written by the individual group had better complexity and fluency measures and higher holistic rating, with the exception of accuracy as the only indicator that was worse in the individual than in the collaborative group. Thus, the results from the first task seem to indicate that overall, the written task products in the individual group were of a higher quality than those of the collaborative group, in contrast with what is observed in the literature. However, this pattern is reversed in the second task, with the collaborative group scoring higher in the holistic rating and in three out of four syntactic complexity measures (the exception being MLC), but not in accuracy, fluency or lexical complexity measures. Therefore, in alignment with what we mentioned before, it would seem that the collaborative group benefits more from the repetition of the task than the individual group in regards to syntactic complexity, which is probably one of the aspects that leads to better holistic ratings. The slight decrease in accuracy could be due to the greater complexity of the sentences, since students might have taken more risks and this could have led them to make more mistakes. Indeed, and as it is explained in Housen and Kuiken (2009), there are several authors in the literature that have put forward the idea of accuracy competing with complexity in L2 production (as well as fluency competing with accuracy), since students might focus on one of the three measures at the expense of the other two. Nevertheless, we should bear in mind that the difference between the error ratios of both groups was very small (0,054 versus 0,049).

Regarding task repetition and its effects on performance, it is worth noting that both the individual and the collaborative groups scored higher in the holistic ratings and fluency in the second task, in line with what the literature says about the positive effects of task repetition on task performance, both in adults (Amiryousefi, 2016; Kim, Kang, et al., 2020) and children (Hidalgo & Lázaro-Ibarrola, 2020; Roothooft et al., 2022). This is not so clear with the complexity measures. Thus, the collaborative group did score higher in three syntactic complexity measures (MLS, MLT, DC/C) but presented slightly worse accuracy, as opposed to the individual group, which only presented a slight improvement in accuracy. These facts further contribute to the hypothesis that the collaborative group could benefit more from task repetition. Nevertheless, also in regard to task repetition, it is worth noting that neither of the groups seemed to improve in the lexical complexity measures in the second task. Such variability in the results of the CAF measures has already been described in previous studies, such as that of Sánchez et al. (2020), who put forward the idea of how complicated it is to predict the effects of task repetition. Another interesting aspect that we would like to highlight is the fact that accuracy seems to be slightly lower in those instances with higher syntactic complexity measures (the second task in the case of the collaborative group and the first task in the case of the individual group), just as it happened when we were comparing the performance between the individual and collaborative groups. Thus, we could hypothesize that this might be related to the aforementioned

idea of accuracy competing with complexity, although we should be careful to make this assertion as the differences are small.

Nitta and Baba's study (2014), in which the effects of writing task repetition in the case of adult learners over the span of a year were analysed, could give us some clues as to the findings in our present study regarding lexical diversity and the increase of syntactic complexity at the expense of accuracy. In the first place, it should be mentioned that Nitta and Baba observed that the benefits of task repetition — such as an increase in the variety of lexical items in the form of higher MTLD scores — were more noticeable over time. This might explain why in our study, in which only one repetition of the task in the span of two days took place, we did not observe an improvement in the lexical complexity measures in neither of the groups. Secondly, in their study Nitta and Baba also referred to the aforementioned competitive relation between the three components of the CAF measures, and they further argued that their findings suggested that this competition might be reversed over time. Thus, while at the beginning students might favour fluency over lexical/syntactic measures, over time the proficiency they gain through repetition could give them the chance of focusing on improving their lexical and syntactic devices. In relation to this, we obtained higher fluency measures with task repetition that not always resulted in better syntactic/lexical indicators in our study. It would be interesting to investigate whether this might have shifted through several repetitions over time, as was the case in Nitta and Baba's study.

Finally, the last research question of our study aimed to investigate whether there was a correlation between task motivation and performance in the case of these students. The statistical analysis revealed no correlation, as opposed to what one might expect if we consider the fact that there seems to be a correlation between motivation and language achievement, as described in previous studies (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). However, it should be noted that Masgoret and Gardner's study analysed general motivation towards the language (through the attitude/motivational variables of Gardner's socioeducational model) rather than task motivation. Most importantly, our findings are in contrast with those of Dörnyei and Kormos (2000), who found a correlation between motivational variables and the learners' language output. Nevertheless, we should take into account the following factors: in the first place, they focused on oral task performance, and secondly, they analysed the relationship between task motivation and performance by means of observing the impact of motivation on the learners' behaviours and engagement in a task instead of using global proficiency scores, arguing that the relationship between task motivation and performance is indirect, since there are multiple variables that might exert an influence on task outcomes. These facts bring into light what was mentioned in the literature review about the need for further research into the relationship between achievement and the motivation towards specific tasks. In any case, the lack of correlation between task motivation and performance that we observed in our present study could be due to

several factors, such as the influence of more variables, the high standard deviations in the data, and most importantly, the fact that we only took into account two factors as indicators of task motivation and performance: the post-task motivation levels in the thermometers and the score obtained through the holistic rubric.

6. CONCLUSION

This study addressed several gaps in the field of motivation towards English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In the first place, and taking into account the need for further research into the topic of task motivation, we investigated the motivation in a group of highly proficient (students of C2 level) adult EFL learners towards writing tasks. The results show that, compared with the high levels of motivation displayed towards the English language and most tasks, the motivation towards the writing tasks was rather low, something that many students attributed to the high difficulty of this type of task. Furthermore, in line with previous research, this study offers evidence of the motivational gains after having done the tasks, as well as the positive effects of collaborative writing and task repetition on motivation. Interestingly enough, there is also evidence in this study that points towards the possibility that learners who write in pairs might benefit more from task repetition than those who write individually. When it comes to task performance, the results that were obtained do not appear to be consistent, with the individual and collaborative groups presenting different patterns depending on whether we look at the first or second task, which we could also hypothesize as further indication that the collaborative group might benefit more from task repetition. Both groups, however, share in common the fact that they had higher holistic ratings and fluency with task repetition, but the CAF measures presented high variability, in alignment with what is expressed in the literature regarding the difficulty to predict the effects of task repetition on performance, even if it is true that the collaborative group seemed to score higher in more measures than the individual group. Finally, the statistical analysis failed to show a correlation between task motivation and performance, and we stated some of the possible causes for that in the discussion.

There are several limitations in this study that could serve as future lines of research. To begin with, statistical analysis could be employed to determine whether the patterns that we observed (such as the positive effects of collaborative writing and task repetition on motivation) are significant or not. Another limitation is related to our finding about the lack of correlation between task motivation and performance, and the fact that we only took into account two measures as indicators of both. Therefore, a more thorough statistical analysis examining the correlation between the different indicators could be carried out so as to obtain more precise information. Furthermore, the high standard deviations that some data presented and the low size of the sample could have caused

unwanted effects that might have led to obtaining non-representative results, so further research could be attempted taking these factors into account. It should also be highlighted that in this study we employed procedural task repetition, rather than the repetition of an identical task, even if it is true that both essays were about highly similar topics. Nevertheless, it could be interesting to investigate the effects of identical task repetition on both motivation and performance. Last but not least, it should be noted that what this study seems to suggest about the collaborative group possibly benefitting more from task repetition than the individual group should be investigated in more depth in a larger sample size, so as to determine whether these results can be extrapolated to other populations and in different learning environments and proficiency levels, as well as different written task modalities other than the essay.

Finally, we would like to highlight the pedagogical implications that justify the need for further research into this topic, since it is essential for EFL teachers to be aware of the students' preferences and their general disposition towards writing tasks, in order to boost their motivation and their task outcomes insofar as possible.

Based on this study, we could say that teachers should not be afraid of having the students do writing tasks in pairs inside the classroom for fear of it being a demotivating factor for them. While it is true that the collaborative group had been reluctant before doing the task, their opinion changed afterwards, as it has been previously discussed in this study. The fact that the students from the collaborative group had a better sense of their achievement in the task and believed to have had less difficulties and to have put more effort than the individual group brings to the foreground the positive effects of collaborative writing, especially considering that many of these students had mentioned that writing tasks were amongst their least favourite activities because of their cognitively demanding nature. Such perceived difficulty, however, is precisely one of the arguments that justify the need for further practise of the writing tasks inside the classroom, where it is easier for them to ask doubts and to put ideas in common with their classmates. In fact, one of the most frequently repeated arguments in favour of collaborative writing in this study was the fact that it allowed them to know how their partner worked. Indeed, we believe that students can learn a lot from their classmates, such as their strategies for successfully completing a writing assignment or the way they plan the structure of the task before beginning to write. Furthermore, it is usually the case that the same doubt might be shared by several students, and even then, writing in pairs would be a positive experience. Thus, by realising that their classmates encounter the same difficulties as they do, they might feel less critical of their own mistakes, which could be helpful for boosting their confidence and, in turn, their motivation.

Furthermore, this study also provided evidence that teachers should not be averse to attempting task-type repetition, although this should be done taking into account certain considerations. Thus, while the motivation of students working in pairs was higher when they had to

repeat the task, this was not so clear for the individual group, in which both positive and negative indicators of motivation were found. Of course, we should not generalise these findings as they represent the beliefs of a particular group of students (adult C2 learners) when carrying out one specific type of writing task (the essay). However, we would recommend to bear this in mind so that, when possible and in similar circumstances, the repetition of a writing task is combined with collaborative writing. On no account does this refute the benefits of task repetition in general, since even in the case of students writing individually, we found some indicators of an increase in motivation after the second task.

In conclusion, teachers could benefit from the knowledge on the effects of collaborative writing and task repetition on motivation and performance, so that they can implement the most adequate and fruitful teaching methods inside the classroom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Motivation questionnaire (parts A and B)

Please write your name:

Please write your age:

<u>Instructions</u>

How much do you **agree** or **disagree** with the following statements? Please indicate by choosing the answer that best describes your opinion on a scale from one to five:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5

Here you have an example: If <u>you like skiing</u>, and <u>you don't like swimming</u>, indicate it like this:

I like skiing.   1 2 3 4 ⑤

I don't like swimming.   1 2 3 4 ⑤

PART A: Motivation towards English

1. I really enjoy learning English.

2. Studying English is an important part of my education.

3. Studying English is important for me because it will be useful in getting a job.

4. Studying English is important for me because it will be useful for keeping my job.

5. Studying English is important for me because I can meet and talk with more people.

6. Studying English is important for me because I'll need it for my future studies.

7. Studying English is important for me because it will be useful to be able to travel abroad.

8. Studying English is important for me because I enjoy meeting and talking with people from other countries and other cultures.

9. I enjoy my English class.

10. I put my best effort into learning English in my English language class.

11. I work hard in my English class even when I don't like what we are doing.

PART B: Motivation towards specific tasks in English

1. English grammar should be important in the English lessons.

2. Reading in English should be important in the English lessons.

3. Writing in English should be important in the English lessons.

4. English vocabulary should be important in the English lessons.

5. English pronunciation should be important in the English lessons.

6. Listening in English should be important in the English lessons.

7. Speaking in English should be important in the English lessons.

8. Activities in these classes should help students improve their abilities to communicate in English.

9. I like activities that permit me to participate actively.

10. I do not like being forced to speak English in my classes taught in English. I prefer to sit and listen.

11. I feel nervous when I have to speak in English in class.

12. I usually have the feeling that other students in the class speak English better than I do.

13. I like to work in groups in these classes.

14. I like to do oral presentations in English.

15. I like to do autonomous learning (work on my own or in groups without the teacher).

16. I do not like to use a textbook in English, but rather use different materials, also in English.

17. I like to use authentic materials in English (journals, magazines, videos, films, etc.).

18. I would like to have more practice with the writing tasks inside the classroom, even if it's tiresome, instead of just doing the writings for homework.

19. I prefer doing the writings for homework, and dedicate the time of the class for doing other kind of tasks (speaking, reading, listening, etc.)

20. I like to start the class with a warm-up exercise, such as the ones we usually do at the beginning of the class (for instance, when we have to guess the right word for a certain idiom, doing sentence transformations, etc.), because it's a nice way of breaking the ice and it gets you in the mood for learning English.

21. I like to do the oral mediation tasks.

22. I like to do the written mediation tasks.

23. I like to do the use of English exercises:

24. I don't feel very confident when doing the listening exercises, and sometimes I get anxious when I don't get what is being said.

Appendix 2a. Writing task (first day, collaborative group)

Please write your names: _____

In pairs, write an essay about the following topic (estimated length: 240-280 words). You have 40 minutes to do this. You could dedicate the first 10 minutes to decide how you are going to organize the task: who prefers to write, main ideas you are going to discuss, etc. Do not worry about the length of the essay: the number of words indicated above is an approximation.

In our society, actors and athletes who have achieved celebrity status command exceptionally high fees for their work, and through advertising and sponsorship deals. It is a commonly held view that such people are not more deserving than others. Can the amounts of money they are paid be justified, or not? Support your opinion with reasons and examples.

Appendix 2b. Writing task (first day, individual group)

Please write your name: _____

Write an essay about the following topic (estimated length: 240-280 words). You have 30 minutes to do this. Do not worry about the length of the essay: the number of words indicated above is an approximation.

In our society, actors and athletes who have achieved celebrity status command exceptionally high fees for their work, and through advertising and sponsorship deals. It is a commonly held view that such people are not more deserving than others. Can the amounts of money they are paid be justified, or not? Support your opinion with reasons and examples.

Appendix 2c. Writing task (second day, collaborative group)

Please write your names: _____

In pairs, write an essay about the following topic (estimated length: 240-280 words). You have 40 minutes to do this. You could dedicate the first 10 minutes to decide how you are going to organize the task: who prefers to write, main ideas you are going to discuss, etc. Do not worry about the length of the essay: the number of words indicated above is an approximation.

For many people, happiness is measured in terms of material wealth and popularity. It is no surprise then that many people wish they were rich, powerful and famous. Nevertheless, it is a widely known fact that many celebrities struggle with the fame and wealth that their profession entails. Taking this into consideration, would you say that being rich and famous is the key to happiness? Or, on the contrary, do you believe that there are other ways in which we can make our lives happier and more fulfilling? Support your opinion with reasons and examples.

Appendix 2d. Writing task (second day, individual group)

Please write your name: _____

Write an <u>essay</u> about the following topic (estimated length: 240-280 words). You have <u>30 minutes</u> to do this. Do not worry about the length of the essay: the number of words indicated above is an approximation.

For many people, happiness is measured in terms of material wealth and popularity. It is no surprise then that many people wish they were rich, powerful and famous. Nevertheless, it is a widely known fact that many celebrities struggle with the fame and wealth that their profession entails. Taking this into consideration, would you say that being rich and famous is the key to happiness? Or, on the contrary, do you believe that there are other ways in which we can make our lives happier and more fulfilling? Support your opinion with reasons and examples.

Appendix 3a. Motivation thermometers (collaborative group, pre-task)

PART 1 (FRONT)

Name: _____

Here you have a "**motivation thermometer**". Please think about how you are feeling now before doing the task. What is your motivation towards the writing task?

Select a number in the thermometer that best describes your motivation levels towards the task on a scale from 0 to 10 (0=lowest motivational level, 10=highest motivational level) and then **justify your answer**. Please **be as honest as possible**. Below you have some examples of the kinds of things you might want to talk about:
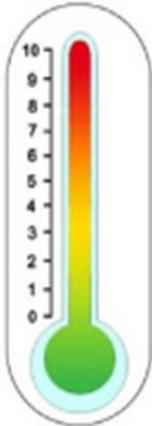
Example:

I have chosen this level because...

- *Because I think the task is going to be easy.*
- *Because I want to work with my partner.*
- *Because I want to do the task.*
- *Because I think I'm going to have fun doing the task.*
- *Because I think that the task is going to be difficult.*
- *Because I don't want to work with my partner.*
- *Because I don't want to do the task.*
- *Because I'm going to get bored doing the task.*
  Etc...

How do you feel **before** doing the task? Please, indicate on this thermometer

Why did you choose this level?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART 2 (BACK)

Now, choose an answer for the following questions:

1. How carefully will you do this task? I will pay

    a.   not much attention

    b.   some attention

    c.   much attention

    d.   very much attention

2. How difficult do you think that you will find this task?

    a.   not at all difficult

    b.   not so difficult

    c.   difficult

    d.   very difficult

3. How much effort do you think you will have to put into this task?

    a.   very little

    b.   some

    c.   much

    d.   my very best

4. How well do you think you will do this task?

    a.   not at all well

    b.   not so well

    c.   well

    d.   very well

5. How useful do you consider that this kind of task will be?

    a.   not at all useful

    b.   not so useful

    c.   useful

    d.   very useful

Appendix 3b. Motivation thermometers (collaborative group, post-task)

PART 1 (FRONT)

Name: _____

Here you have a "**motivation thermometer**". Please think about how you are feeling now that you have completed the task. What is your motivation towards this writing task now that you have done it?

Select a number in the thermometer that best describes your motivation levels towards the task on a scale from 0 to 10 (0=lowest motivational level, 10=highest motivational level) and then **justify your answer**. Please **be as honest as possible**. Below you have some examples of the kinds of things you might want to talk about:

Example:

I have chosen this level because...

- *Because the task was easy.*
- *Because I liked working with my partner.*
- *Because I liked the task.*
- *Because I had fun doing the task.*
- *Because the task was difficult.*
- *Because I didn't like working with my partner.*
- *Because I didn't like the task.*
- *Because I got bored doing the task.*
  Etc...

How do you feel **after** doing the task? Please, indicate on this thermometer:

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

Why did you choose this level?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART 2 (BACK)

Now, choose an answer for the following questions:

1. How carefully did you do this task? I paid

    a.   not much attention

    b.   some attention

    c.   much attention

    d.   very much attention

2. How difficult did you find this task?

    a.   not at all difficult

    b.   not so difficult

    c.   difficult

    d.   very difficult

3. How much effort did you put into this task?

    a.   very little

    b.   some

    c.   much

    d.   my very best

4. How well did you do this task?

    a.   not at all well

    b.   not so well

    c.   well

    d.   very well

5. How useful do you consider this kind of task now that you have done it?

    a.   not at all useful

    b.   not so useful

    c.   useful

    d.   very useful

6. Do you normally write individually or in pairs in your English class?

7. Do you prefer to write individually or in pairs? Why?

8. Would you like to do more writing tasks in pairs in the future? Why/why not?

Appendix 3c. Motivation thermometers (individual group, pre-task)

PART 1 (FRONT)

Name: _____

Here you have a "**motivation thermometer**". Please think about how you are feeling now before doing the task. What is your motivation towards the writing task?

Select a number in the thermometer that best describes your motivation levels towards the task on a scale from 0 to 10 (0=lowest motivational level, 10=highest motivational level) and then **justify your answer**. Please **be as honest as possible**. Below you have some examples of the kinds of things you might want to talk about:
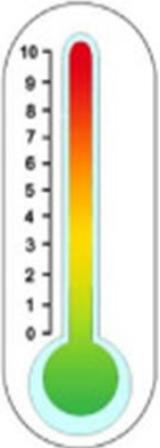
Example:

I have chosen this level because…

- *Because I think the task is going to be easy.*
- *Because I like doing tasks on my own.*
- *Because I want to do the task.*
- *Because I think I'm going to have fun doing the task.*
- *Because I think that the task is going to be difficult.*
- *Because I don't like doing tasks on my own.*
- *Because I don't want to do the task.*
- *Because I'm going to get bored doing the task.*
  Etc…

How do you feel **before** doing the task?
Please, indicate on this thermometer

Why did you choose this level?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART 2 (BACK)

Now, choose an answer for the following questions:

1. How carefully will you do this task? I will pay

    a.   not much attention

    b.   some attention

    c.   much attention

    d.   very much attention

2. How difficult do you think that you will find this task?

    a.   not at all difficult

    b.   not so difficult

    c.   difficult

    d.   very difficult

3. How much effort do you think you will have to put into this task?

    a.   very little

    b.   some

    c.   much

    d.   my very best

4. How well do you think you will do this task?

    a.   not at all well

    b.   not so well

    c.   well

    d.   very well

5. How useful do you consider that this kind of task will be?

    a.   not at all useful

    b.   not so useful

    c.   useful

    d.   very useful

Appendix 3d. Motivation thermometers (individual group, post-task)

PART 1 (FRONT)

Name: _____

Here you have a "**motivation thermometer**". Please think about how you are feeling now that you have completed the task. What is your motivation towards this writing task now that you have done it?

Select a number in the thermometer that best describes your motivation levels towards the task on a scale from 0 to 10 (0=lowest motivational level, 10=highest motivational level) and then **justify your answer**. Please **be as honest as possible**. Below you have some examples of the kinds of things you might want to talk about:

Example:

I have chosen this level because...

- *Because the task was easy.*
- *Because I liked doing a task on my own.*
- *Because I liked the task.*
- *Because I had fun doing the task.*
- *Because the task was difficult.*
- *Because I didn't like doing a task on my own.*
- *Because I didn't like the task.*
- *Because I got bored doing the task.*
  Etc...

How do you feel **after** doing the task? Please, indicate on this thermometer:

Why did you choose this level?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART 2 (BACK)

Now, choose an answer for the following questions:

1. How carefully did you do this task? I paid

    a. not much attention

    b. some attention

    c. much attention

    d. very much attention

2. How difficult did you find this task?

    a. not at all difficult

    b. not so difficult

    c. difficult

    d. very difficult

3. How much effort did you put into this task?

    a. very little

    b. some

    c. much

    d. my very best

4. How well did you do this task?

    a. not at all well

    b. not so well

    c. well

    d. very well

5. How useful do you consider this kind of task now that you have done it?

    a. not at all useful

    b. not so useful

    c. useful

    d. very useful

Appendix 4. Answers to the second part of the motivation questionnaire (means and standard deviations in parenthesis)

Questions	Collaborative group	Individual group
1. English grammar should be important in the English lessons	4,09 (0,94)	4,00 (0,76)
2. Reading in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,00 (0,77)	4,63 (0,52)
3. Writing in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,27 (0,79)	4,50 (0,53)
4. English vocabulary should be important in the English lessons.	4,55 (0,52)	4,63 (0,52)
5. English pronunciation should be important in the English lessons.	4,55 (0,52)	4,63 (0,52)
6. Listening in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,36 (0,67)	4,75 (0,46)
7. Speaking in English should be important in the English lessons.	4,82 (0,40)	4,63 (0,52)
8. Activities in these classes should help students improve their abilities to communicate in English.	4,91 (0,30)	4,63 (0,74)
9. I like activities that permit me to participate actively.	4,36 (0,67)	4,13 (0,64)
10. I do not like being forced to speak English in my classes taught in English. I prefer to sit and listen.	2,55 (1,29)	3,25 (0,46)
11. I feel nervous when I have to speak in English in class.	2,82 (1,47)	3,00 (0,93)
12. I usually have the feeling that other students in the class speak English better than I do.	3,18 (1,40)	3,50 (0,53)
13. I like to work in groups in these classes.	4,09 (1,14)	4,25 (0,71)
14. I like to do oral presentations in English.	3,36 (1,36)	2,75 (0,89)
15. I like to do autonomous learning (work on my own or in groups without the teacher).	3,18 (0,98)	3,75 (0,89)
16. I do not like to use a textbook in English, but rather use different materials, also in English.	2,82 (0,60)	3,00 (0,76)
17. I like to use authentic materials in English (journals, magazines, videos, films, etc.).	4,36 (0,67)	4,63 (0,52)
18. I would like to have more practice with the writing tasks inside the classroom, even if it's tiresome, instead of just doing the writings for homework.	2,55 (1,21)	3,13 (1,36)
19. I prefer doing the writings for homework, and dedicate the time of the class for doing other kind of tasks (speaking, reading, listening, etc.)	3,82 (1,08)	3,88 (0,83)

20. I like to start the class with a warm-up exercise, such as the ones we usually do at the beginning of the class (for instance, when we have to guess the right word for a certain idiom, doing sentence transformations, etc.), because it's a nice way of breaking the ice and it gets you in the mood for learning English.	4,55 (0,82)	4,50 (0,76)
21. I like to do the oral mediation tasks.	3,09 (1,45)	2,88 (1,46)
22. I like to do the written mediation tasks.	3,09 (0,94)	3,13 (0,99)
23. I like to do the use of English exercises.	4,45 (0,69)	4,25 (1,04)
24. I don't feel very confident when doing the listening exercises, and sometimes I get anxious when I don't get what is being said.	2,82 (1,47)	3,13 (1,13)

Appendix 5. Frequency of reasons given by the students in the motivation thermometers (expressed in percentages) for both groups and both tasks

REASONS GROUP 1 FIRST TASK			
Pre-task		Post-task	
Frequency	Reasons	Frequency	Reasons
9,09%	(-) Perceived difficulty of the task	5%	(+) Felt good/better/better doing it than they had thought
13,64%	(-) Need for more time	10%	(-) Working with partner
18,18%	(-) Working with partner	20%	(+) Working with partner
9,09%	(-) Not feeling like doing the task	15%	(-) Need for more time
9,09%	(+) Going to have fun doing the task	15%	(-) Not feeling well/ could have done it better
13,64%	(+) Working with partner	5%	(-) Difficulty of the task
18,18%	(-) Don't like writing tasks in general/finding them difficult	5%	(-) Don't like writing tasks in general/finding them difficult and time consuming
4,55%	(+) Task won't be really difficult	10%	(+) Task not too difficult
4,55%	(+) Like writing tasks in general	15%	(+) Had fun
31,82%	Frequency positive reasons	50%	Frequency positive reasons
68,18%	Frequency negative reasons	50%	Frequency negative reasons

REASONS GROUP 1 SECOND TASK			
Pre-task		Post-task	
Frequency	Reasons	Frequency	Reasons
7,69%	(+) Wanting to improve	30,77%	(+) Liked the task/did it better/felt better
23,08%	(-) Not feeling well/not feeling like doing the task	23,08%	(+) Working with partner
7,69%	(+) Going to have fun doing the task	15,38%	(-) Working with partner
30,77%	(-) Don't like writing tasks in general/finding them difficult	7,69%	(-) Perceived difficulty of the task
7,69%	(-) Task repetition not appealing	7,69%	(+) Had fun
7,69%	(+) Working with partner	7,69%	(+) Task not too difficult/easier now that they have done it for the second time
15,38%	(+) Task not too difficult/easier now that they are doing it for the second time	7,69%	(-) Better result in the first task
38,46%	Frequency positive reasons	69,23%	Frequency positive reasons
61,54%	Frequency negative reasons	30,77%	Frequency negative reasons

REASONS GROUP 2 FIRST TASK			
Pre-task		Post-task	
Frequency	Reasons	Frequency	Reasons
18,75%	(-) Perceived difficulty of the task/demanding task	15,38%	(-) Not feeling well or satisfied with the result/could have done it better/they did it worse than they had thought
6,25%	(+) Like writing tasks in general	7,69%	(-) Difficulty of the task
18,75%	(-) Need for more time	30,77%	(-) Need for more time
12,50%	(+) Eagerness to improve writing skills	23,08%	(+) Felt good/better/ better doing it than they had thought
12,50%	(-) Don't like writing tasks in general/finding them difficult/preference for other skills	23,08%	(+) Eagerness to improve writing skills/the result
12,50%	(-) Anxiety/feeling insecure about their own abilities		
18,75%	(-) Not feeling like doing the task		
18,75%	Frequency positive reasons	46,15%	Frequency positive reasons
81,25%	Frequency negative reasons	53,85%	Frequency negative reasons

REASONS GROUP 2 SECOND TASK			
Pre-task		Post-task	
Frequency	Reasons	Frequency	Reasons
5,88%	(-) Perceived difficulty of the task/demanding task	6,25%	(-) Anxiety/feeling insecure about their own abilities
5,88%	(-) Need for more preparation	37,50%	(+) Felt good/better/ better doing it than they had thought/had fun
11,76%	(-) Task repetition not appealing	12,50%	(-) Difficulty of the task
11,76%	(-) Don't like writing tasks in general/finding them difficult/preference for other skills	18,75%	(+) They liked the topic/easy topic
11,76%	(-) They'd rather do the task at home/don't like doing writings inside the classroom	12,50%	(-) Need for more time
17,65%	(-) Need for more time	6,25%	(+) Easy to surpass low expectations
11,76%	(+) Task easier now that they are doing it for a second time and know how it works	6,25%	(-) Not feeling well or satisfied with the result/ could have done it better
11,76%	(-) Not feeling like doing the task		
5,88%	(+) They want to test their level		
5,88%	(-) Because of how they had felt doing the first task		
17,65%	Frequency positive reasons	62,50%	Frequency positive reasons
82,35%	Frequency negative reasons	37,50%	Frequency negative reasons

Appendix 6. Holistic rubric (translated into English, the original one was in Spanish)

COMMUNICATIVE EFFECTIVENESS	
It follows all the conventions of the type of text. It provides enough and completely relevant information with sound arguments	2,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	2
It generally follows the conventions of the type of text, although there are some mistakes in the format, register or typical distribution of the information. It provides enough and mostly relevant information	1,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	1
It presents considerable mistakes in the conventions of the type of text. It provides little or irrelevant information; the student might have misunderstood the task	0,5
COHERENCE AND COHESION	
It presents a clear discursive structure that gives clear unity to the text. The student makes use of a varied and efficient number of connectors, cohesive devices and organizational structures, both within a paragraph and between the parts of the text. It follows all the conventions of the type of text	2,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	2
It presents an easily distinguishable discursive structure, in spite of some incoherencies. The information is well organized through an adequate use of cohesive devices, in spite of occasional inaccuracies. There are some mistakes in the format, register or typical distribution of the information	1,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	1
Its discursive structure presents little coherence or little clarity. The information is organized through very simple cohesive devices or the cohesive devices are not used adequately. It deviates considerably from the conventions of the type of text	0,5
LEXIS	
The student makes use of an ample and precise linguistic repertoire that allows for the expression of ideas with efficiency, great accuracy, precision and appropriateness. Inaccuracies are very rare and they do not affect communication	2,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	2
The student makes use of a range of everyday and less common vocabulary with the aim of expressing ideas with precision. Even though there might be some inaccuracies, these do not affect communication	1,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	1
The student makes use of a certain amount of everyday vocabulary adequately, but it lacks precision or presents inaccuracies and repetitions that hinder communication	0,5
MORPHOSYNTAX	
The student makes an adequate use of both basic and complex structures that are necessary for the fulfilment of the task	2,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	2
The student makes use of basic as well as some complex structures with sufficient accuracy; mistakes do not hinder communication	1,5
It shares features with the above and below rows	1

The student makes an adequate use of basic structures; but there are significant mistakes in more complex structures, even if the meaning can be inferred	0,5
It does not fulfil the communicative purpose of the task. The student barely provides information or the content is completely irrelevant	0
TOTAL WRITTEN PRODUCTION _____/10	