SELF-REVISION AND SELF-CORRECTION TOOLS FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

As you have observed throughout the handbook, academic writing is formal, but not complicated. On the contrary, it aims at simplicity and expressive economy. This section recapitulates the contents given, while it offers a few tips for autonomous self-revision. Finally, it offers a couple of questions and exercises for reviewing the whole course.

WARMING UP

As you know, almost any piece of research will be blind peer-reviewed before being accepted. Usually, objections for publication are not exactly related with content, but with the way such content is put across. This is the reason why, before submitting your paper, and even if a language specialist has had a look at it, you must make a self-revision as thorough as possible.

Some of the tips have already been mentioned on these pages. Go back to the previous sections, the read the tips and answer the following questions: Can you supply the missing information? Which items from this list do you find more useful? Can you add any?

1. In order to enhance your academic register, make use of the Academic Word List, especially for _____ and _____.

2. Stick to a _____, indirect, objective style.

3. Whenever you feel unsure about an expression, make a search, and choose the most usual solution in similar papers.

4. Do not feel at a disadvantage for not being a native English speaker. Academic English is a "_____" of its own, and native speakers who do not belong to this professional environment would not be able to write a research paper.

5. Use lists of fixed academic expressions (phrase-banks) and of connectors.

6. When revising the literature of your colleagues, pay attention to the ways in which they use the items reviewed in this course (e.g., _____, passive voice, purpose clauses, connectors).

7. Be always clear and concise (keep it simple!). Do not overuse subordination. Write _____ sentences and seek for gradual progress.

8. Check little (but indispensable) issues such as: prepositions, pronouns, punctuation, subject/verb _____, spelling. Use only one spelling format (British, American, or other) and stick to it.

9. Make sure that tables and graphs are correctly numbered and described, and references included according to the publisher's guidelines. The same applies to font type, headings, and subheadings, etc.

10. Do not underestimate the importance of _____. At this formal level of writing, correction is indispensable.

11. Introduce _____: in similar contexts, do not always use the same connector, the same noun, the same adverb…

12. …

SELF-CORRECTION TOOLS

Usually, engineers work in writing formats other than Word, as they must use tables and equations that require specific file types. However, for the part of their manuscripts that is strictly text, it is a good idea to temporarily write in Word, and make ample use of its correction tools, such as *language choice* and *editor* (spelling, grammar, and punctuation) available in the section "Revisar" at the top bar of the file. Here is an example:
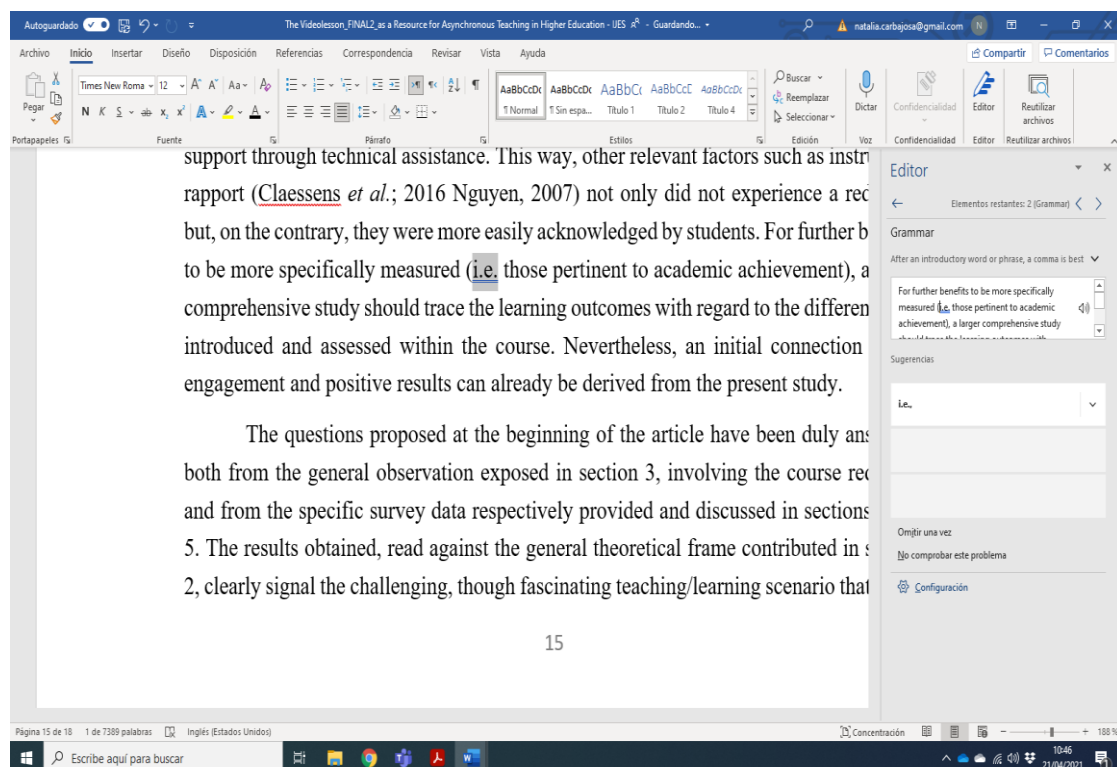
Likewise, when somebody else revises our paper, it is advisable to use the tool "nuevo comentario", what allows question/answer exchanges. All the successive changes and versions of the document are saved in "control de cambios". The comments introduced may be related with any aspect of the paper: grammar, content, structure, even further suggestions:
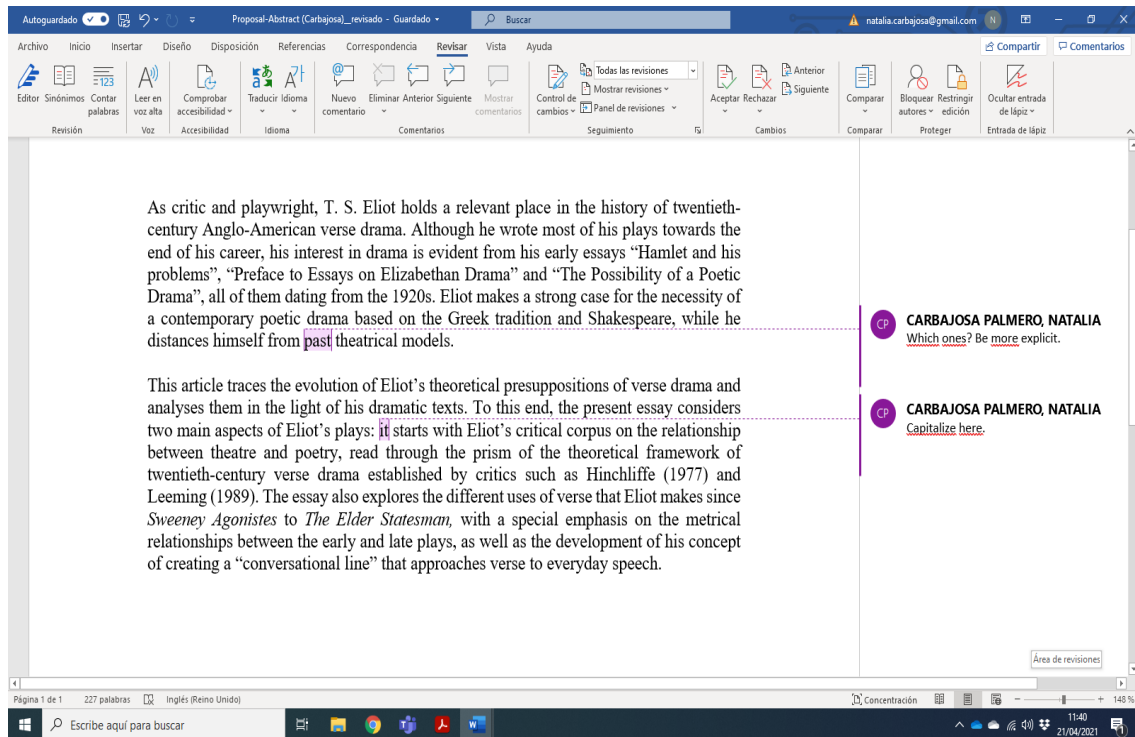
NOW IT IS YOUR TURN:

This exercise consists of three phases:

1. Apply the Word revision tool to a couple of paragraphs from your research item.

2. Exchange your text with that of a colleague's. With the corresponding tool, each participant must introduce a couple of aside comments.

3. Go to "Appendix 2" and try to find, at least, two patterns in which some of the constructions from your article may fit. Write them following the table format given, and share them with the instructor and course participants.

FINAL REFLECTION:

Think about the following questions, and provide answers for yourself:

1) What was covered in this course?

2) What was new to you?

3) What wasn't new?

4) What did you already know but have seen in a new way now?

5) In which way does the expression "raise awareness" apply to academic writing in your specific case?