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RICE UNIVERSITY

A STUDY OF LANGUAGE TRANSFER IN THIRD-YEAR SPANISH STUDENTS

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

A Study of Language Transfer in Third-year Spanish Students

by

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This study analyzes the role of Transfer, or native language interference in the written interlanguage of fourteen English-speaking students during the second semester of the third year of Spanish at Rice University. English language interference is studied in the development of Spanish lexicon, syntax, morphology and orthography. Errors from translation exercises as well as from written compositions were analyzed and categorized by type. A list of all the English transfer errors found in this project is preceded by an explanation of the interference mechanism involved. At two data collection points, evenly spaced toward the beginning and the end of the semester, a horizontal comparison of transfer errors was carried out in order to observe changes in transfer errors. A review of previous literature in language transfer precedes the findings specific to this study.
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Review of Literature on Language Transfer

Language Transfer has been a central issue in applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and language teaching for at least a century. In the early 1970s, the issue of language transfer started to be questioned and even rejected by some scholars as being associated with behaviourism. Among the most influential theories that tried to discredit the importance of language transfer in second language learning was Dulay and Burt’s morpheme order studies. Dulay and Burt’s theory was based on the idea that developmental factors, rather than native language factors, influence second language acquisition. However, the crucial importance of language transfer in the area of second language learning has regained acceptance in the last two decades and studies and investigations of this phenomenon have been proliferating all over the world.

Discussions of transfer usually start with the work of Robert Lado, Linguistics across Cultures, published in 1957, in which he presented his proposal of the contrastive analysis method and the contrastive analysis hypothesis. Lado’s most famous claim was that many of the potential difficulties a learner may find when learning a second language can be attributable to native language interference both in production of the target language when trying to communicate and in reception when trying to understand the speech
of native speakers of the target language, since "Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (Lado 2). However, though Lado's work had an undeniably major influence in the study of the role of the native language for subsequent research, serious thinking about the importance of cross-linguistic influence dates back to the nineteenth century. Authors of classic works on foreign language teaching like Henry Sweet in 1899 show evident awareness of the relation of the student's first language to the foreign language being learned. In Sweet's words:

We are naturally inclined to assume that the nearer the foreign language is to our own, the easier it is . . . But this very likeness is often a source of confusion. It is a help to the beginner who merely wants to understand the allied language, and is contented with a rough knowledge; but it is a hindrance to any thorough knowledge, because of the constant cross-associations that are sure to present themselves . . . (Sweet, 1964, in Håkan 1987, p. 44).

Even though Sweet was one of the first scholars to consider the importance of the role of the native language, it was Lado's thinking that prompted much of the research in second language acquisition and brought about a renewed look at, and interest in, cross-linguistic influence. Before Lado, in the 1930s and 1940s, the term transfer was usually used to refer to the influence of any previous knowledge in the learning process of a new task under the constraints of the
behaviouristic psychology; but the followers of this psychological trend were hardly interested in the learning process of a second language. "Interference" was also used to describe the influence of the native language, and although the term was used by the Prague School around 1936, it is rarely found in relation to linguistics before the 1950s (Håkan 46).

In fact, as previously noted, it is not until the 1950s that transfer, in the context of second language acquisition, receives the attention and interest it deserves. Lado's most famous claim, as cited above, based on the idea that difficulties encountered by second language learners arise from the influence of the mother tongue, has been repeated for years by second language acquisition researchers. Additionally, Lado pointed out that these difficulties encountered by the second language learner can be predicted by a rigorous comparison, or contrastive analysis, of the culture and language systems of the two languages in question.

This idea led to the formulation of the Contrastive Analysis theory which prompted a great deal of experimental research on second language acquisition based on the systematic comparison of the student's native language and the language being learned. The purpose of this detailed and rigorous comparison of two languages proposed by Lado was to detect similarities and differences between the student's native language and the target language in order to predict potential problems for second language learners. The
underlying assumption was that these potential problems would manifest themselves in errors.

Lado also claimed that a learning difficulty could be predicted by linguistic differences rather than by linguistic similarities. This idea led to the formulation of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH). This hypothesis gave rise to the distinction of two types of transfer: positive transfer and negative transfer. These two terms are defined within the behaviouristic1 frame on second language learning as the following: positive transfer will occur where two languages are similar with a facilitating effect in the learning process, and it will be supported by evidence wherever the learner acquires second language features which are identical or similar to features in the student's native language. By contrast, negative transfer or interference will take place where the two languages are different. It will manifest itself in errors which resemble native language habits and patterns inappropriate to the new situation such as realizó él estaba allí ('I realized he was there') specific to the Spanish interlanguage of English-speaking students. These errors are considered as obstacles to successful language learning since they prevent the formation of appropriate target-language habits. Under behaviourism, second language learning was considered as an

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1 Behaviourism can be defined as a learning theory in which learning is viewed as a formation of habits through a stimuli-response sequence, thus a process operating through analogy rather than analysis. Behaviourism asserts that prior learning will affect new learning through a psychological process of transfer of old habits into the new learning situation. The behaviourist notion of language transfer implies a transfer of the native language set of habits to the language being learned (Ellis 300).
acquisition of a set of new linguistic habits by a process of surmounting native language habits. Since Contrastive Analysis was thought to anticipate possible areas of errors, errors could be avoided or kept to a minimum. Thus, bad habit formation could be avoidable (Larsen-Freeman and Hong 55).

Although in many cases Contrastive Analysis (CA) predicted a fair amount of learner errors, it did not anticipate all of them and, after Chomsky's review of Skinner's *Verbal Behaviour* in 1959, the CAH was refuted. Nonetheless, CA as a methodological option in language learning research was never completely abandoned. In fact, nowadays the CA method is still practiced and considered by many researchers as an important and useful tool in linguistic studies. Its importance as a preliminary step in order to understanding transfer was stated by Di Pietro in 1964. This same idea was reasserted in 1983 by Gass and Selinker (3):

> For us, one important preliminary step to understanding language transfer is, at the very least, a native language-target language comparison, which often leads to insightful hypotheses concerning language transfer phenomena.

In the present study Contrastive Analysis is also regarded as a fundamental tool in understanding language transfer in second language acquisition. Thus, a detailed and systematic comparison of the student's native language, i.e., English and of the target language, i.e., Spanish, is of crucial importance in order to draw conclusions
about the process of language transfer specific to the Spanish interlanguage of English-speaking students.

The Chomskyan generative linguistic theory was based on the idea that language learning is a cognitive process. The acquisition of a second language is regarded as a creative process in which a learner creates his own hypotheses about the target language. Chomsky claimed that humans had a certain innate predisposition to infer target language rules from the input they received. After the acquisition of these target language rules, the language learner could produce and understand new sentences. Thus, language learning started to be considered as a process of rule formation rather than as a process of habit formation (Corder 20). This idea is still supported by second language researchers.

In the 1960s, all these Chomskyan ideas gave rise to pioneer research in first language acquisition. The findings on first language acquisition were later applied to second language acquisition (SLA). SLA came to be regarded as a cognitive process of hypothesis formulation and hypothesis testing based on developmental sequences. Learners would formulate hypotheses about target language rules which when contrasted to forms and functions of the actual target language would be modified so that their production would progressively adjust to the target language (Larsen-Freeman and Long 58). With the generative theory, second language acquisition research experienced an enormous change. The learner
came to be regarded as an active participant in the learning process and, the behaviouristic view of language learning fell out of favour.²

The discredit of the behaviourist notions implied a neglect of transfer, since transfer had always been linked to the behaviourist theory of learning. Early in the history of second language research, Lado had pointed out that second language learning was mainly based on the psychological process of the transfer of the student's first language habits into the language being learned (Lado vii). In addition, contrastive analysis theory was also considered inappropriate and incompatible with generative theory. Some scholars suggested that contrastive analysis could not predict errors and that this research method could only be useful in looking at data and drawing conclusions from the facts (Odlin 19). Consequently, the importance of the influence of the native language in second language learning came to be minimized and even rejected.

Dulay and Burt with their morpheme studies in the early 70s were among the best known researchers to discredit the importance of the influence of the mother tongue in second language learning. Their underlying assumptions were that child first language acquisition would present developmental patterns similar to child second language acquisition. Thus, they hypothesized a similarity between first language (L1) and second language (L2) learning

²The theories of behaviourism were seen as misguided tools in the field of second language learning since animal behaviour could not be used to explain human language behaviour. Thus, basic terms of behaviourism like 'stimulus,' 'response' and 'analogy' were considered empty concepts in the context of language learning and language behaviour (Ellis 300).
which would minimize the role of transfer. In order to prove the minor role of the L1 in language learning, they compared the way Spanish and Chinese children learnt English. They conducted a set of grammatical morpheme order studies that contrasted the developmental acquisition of eleven grammatical morphemes by the Spanish and Chinese child learners of English. As hypothesized, the results showed a similarity in the children's development of grammatical morphemes irrespective of the L1 involved. Dulay and Burt assigned less than 5% of their data errors to interference. With these data, they arrived at the conclusion that second language acquisition is guided not by the structure of the native language but rather by the structure of the target language, and that developmental factors, rather than native language factors, influence the process of second language learning (Wode 205). Dulay and Burt's theory received much criticism not only for neglecting transfer as an important variable in language learning, but also for not considering the language background of their informants in their assumptions and results. Furthermore, critics assumed that a large amount of evidence was disregarded since in the research of Dulay and Burt, they did not consider pre-target like errors (Gass and Selinker Second Language 82). Kellerman also points out that L1 influence can be underestimated if assumptions and conclusions are based on counting errors rather than analyzing types of errors. The number of errors will depend on the number of contexts that require the use of a particular structure (Ellis 312).
In the 1970s, there was a strong interest in second language acquisition based on the innate principles theory first stated by Chomsky in 1959. The morpheme order approach attracted the researchers' attention since it provided evidence for an innate learner-generated factor in L2-learning (Larsen-Freeman and Long 63). However, as previously noted, the morpheme order methodology soon fell out of favour when some researchers showed that the results of these analyses were not accurate.

Another type of research analysis was also being conducted at the same time. We refer here to the universal developmental sequence approach, which started to be considered as a key to understanding language acquisition. The major claim of the universal developmental sequence approach was also the existence of similarity between L1 and L2 stages of acquisition. But once again, transfer was not taken into consideration. One of the most important opponents of this neglect of native language influence was Wode, who in 1974 (reported in 1976) studied the developmental sequences of four German-speaking children learning English. Wode found differences between L1 and L2 developmental sequences, and attributed these differences to the children's reliance on their native language, i. e. , to transfer. Wode discovered these developmental differences in the acquisition of the English negation pattern in which the four German-speaking children show a post-verbal negation stage ('John go not to the school') not found in native English-
speaking children's developmental stage (Larsen-Freeman and Long 65).

Thus, with Wode's claim, the importance of transfer was newly asserted. The universal developmental sequence approach was not disregarded since it supported the idea of an innate structure of language which came to be referred to as Universal Grammar (UG). UG consists of certain aspects of language structure assumed to be innately present in the native speaker's mind. These aspects underlie the knowledge of language. In addition, UG contains also parameters defined as "built-in-settings." L1 learning and L1 input determine the choice of the appropriate setting for the language being learned (White 217).

Contrary to previous theories, UG does not disregard the contributing influence of the mother tongue in language learning, but rather, transfer is regarded as a crucial issue within this theory. There exist two opposing trends with regard to language transfer and UG. On the one hand, transfer is explained in terms of UG parameters: learners are supposed to apply their L1 parameters to the target language. And on the other hand, transfer is employed to query whether UG operates in L2 acquisition (White 218).

Nowadays the important role of language transfer is no longer questioned. Many studies have compared different subsystems of languages (grammar, vocabulary, semantics, etc.) of learners with different native languages showing crucial differences in acquisition attributable to cross-linguistic influence. Furthermore, the concept of
developmental sequences has been reconciled with the concept of transfer in the context of second language acquisition. This idea was first proposed by Jack C. Richards in 1971. Richards distinguished between 'interlingual' and 'intralingual' or 'developmental' errors. 'Interlingual' errors are defined as errors traced back to L1 interference while 'intralingual' or 'developmental' errors do not reflect L1 influence but rather are caused by the structure of the L2 itself. Thus, second language learning was considered as a process in which L1 influence was comparable to mutual interference of items within the target language.

In fact, from the 1980s onwards, transfer has become a central issue in second language acquisition. As remarked by Gass and Selinker in 1992 (7):

There is now overwhelming evidence that language transfer is indeed a real and central phenomenon that must be considered in any full account of the second language acquisition process. . . researchers have begun to once again focus their attention on language transfer.

Current researchers now try to investigate some loose points on language transfer such as what aspects of languages are more likely to be transferred and the way language transfer operates. As White (223) points out: "to try and establish more precisely where and when the L1 will have an influence, and what that influence will be." The present study will attempt to provide an answer to these questions and to investigate the role and function of language
transfer by analyzing the Spanish written interlanguage of fourteen English-speakers enrolled in an advanced level course of Spanish at Rice University throughout an academic semester.
2. METHODOLOGY AND DESCRIPTION OF THIS STUDY

This study analyzes the errors attributed to native language influence, i.e., transfer, in data collected from fourteen students enrolled in Spanish 312 (second semester of advanced Spanish) at Rice University. Students were considered advanced learners because of their extensive experience with the language. They were all native speakers of English. All the students had maintained contact with Spanish for at least seven years and they all had had a minimum of five years of schooling. This information was obtained from a questionnaire completed by the students to provide information regarding native language environment and language background, nature of first contact with Spanish, amount of formal training in Spanish, amount and nature of present contact with Spanish and amount and nature of experience in a Spanish-speaking country. Students were also asked about any previous formal training in other foreign languages.

Four of the fourteen students had a Hispanic relative but only one of them speaks in Spanish frequently. The other ten students had their first and only contact with Spanish at school. Seven of the students declared that they have no present contact with Spanish outside of the classroom. Three stated that their only out-of-class contact is listening to TV or radio and occasionally talking to friends. The four students of Hispanic origin indicated that they talked in
Spanish to their relatives only for a short period of time during their holidays. One of them visits his relatives every year but considers English to be his dominant language. Four of the students had no experience in a Spanish-speaking country, eight stayed for no longer than seven weeks in a Spanish-speaking country, one goes for one month every two or three years and another one goes frequently during summer holidays. As for knowledge of another language, one of the students studied German for two semesters but admitted to speaking it with difficulty, another studied one year of French at school, another is currently enrolled in a beginning Chinese course, and only one of them claimed to be able to communicate in another foreign language (Chinese) with ease, but said that she had difficulties in using the written form of the language.

While all the informants could maintain a conversation in Spanish with minor or no communicative problems, they showed differences in their level of competency in Spanish. The average level of the class was considered advanced. The instruction was conducted entirely in Spanish and was oriented to create opportunities for students to participate orally and actively in the classroom. Most of the activities were developed to engage students in expressing opinions, negotiating meanings and structures while placing a lot of emphasis on interaction.

This study was conducted with the assumption that transfer was just one of the causes of advanced students' errors. At an advanced level, students have acquired an L2-frame of reference
and their hypotheses about language will rely not only on their L1 but also on their L2 knowledge. However, the aim of this study is to measure to what extent advanced students rely on their native language to generate sentences in the target language and to analyze the types of transfer errors which occur in the interlanguage of third-year English-speaking students of Spanish. The underlying assumption agrees with the one expressed by Corder in the following quotation (1983, 29):

The part played by the mother tongue in the acquisition of a second language is a good deal more pervasive and subtle than has been traditionally believed. It plays a part at the start of learning, in the process of learning, and in the use of the target language in communication.

"Interlanguage" is a very important concept within this study. Interlanguage can be defined as an independent language system half way between the native and the target language (Corder 23). The idea is that the L2 learner creates and uses a linguistic system which is systematically different from the target language and which must be seen as a continuum between the L1 and L2 (Larsen-Freeman and Long 60). Thus, interlanguage is a concept closely associated with the universal grammar theory. It is also important to notice that transfer is regarded as an important factor since the systematic continuum, or interlanguage, is considered to be affected by any previous linguistic knowledge (Færch and Kasper 177). Other
terms that refer to this concept are 'approximate system' (Nemser 1971) and 'transitional competence' (Corder 1967). The term 'interlanguage' was coined by Selinker in 1972.

Data were collected only from written assignments (translations and free compositions) and transfer in different areas of grammatical structures including lexicon and syntax, as well as in morphology and orthography was to be analyzed. Phonological transfer was not taken into consideration.

The textbook used in the course, Spanish Composition through Literature, by Cándido Ayllón, Paul Smith and Antonio Morillo, was designed as a "core text for advanced students of Spanish" (1). It is mainly oriented towards the improvement of writing skills in the form of compositions while introducing clues for a beginning literary analysis of the texts presented in each chapter. Each chapter presents a selection by a modern author and contains explanations and activities for vocabulary development, comprehension, interpretation, style, translation and free composition. All chapters provide a thorough and systematic review of important grammar topics that present difficulties for advanced English-speaking learners. The literary excerpts include a variety of topics, themes, styles and techniques with explanatory notes and exercises which help the student to understand and incorporate new materials when s/he writes in Spanish.

Besides the textbook material, other activities were included in the course syllabus in order to enhance communication and help
students to develop proficiency in Spanish. Among those activities were: individual presentation and group discussion of articles on current news; literary passages to be compared with, and contrasted to those featured in the textbook; role-play designed and performed by the students with partial control by the teacher and generally related to the topic or theme of the literary excerpt studied in class; group discussion of a film related in subject matter to the class material; oral reports on aspects of Hispanic culture, and talk shows. All these activities were designed and included in the course syllabus with the purpose of enhancing communication while engaging students in discussion of a subject that required expression of personal opinions and critical judgments in Spanish. Thus, oral production was heavily emphasized in class. The underlying idea was that at an advanced level, mastery of the spoken language would help students to improve their writing skills, since in oral production there exists an immediate and active use of vocabulary and grammatical structures.

During the semester in which data were collected for this study, the course material covered six chapters of the textbook with each chapter including an extensive explanation of a minimum average number of eighty-one lexical items with their corresponding exercises. The second section of each chapter presented a grammar topic. The grammar explanations in the textbook were designed for advanced students who had received extensive previous instruction on these topics and, though some students were familiar with them, a
review at the advanced level was considered to be needed in order to improve both oral and written production.

A minimum of five written assignments were completed for every chapter. Four of the assignments were textbook exercises that reviewed and gave further practice in the use of lexicon and grammar topics. Two of these textbook exercises were presented in the form of "fill-in-the-blank" exercises providing a choice of about three items. The other two exercises consisted of a series of English sentences to be translated into Spanish by using the vocabulary and grammar covered in that lesson. Each chapter contained a total of thirty-five English sentences to be translated into Spanish. The fifth written assignment consisted of a free composition dealing with the subject matter of the literary passage featured in that chapter.

The course examinations contained lexical and grammatical exercises. Knowledge of the lexicon was tested in the form of "provide-a-definition-for-a-given-word" or "use-this-word-within-an-appropriate-context" as well as a series of sentences to be translated. The grammar points were mainly tested by means of translation exercises that presented no lexical problem for the students. These periodic examinations also included a short composition exercise (about one page) on a topic connected to material presented in class. For this exercise students were encouraged to make use of the vocabulary and grammar studied in the chapter being tested.
In this study, data were collected from translation exercises as well as from free compositions of weekly written assignments. This means a total of one hundred ninety-five English sentences to be translated and six written compositions per student throughout the semester.

The methodology employed in this study follows the error analysis method. Error analysis focuses on the learners' errors which are to be compared to target language forms. This linguistic analysis is based on the following procedures: collection of data from translation exercises and free compositions assigned as homework. Identification of errors, categorization into error types, analysis of the source of errors, and identification of the problem areas for pedagogical purposes (Gass and Selinker Second Language 68). The translation exercises as well as the free compositions required the use of new vocabulary and grammar and were thematically related to the material presented in class. These two data elicitation procedures were chosen with the following assumptions. On the one hand, translation exercises required an active and immediate use of both, the native language and the target language. When translating, students first have to decode the given sentence, and then encode the translation, so that their performance will be similar to natural

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3The first proponent of this approach was Corder (1967) in his article "The significance of learner's errors." Errors are not seen solely as a product of imperfect learning but rather as evidence of the state of acquisition the L2 learner possesses, i.e., of his interlanguage. Corder also distinguished between 'errors,' which are systematic, and 'mistakes' that are result of chance circumstances and, hence, are not part of the learner's interlanguage (Gass and Selinker Second Language 66).
speech production. By contrasting structures in the two languages, translation exercises may be used as an aid for advanced students to correct expression in Spanish. On the other hand, free compositions are considered to be the least controlled of all data elicitation procedures. Apart from establishing a topic, the instructor has no other intervention. Students' production in free compositions are thought to reflect more accurately their grammatical and communicative competence, i.e., their level of attained mastery.

At two collection points, data were used for a horizontal comparison of transfer errors in order to observe any relevant change. These two collection points were at the beginning and the end of the semester. The two assignments used in the longitudinal comparison consisted of two free compositions. The findings of this longitudinal comparison are shown in the fourth chapter of this study.

Errors were categorized into two groups: transfer errors and non-transfer errors. The transfer errors group was subdivided into four groups: transfer errors in syntax, lexicon, morphology and orthography. Errors were classified as being the result of transfer when a form or structure used by the student resembled a form or structure in the student's native language (Gass 1984, 117). Other

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4 This data elicitation procedure was harshly attacked by some second language researchers such as Richards in 1980. Richards, reporting on a study by Swain, Naiman and Dumas, claimed that elicited translation exercises encouraged learners to produce native-like structures and thus, many of the errors in Swain, Naiman and Dumas’ study could be attributable to native language interference. However, this was not true for all learners, because many of the errors found in translation exercises were the same as those found in natural, spontaneous speech (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 28).
types of errors were also attributed to transfer if they were found in an area of structural difference between L1 and L2, irrespective of the error's resemblance to the L1 form. Examples of this type of transfer errors were detected in cases in which the target language presented a feature which did not exist in the student's native language, such as in constructions that require a subjunctive verb form structure in Spanish but not in English, differences in aspectual tenses like the preterit and the imperfect, gender marking and gender agreement. As Ellis (311) points out: "Clearly, though, the absence of a structural feature in the L1 may have as much impact on the L2 as the presence of a different feature."
3. LANGUAGE TRANSFER

The detection of foreign accents is just one example of the awareness that people may often have of 'cross-linguistic influence,' which is also known as 'language transfer' (Odlin 1).

There are many linguistic areas affected by transfer, and as Odlin mentions above, transfer in phonology is just one of the cases of cross-linguistic influence, perhaps one of the most obvious. Language transfer operates in both structural and cultural domains. Early in the history of transfer studies, Robert Lado proposed a theoretical method based on a rigorous comparison of two languages by contrasting not only the grammatical structures, sound, vocabulary and writing systems, but also the cultural nuances of the two languages in question. Lado was the first to notice the importance of cross-linguistic influence in language structure and language culture and he pointed out how transfer in both domains could lead to misinterpretations and miscommunication.

Current researchers have supported this idea reviewing the field from a concrete as opposed to a theoretical perspective. They all agree that transfer occurs in all linguistic subsystems and they have analyzed these areas of cross-linguistic influence in order to find out the way language transfer operates. Odlin, for example, in his book Language Transfer (1989) investigates the influence of the native language in syntax, phonetics, phonology, writing system,
semantics and discourse. He analyzes transfer in relation to structural as well as nonstructural factors, just as Lado had done thirty years earlier. Odlin identifies politeness as an aspect of discourse very likely to be transferred. He points out how the learner's tendency to interpret speech acts in the target language according to native language rules may lead him/her to contemplate speakers as being rude in situations where they are following appropriate norms of behaviour of their speech community.

For example, for a German speaker the sentence _Du solltest das Fenster zulassen_ ('you should close the window') represents a polite way to express a request. In German, requests are generally expressed in a declarative statement with a modal verbal form suggesting a sense of obligation. By contrast, English constructs requests with interrogative sentences using weaker modal forms of the verb ('Could you close the window, please?') (Odlin 51). This example suggests that a native German speaker making a request to a native English speaker in the form of 'you should close the window' will be interpreted as rude by the native English speaker, whereas the native German speaker will consider it appropriate and polite. Thus, the native German speaker has employed an L1 acceptable norm which did not bring the same result in L2. Speech acts considered polite in the L1 may not be appropriately transferred to L2.

Similarly, another potential source of cultural miscommunication can be found in the following example. A native
French speaker shows his enthusiasm and approval with a negative construction like *c'est pas mal*. This sentence would be directly translated into English as 'it's not bad' or 'not too bad'. However, the intended meaning in French is highly positive and enthusiastic, close to the English sentence 'it's pretty good.' A native French speaker who finds himself uttering the sentence 'it's not bad' when meaning 'it's pretty good' would be erroneously interpreted by native English speakers as cold, uninterested, ungrateful and negative while the native French speaker's intended meaning was the opposite.

These examples show potential areas of cultural misinterpretation and miscommunication in a second language learning situation due to transfer of inappropriate L1 discourse norms. This shows how language transfer can also affect cultural domains.

Transfer from L2 to L1 also exists. However, it will not be covered in the present study. Transfer from L2 to L1 is typically found in the speech of speakers who have had a long-term and intensive contact with the L2 speech community. For example, a native Spanish speaker highly immersed in the English community and performing most of his/her daily communication in English could be found uttering the following sentence *¿puedo tener el pan?* when sitting at the table. This construction reflects the English request 'Can I have the bread?' rather than the correct Spanish utterance *¿me puedes pasar/dar el pan?*. 
However, most of the research in transfer deals with the influence of L1 on the course of L2 development, and with structural transfer rather than cultural transfer. The focus of the present study is to investigate the importance of L1 structural transfer on L2 learning at an advanced L2-knowledge level. A brief review of previous findings on L1 structural transfer will be included before the data of this project is analyzed.

3.1 Problems of Definition

The first problem that we encounter when reviewing literature on language transfer is the lack of agreement in providing a definition of transfer. Even the term 'transfer' may be considered problematic since in the 1970s it started to be associated with the behaviouristic school, as mentioned previously. Nowadays, some researchers have supported the idea of abandoning this term or using it in a very restricted way. Others continue to use it without restrictions.

Other terms used to refer to transfer are 'interference', 'native language influence', 'borrowing', and 'cross-linguistic influence'. According to Odlin, "transfer is not simply interference" (26). For Odlin, 'interference' is associated with a negative effect of the L1 also named 'negative transfer'. This leaves out the possibility of a facilitating effect of the L1. Corder, in 1983, distinguishes between
'interference', 'transfer' and 'borrowing'. He defines 'Interference' in the same terms as Odlin, but regards 'transfer' and 'borrowing' as two very close terms. 'Borrowing' is regarded as a "performance phenomenon", or communicative strategy, based on the substitution of a lexical item in the target language by another in the native language (or other languages studied by the learner) causing no change in the syntactic structure of the target language sentence. 'Borrowing' is the mechanism by which 'transfer' (a "learning process") takes place incorporating the communicatively successful item into the student's interlanguage (Corder 29).

In 1986, Kellerman and Sharwood Smith proposed a term that reconciled all these linguistic phenomena under one heading. The term they chose was 'crosslinguistic influence.' They also provided a concise definition of 'transfer' in which the term 'transfer' is restricted to those processes that lead to the incorporation of elements from one language into another (1). In 1989, Dechert and Raupach in the introduction to their book Transfer in Language Production provide a list of seventeen different definitions of the term 'transfer' used by previous researchers. Both Dechert and Raupach acknowledge the important role of transfer in language learning. They propose a relaxification of the term 'transfer,' but they do not elaborate their own definition, nor do they claim to regard any of the seventeen definitions provided as a valid definition of 'transfer.'
In the same year, Odlin published a book in which he analyzed the phenomena in depth and elaborated a definition of 'transfer.' In Odlin's words: "Transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (27). Another definition is proposed by Ringbom who indicates that transfer is "the learner's reliance on L1" (1).

In this thesis, the terms 'transfer,' 'influence' and 'interference' are used interchangeably to refer to interlanguage forms or structures that resemble L1 rather than L2 forms or structures, or interlanguage errors that can be traced back to native language influence.

3.2 Areas of Language Transfer

Once a definition of language transfer has been established, we can move towards a new focus. We need to determine the areas in which evidence of language transfer can be found. According to previous research, evidence of native language influence can be found in phonology, syntax, morphology, lexicon, writing system, and discourse. Kellerman and Sharwood Smith's book Crosslinguistic Influence in Second Language Acquisition includes papers dealing with native language interference in segmental and suprasegmental phonology, lexicon, morphology, syntax, and discourse. Oller and
Ziahosseiny also analyze the importance of native influence in orthography and attribute to transfer a great deal of the spelling errors made by second language learners.

The present study will analyze the role of transfer in four of those linguistic areas in order to find out more about the way language transfer operates. As Selinker states: "What can be or actually is transferred?, how does language transfer occur? and what types of language transfer occur?" (Gass and Selinker Language Transfer in Language Production 5). The areas to be analyzed are: lexicon, syntax, morphology and writing system or orthography. As mentioned previously, phonology and discourse were left out since it would have been too ambitious to try to cover them in this project.

The following four sections will present a brief review of previous research on L1 structural transfer in the four linguistic areas of lexicon, syntax, morphology and orthography immediately followed by structural transfer findings specific to this project. Students' erroneous sentences relevant to this study are reproduced as they were found in the students' assingnments and may present more than one error, but only items related to the point in question will be dealt with, or corrected.

3.2.1 Lexicon
Lexical semantics is defined as the study of meaning in content words\(^5\) (Odlin 71). Transfer in lexicon will consist of the detection of any native language influence affecting second language meaning. Transfer in lexicon can be analyzed in both comprehension and production. As previously stated, the present study will focus solely on lexical transfer in written production.

According to previous research, transfer in lexicon is to be detected in areas of similarities and dissimilarities in content word forms, together with similarities and dissimilarities in content word meanings in the languages under study. That is, areas of overlapping between the two languages in which transfer operates when an overlap or correspondence in meaning is wrongly extended into another area. Transfer errors are usually due to the learner's tendency to identify words or concepts on the basis of one-to-one correspondences in both languages (Politzer and Staubach 116). This inevitably leads to problems of structure and vocabulary.

An example of this would be cases in which one English word corresponds to two or more Spanish words, as in the case of the English word 'time,' which can be translated in Spanish as tiempo, hora and vez, depending on the context. In the case of French, for example the word feu has three equivalents in English 'fire' 'light' and 'traffic light,' and thus sentences like 'stop at the fire' when

\(^5\) Content words can be defined as words that carry the semantic meaning of the sentence, as opposed to function words which perform grammatical relationships. Content words are nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Function words are prepositions, conjunctions and verbal auxiliaries.
meaning 'stop at the traffic light' and 'Do you have fire?' ('Do you have a light?'), would be the result of lexical transfer in which the L2 learner has established the one-to-one correspondence in the two languages. This type of interference becomes more difficult to the L2 learner when the conceptual difference between the lexical items in the target language is not so obvious to the student, as in the case of the English 'to know' which has two Spanish counterparts: \textit{saber} and \textit{conocer}, and 'to be' which corresponds to \textit{ser} as well as \textit{estar}. Van Patten investigated the acquisition of \textit{ser} and \textit{estar} by six adult English-speaking learners of Spanish. After conducting a longitudinal study investigating the students' developmental acquisition of the Spanish \textit{ser} and \textit{estar}, he found that transfer of the English 'one-copula usage' was one of the three factors at work in guiding the acquisition of the Spanish copula --the other two factors were simplification and frequency of occurrence-- (VanPatten, 405).

Evidence of this type of lexical transfer was shown by Libuse Duskova in 1983. She analyzed the source of errors of a homogeneous sample of Czech adult learners of English. Duskova found that a major group of lexical errors could be traced back to the influence of the mother tongue in cases in which a Czech word had several equivalents in English, as the Czech word \textit{cesta} which corresponds to the English 'way' and 'journey' or \textit{dalsi} which corresponds to 'next,' 'further' and 'other' (Duskova 228).

Færch and Kasper also found evidence of transfer in lexicon in their 1989 study. They presented three types of lexical transfer. The
first type involved examples in which a L1 word is closely integrated into a L1 structure, called 'borrowing'\textsuperscript{6} by other authors, as in 'put a \textit{lap} on it' (\textit{lap} Danish for 'patch'). The second type were examples of L1 words integrated in L2 structures but articulated according to interlanguage rules rather than L1 rules as in 'a half hour- [\textit{wae} ] Monday' ( [\textit{hver}] Danish for 'every'). The third type consists of interlanguage words and expressions which have been incorporated in the interlanguage vocabulary with semantic and/or syntactic features transferred from the native language. An example of this would be 'so I-shall-have the money and keep \textit{them}', since Danish \textit{penge} (money) takes the plural (Færch and Kasper 187). In Spanish an example of this type of transfer may be found in utterances such as \textit{La gente comen mucho} or \textit{La policía vienen rápidamente}. Since 'people' and 'police' take the plural in English but the singular in Spanish. The grammatical property of the L1 word is mistakenly transferred to the L2. Transfer of transitive meaning and of reflexive properties are other instances of this type of transfer error.

Lexical transfer in cases of partial overlap either in meaning or in form is generally found in the wrong use of the so-called "false" cognates. One case of false cognates is found in words which present very similar forms but completely different meanings. Thus, English 'embarrassed' or 'realize' and Spanish \textit{embarazado} ('pregnant') or

\textsuperscript{6} Håkan Ringbom (1986, 158) differentiates between 'borrowings' and 'lexical transfer' by asserting that the later process requires fluency and automatization in the language form which transfer takes place. By contrast, 'borrowing' does not need this to operate. Ringbom sees 'borrowing' and 'lexical transfer' as a continuum rather than as a clear-cut distinction (Ringbom 158).
realizar ('to realize' in the sense of 'to carry out'). These pairs are pitfalls both for English learners of Spanish and Spanish learners of English. Another type of false cognates, probably the most problematic ones, are those which present only a partial semantic equivalence. For example, the Spanish equivalent of the English 'succeed' may be suceder only in some contexts. As Odlin points out (79), the sentence *Truman sucedió a Roosevelt* ('Truman succeeded Roosevelt') is correct in Spanish, while *Sucedió en sus exámenes* ('He succeeded in his exams') is not acceptable.

A third case of lexical transfer due to the inappropriate use of false cognates takes place in pairs of cognates which are semantically similar but possess different grammatical features in the two languages. Adjemian (1983) cites the following example of a French ESL student: 'They must retire themselves' where 'retire' is a true French-English cognate. However, here it is used with a reflexive pronoun 'themselves' because this pronoun is necessary in French *se retirer*, but the use of the English reflexive pronoun 'themselves' is not grammatical in this context (Odlin 79).

Another example of lexical transfer is related to the so-called 'idiomatic expressions.' An 'idiom' is a "form the meaning of which cannot be deduced from the meaning of its components" (Politzer 121). The meaning of the idiom must be learnt as a whole. Thus, it is not surprising to find a native English speaker learning Spanish saying *He tenido un buen tiempo* when meaning 'I have had a good time' if he/she is not aware of the equivalent Spanish idiomatic
expression *pasarlo bien*. Sajaavara, in 1989, provided evidence of language transfer in the acquisition of English idioms by Finnish-speaking students. After conducting a series of tests on the learners' reactions to correct and deviant idiomatic patterns, he pointed out that transfer of some idiomatic expressions may take place even at a very advanced stage of target language proficiency if the learner fails to detect the differences between the target language and the native language patterns (50).

A final type of lexical transfer error is due to the confusion of verbal aspects, as in the use of Spanish imperfect and preterit forms. English does not present the distinction between preterit and imperfect aspect as explicitly as does Spanish, thus transfer of English one-tense usage is the cause of this type of error. If an English-speaking student learns that *Ví una mesa que me gustó* corresponds to 'I saw a table that I liked,' he may falsely establish a one-to-one correspondence between 'liked' and 'gustó', and produce erroneous sentences like *Ví la mesa que me gustó sentarme siempre* ('I saw the table I always liked to sit at') which clearly reflects transfer of the English one-tense usage to the Spanish construction. Smith also attributes the lack of mastery in the use of the imperfect and preterit tense among her third-year Spanish students to the zero distinction in past tense aspects in the students' native language (65).

3.2.11 Research Findings in Lexicon
This section includes all the errors attributed to lexical transfer found in this project. Data were collected from the weekly written assignments (translation exercises and free compositions) of the fourteen third-year English-speaking students of Spanish. Errors have been classified as the result of mother tongue interference when they arise "from breaks in parallel and inconsistencies in the overlapping" of meanings of words and constructions in the two languages in question (Politzer 115). Five categories of errors will be included here: a) errors caused by a single English lexical item which corresponds to different Spanish items, b) errors caused by words with the same meaning but different grammatical features, c) errors caused by the so-called "false cognates," d) errors caused by direct translations from English (loan translations) and e) errors in usage of Spanish preterit and imperfect tenses.

a) **A single English lexical item which corresponds to different Spanish items.**

A very common transfer error appears when there is an area of lexical overlap in the two languages and the learner wrongly extends the meaning into another area where the overlap no longer exists, such as cases in which one English word corresponds to two or more Spanish words. For instance, the verb 'to take' may have at least four translations in Spanish, as shown below:
I took a drink
I took a walk
I took a trip
I took a nap

Tomé una copa
Dí un paseo
Hice un viaje
Eché una siesta

An English-speaking student who learns that *tomar* corresponds to 'to take' as in *Tomé una copa* or *Tomé un taxi* may produce the erroneous construction *Tomé un paseo* (*Dí un paseo*) 'I took a walk' by wrongly establishing the one-to-one correspondence between 'to take' and *tomar*. English 'to take' also corresponds to Spanish *tardar* ('to take time'), *llevar* ('to take somewhere') and *coger* ('to take a bus'). Errors of this type appear in the following constructions:

Era sorprendente que el vuelo *tomara* solamente seis horas
(cf. It was surprising that the fligh took only six hours/tardara)

El taxi nos *tomó* al aeropuerto
(cf. The taxi took us to the airport / llevó)

Lo *toma* al parque para que juegue

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7 In the following lists of errors, the first line shows the error as it was produced by the Spanish learner in the written assignment. We have used italics to mark the English word which created the lexical problem. Immediately after, we have included the English parallel expression followed by the correct Spanish word that should have been used in this context.
(cf. He takes him to the park to play / lleva)

El soldado fue descargado para no obedecer su orden
(cf. The soldier was discharged for / despedido por)

Al mismo vez
(cf. At the same time / tiempo)

A ese tiempo
(cf. At that time / momento)

Gastó horas enfrente del espejo
(cf. She spent hours in front of the mirror / pasó)

No quería gastar el resto de su vida allí
(cf. He didn't want to spend the rest of his life there / pasar)

Gastamos la mañana cosechando bayas
(cf. We spent the morning picking up berries / Pasamos)

Gastaron tres días en la ciudad
(cf. They spent three days in the city / Pasaron)

Las ondas estaban altas
(cf. The waves were high / olas)

Pregunté ver el soldado
(cf. I asked to see the soldier / Pedí)

Les pedimos a los estudiantes como se llamaba la capital
(cf. We asked the students what the name of the capital was / preguntamos)
Espera a la oficina  
(cf. Wait for me at the office / en)

Las personas al concierto de rock  
(cf. The people at the rock concert / en)

A este momento  
(cf. At this moment / En este momento)

Se puso loca al aprender de la muerte de su hijo  
(cf. She became crazy upon learning about her son's death / saber de)

Fue a la cabina de información para encontrarlo  
(cf. He went to the information booth to find out / averiguarlo)

Mamá Mili estaba en pensamientos hondos  
(cf. Mamá Mili was in deep thoughts / profundos)

Le demostraron pequeño de los lujos de la vida  
(cf. They showed her little about the luxury of life / poco)

Estaba dispuesta a compartir lo pequeño que tenía  
(cf. She was ready to share the little she had / poco)

El puente era libre  
(cf. The bridge was free / gratis)

La policía pruebó cogéarlo  
(cf. The police tried to catch him / intentó)

El timbre tocó  
(cf. The doorbell rang / sonó)
Llegué a casa y soné el timbre
   (cf. I arrived home and I rang the doorbell / toqué)

El gobierno tuvo que descansar las leyes
   (cf. The government had to relax the laws / relajar)

El oficial de costumbres
   (cf. The customs officer / aduanas)

El invierno duro salió la carretera llena de baches
   (cf. The hard winter left the highway full of cracks / dejó)

Las razones por las cuales David sale de su trabajo son muchas
   (cf. The reasons for which David is leaving his job are many / deja)

Las luces crecían más brillantes
   (cf. The lights grew brighter / se hicieron)

El es molestado por unos hijos que juegan en la calle
   (cf. He's bothered by some children who are playing in the street / niños)

Algunos hombres tiraban el niño del mar
   (cf. A few men were pulling the kid out of the sea / sacaban)

Another example of this type of transfer error is found in pairs of verbs such as ser y estar which correspond to English 'to be' or conocer y saber which correspond to 'to know.' The potential for this type of transfer error is even greater because "the conceptual
difference between these lexical items is not obvious for the English speaker" (Politzer 118).

Ser is used to indicate origin as in Es de Badajoz ('She's from Badajoz'), to imply a permanent state or condition as in Es guapo ('He's beautiful'), to identify a person, a thing or a place as in Soy María ('I'm Mary') and to form the stative passive as in Juan es admirado por todos ('John is admired by everyone'). By contrast, estar is used to indicate temporary state as in Está muy cansado ('He's very tired'), to express location as in Está en Madrid ('He's in Madrid'), and to signify a resulting state or condition as in La puerta está abierta ('The door is open'). The following errors are the result of transfer of the English one-copula 'to be'.

Fue muy cansada después de mi viaje.
(cf. I was very tired from the trip / Estaba)

Es claro que la gente son muy reprimidos por los rusos
(cf. It is clear that people are very repressed / Está - está)

Ella está rechazada por sus padres
(cf. She is rejected by her parents / es)

Él está molestado por unos niños
(cf. He is bothered by some kids / es)

Estaba cerca de la puesta de sol
(cf. It was close to sunset / Era)

La relación es bien descrita
Las relaciones son basadas en resentimientos
(cf. The relationships are based on resentments / están)

Algo estaba diferente: la casa era sucia
(cf. Something was different: the house was dirty / estaba)

Es una lástima que sean separados
(cf. It is a shame that they are divorced / estén)

Sus padres eran muy tristes, pero se divorció sin embargo
(cf. His parents were unhappy but he got divorced anyway / estaban)

La mujer no creyó que su propio hijo fuera perdido
(cf. The woman didn't believe that her son was lost / estuviera)

La nación era pasmada por la súbita dimisión
(cf. The nation was stunned by the sudden resignation / estaba)

El dijo que cada minuto está destruido un pedazo
(cf. He said that each second a piece is destroyed / es)

La historia de E.E.U.U es llena de ejemplos
(cf. The history of E.E.U.U is full of examples / está)

Todavía era debajo del control de su madre
(cf. He was still under his mother's control / estaba)

Sólo un carril era abierto y el puente estaba gratis
(cf. Only a lane was open and the brigde was free / estaba - era)

El bebé estaba tan pequeño
(cf. The baby was so small / era)

Los padres de Alina estaban tan estrictos
(cf. Alina's parents were so strict / eran)

Su vida también era llena de felicidad
(cf. Her life was also full of happiness / estaba)

Se comportaba como si fuera completamente borracho
(cf. He behaved as if he were completely drunk / estuviera)

La familia está tan fuerte que puede apoyar los miembros
(cf. The family is so strong that can support its members / es)

Pedro estaba bautizado de nuevo
(cf. Pedro was baptized again / era)

Irá hacia la ciudad para ser con los vivos
(cf. He'll go to the city to be with the living beings / estar)

Él nunca será solo en el mundo
(cf. He will never be alone in the world / estará)

No demanda estar oída
(cf. She doesn't demand to be heard / ser)

Su tumba era en un cementerio
(cf. Her tomb was in a cemetery / estaba)
Dios es vivo  
   (cf. God *is* alive / está)

Aunque uno de ellos *son* muertos  
   (cf. Although one of them *is* dead / está)

Era el tipo de ambiente que había *sido* buscando  
   (cf. It was the type of atmosphere that he had *been* looking for / estado)

A veces *somos* desanimados por la vida  
   (cf. Sometimes we *are* discouraged by life / estamos)

La vida de Pedro ha *sido* lleno de pena  
   (cf. Pedro's life has *been* full of pain / estado)

La idea de que no *esta* seguro amar a otra persona  
   (cf. The idea that it's not safe to love another person / es)

Only one transfer error was found in the use of *saber* and *conocer* throughout this project. This finding indicates that advanced students master the difference between these verbs which, however, causes differences at beginning and intermediate levels. The only error found is shown in the following sentence.

No creo que había ninguna persona que *conozca* escribir bien  
   (cf. I don't believe there is anyone who *knows* how to write well / sepa)
The English preposition 'for' is another instance of a mother tongue item which has two lexical counterparts in the target language. English 'for' may correspond to the Spanish \textit{por} or \textit{para} depending on the context. The following sentences illustrate an erroneous choice of preposition due to English interference:

Yo rezaba \textit{para} el cada día
(cf. I prayed \textit{for} him every day / \textit{por} )

Su amor \textit{para} su hijo
(cf. Her love \textit{for} her kid / \textit{por})

\textit{Por} los niños, el divorcio es una cosa traumática
(cf. \textit{For} kids, divorce is something traumatic / \textit{para})

Es muy difícil \textit{por} un niño
(cf. It's very difficult \textit{for} a kid / \textit{para})

Cociñando \textit{por} él
(cf. cooking \textit{for} him / \textit{para él})

Tiene justificación \textit{por} odiar a su padre
(cf. He has a justification \textit{for} hating his father / \textit{para})

El mismo amor \textit{para} la aventura
(cf. The same love \textit{for} adventure / \textit{por})

Creen que hay un razón \textit{por} sus sufrimientos
(cf. They think that there is a reason \textit{for} their sufferings / \textit{para})

Nos acordaríamos \textit{por} siempre
(cf. We would remember for ever / para)

b) Words with same meaning but different grammatical features

While words may be semantically similar in the two languages, there are sometimes grammatical restrictions found in one language but not in the other. In such cases, the student mistakenly tends to transfer the grammatical feature of the native language word to the target language equivalent construction. For instance, English 'people' and 'police' require a third-person plural verb form whereas Spanish gente and policía take a third-person singular verb form. Errors of this type may be seen in the following sentences.

La policía llegaron después del accidente
La gente todavía están rebelándose
Nos contó lo que hacían la gente
La policía trataron agarrarlo
Toda la gente guardaron silencio

c) False cognates

Another type of lexical transfer error is caused by the erroneous use of the so-called "false" cognates. Learners assume that words which are similar in form are also similar in meaning. There
are two types of deceptive cognates. Those that resemble each other in form but possess a completely different meaning, and those that present similarity in form and partial semantic overlap (as explained on page 25). The following errors are the result of lexical transfer due to the student's false assumption of equivalent meaning in deceptive cognates.

Mi hijo tomó la examinación en física dos veces
(c.f. My son took the examination in physics twice / examen)

Voy a estudiar en la librería
(c.f. I'm going to study in the library / biblioteca)

El que tuvo la pantalla más larga
(c.f. The one that had the largest screen / más grande)

Los padres realizan la importancia de estas escuelas
(c.f. Parents realize the importance of these schools/ se dan cuenta de)

Nunca realizó que me quería tanto
(c.f. I never realized that she loved me so much / me di cuenta de)

No se removieron los sombreros
(c.f. They do not remove their hats / quitan)

Los mozos removieron los manteles
(c.f. The waiters removed the tablecloths / quitaron)
La lengua de sus *ancestros*
(c.f. Their *ancestors'* language / antepasados)

Sin *afcción*
(c.f. without *affection* / sin cariño)

El *sujeto* era interesante
(c.f. The *subject* was interesting / el tema)

Se siente *sobocado* en el abrazo
(c.f. He feels *suffocated* in the hug / asfixiado)

La *resignación* del presidente
(c.f. The president's *resignation* / dimisión)

Él *movió* a una ciudad grande
(c.f. He *moved* to a big city / se mudó)

No hay una buena *librería* en esta universidad
(c.f. There isn't a good *library* at this university / biblioteca)

Él me dio un buen *aviso*
(c.f. He gave me a good *advice* / consejo)

El *borde* de Chile y Argentina
(c.f. The *border* of Chile and Argentina / La frontera)

España tiene muchos *resortes* de esquí
(c.f. Spain has many ski *resorts* / estaciones)

Puso las gafas en su *caso*
(c.f. She put the glasses in their *case* / estuche)
Mis padres van a soportarme para siempre
(c.f. My parents are always going to support me / mantenerme)

Cuando atiendes a un entierro
(c.f. When you attend a burial / asistes)

d) Loan Translations (or calques)

These errors are the result of a direct word-for-word translation of an English phrase or idiom. Loan words may be directly translated from the native language or they may be reproduced using the morphemes of the adopting language. The examples below show calques consisting of English constructions which have been reproduced word for word using Spanish lexical items and morphology:\footnote{In the following list of errors, the first italicized sentence shows the students' errors as they were produced in the written assignments. We show, in brackets, the English counterpart expression immediately followed by the correct Spanish sentence.}

_Marcos no se toma mejor cuidado_
(c.f. Marcos does not take better care of himself / Marcos no se cuida mejor)

_Tuvimos un buen tiempo_
(c.f. We had a good time / Nos lo pasamos muy bien)

_Refugiados casi siempre falta su tierra nativa._
(cf. Refugees almost always miss their native land / Los refugiados casi siempre echan de menos su patria)

A mi es muy sorprendente
(cf. It's very surprising for me / me sorprende mucho)

Va a ser mucha tiempo
(cf. It's going to be a long time / Va a pasar mucho tiempo)

En adición a las problemas
(cf. In addition to the problems / Además de los problemas)

La primer cosa ella hizo fue abrir la puerta
(cf. The first thing she did was to open the door / Lo primero que ella hizo fue abrir la puerta)

Todavía tenía el único cosa que ella quería
(cf. She still had the only thing she loved / Todavía tenía lo único que ella quería)

El divorcio no tiene nada que hacer con ellos
(cf. Divorce has nothing to do with them / No tiene nada que ver con ellos)

Ella tiene miedo que ha perdido toda su vida
(cf. She is afraid that she's lost all her life / Tiene miedo de haber perdido toda su vida)

Quería tomar la venganza
(cf. He wanted to take revenge / Quería vengarse)

Estaba llevando un delantal sucio
(cf. She was wearing an old apron / Llevaba un delantal sucio)

Niveles sociales siempre quedan el mismo
(cf. Social levels always remain the same / Los niveles sociales siempre se quedan igual)

En la otra mano
(cf. On the other hand / Por otro lado)

Mujeres fueron prohibidas asistir
(cf. Women were forbidden to attend / A las mujeres se les prohibió asistir)

Eran dependientes de su marido
(cf. They were dependent on her husband / Dependían de su marido)

Basura era de toda parte
(cf. Trash was everywhere / Había basura en todas partes)

El oficial se hacía muy enojado
(cf. The officer became very angry / El oficial se enojó)

El matando de todas las especies
(cf. The killing of all species / La matanza de todas las especies)

El vendiendo y comprando drogas
(cf. Selling and buying drugs / La compra y venta de drogas)

Ellos parecen el mismo
(cf. They look the same / Parecen iguales)

**Bosques de agua**
(cf. Rain forest / Selva amazónica)

**Crecer frutas y vegetales**
(cf. To grow fruits and vegetables / cultivar frutas y vegetales)

**Otras personas que la madre verdadera pueden reemplazarla**
(cf. People other than the real mother may replace her / Otras personas aparte de la madre verdadera pueden reemplazarla)

**Mi atención estaba llamada por**
(cf. My attention was called by / Me llamó la atención)

**Cosas extrañas toman lugar cada día**
(cf. Strange things take place every day / Pasan cosas extrañas todos los días)

**Su madre hacía todas las decisiones**
(cf. Her mother made all the decisions / Su madre tomaba todas las decisiones)

**Desde él ignoro cuando el tren estaba saliendo, fue a la taquilla**
(cf. Since he didn't know when the train was leaving, he went to the information booth / Como ignoraba cuando salía el tren fue a la taquilla)

**Las novelas de Stephen King causan algunos lectores tener pesadillas**
(cf. Stephen King’s novels cause some readers to have nightmares / Las novelas de Stephen King dan pesadillas a algunos lectores)

*En lunes mañana*  
(cf. On Monday morning / El lunes por la mañana)

*Evitas ojazos hermosos*  
(cf. Evita’s beautiful eyes / Los (hermosos) ojazos de Evita)

*Unos años pasados*  
(cf. Some years ago / Hace unos años)

*Una estrella de la película*  
(cf. A movie star / Una estrella de cine)

*Ella me amaba tan mucho*  
(cf. She loved me so much / Ella me amaba tanto)

*No estudiante*  
(cf. No student / Ningún estudiante)

*Si tienes un problema, dejame saber*  
(cf. If you have a problem, let me know / Si tienes un problema, dímelo)

*Esperaba por el sobre a secar*  
(cf. She waited for the envelope to dry / Esperaba que se secara el sobre)

*Todo de sus hijos*  
(cf. All of her kids / Todos sus hijos)
Picasso's famosa pintura Guernica
(cf. Picasso's famous painting Guernica / El Guernica, la famosa pintura de Picasso)

A las cuatro, el novio de Juanita está volviendo para la recoger
(cf. At four o'clock, Juanita's boyfriend is coming to pick her up / El novio de Juanita viene a recogerla a las cuatro)

Guillermo sabe su lectura de corazón
(cf. Guillermo knows his lecture by heart / Guillermo se sabe su conferencia de memoria)

Todavía estoy pensando de lo
(cf. I'm still thinking about it / Todavía lo estoy pensando)

Trabajo como un guardabosques
(cf. I work as a forester / Trabajo de guardabosques)

Se va a poner confundida
(cf. She's going to get confused / Se va a confundir)

La mejor cosa
(cf. The best thing / Lo mejor)

No estamos juntos tan mucho
(cf. We are not together so much / No estamos juntos tanto tiempo)

La importancia de viajando
(cf. The importance of travelling / La importancia de viajar)
En el día de nuevo año  
(cf. On New Year's Day / El día de año nuevo)

Era muy difícil para el niño correr el cerrojo  
(cf. It was very difficult for the kid to slide the bolt / Al niño le era muy difícil correr el cerrojo)

Durante tiempos duros  
(cf. During hard times / Durante tiempos difíciles)

Todo de nosotros  
(cf. All of us / Todos nosotros)

No podía ponerlo en palabras  
(cf. I couldn't put it into words / No podía expresarlo)

A primero  
(cf. At first / Al principio)

Por la primera vez  
(cf For the first time / Por primera vez)

Gente corriendo de lugar a lugar  
(cf. People running from place to place / Gente corriendo de un lugar a otro)

Only two cases of direct borrowing of English words were found in the students' written assignments. In both occurrences, the students incorporated the English word in the Spanish structure, modifying the English word. The learners added a final "o," either by
trying to make the word conform to Spanish gender rules or by erroneously assuming that the word was in fact a Spanish lexical item. The only two occurrences were *tasco en* David terminó el tasco a tiempo ("David finished the task on time") y *enviromento* in *Debemos cuidar el enviromento* ('We must look after the environment).

In this section, we will also include constructions that present a wrong preposition choice which is clearly attributable to English transfer. Spanish students, influenced by a parallel English counterpart, fail to use the appropriate preposition producing a word for word translation of the corresponding English prepositional phrase. This type of transfer was also reported by Birgit Harley who analyzed preposition production in forty-four compositions written by twenty-two English-speaking students enrolled in a French immersion program. Her findings showed that there was a "continued presence of systematic L1 transfer in the L2 production of immersion students even after several years in the program" (15). The following examples reflect wrong preposition choice due to English transfer⁹:

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⁹ In the following list of errors, the first sentence shows the erroneous structure as it was gathered from the students' written assignments. We have italicized the wrong prepositional phrase in order to facilitate the process of recognition. Immediately below this erroneous construction, we illustrate the English counterpart expression followed by the correct Spanish prepositional phrase.
Juan irá a *parar en* el hospital
(c.f. Juan will *end up in* the hospital/ parar al)

Victor arrojó su cigarrillo *en el piso*
(c.f. Victor threw his cigarette *on the floor* / al piso)

Dos temas *relacionados a* este situación
(c.f. Two themes *related to* this situation/ relacionados con)

Una novela *por* Mario Vargas Llosa
(c.f. A novel *by* Mario Vargas Llosa / de)

No son *importantes a* nadie
(c.f. They are not *important to* anyone / importantes para)

Al *contrario a* sus días jóvenes
(c.f. In *contrast to* her youthful days / al contrario de)

Necesita reaccionar a sus padres *en diferentes modos*
(c.f. He needs to react to his parents *in different ways* / de diferente manera)

*Riendo a* los cadetos
(c.f. *Laughing at* the cadets / riéndose de)

*Sueña sobre* los padres
(c.f. He *dreams about* his parents / sueña con)

Solamente *se vista en* faldas
(c.f. She only *dresses in* skirts / viste faldas)

Emociones *dificiles a* entender
(c.f. Emotions *difficult to* understand / difíciles de)
Pensaba de Adolfo
   (cf. I was thinking of Adolfo / Pensaba en)

Pensé de ella mucho
   (cf. I thought of her a lot / Pensé en)

Pedro intenta pensar de todos los momentos
   (cf. Pedro tries to think of all the moments / piensa en)

Estaba siempre en un mal humor
   (cf. He was always in a bad mood / de mal humor)

Le tenía toda la confianza en el mundo
   (cf. I trusted him the most in the world / del mundo)

La autopista estaba cubierta con nieve
   (cf. The highway was covered with snow / cubierta de)

¿Cuáles son tus ideas en este tema?
   (cf. What are your ideas on this subject? / sobre)

El cerrojo en la puerta
   (cf. The bolt on the door / de la puerta)

Se enamora con Jane
   (cf. He falls in love with Jane / se enamora de)

Él no desborda con alegría
   (cf. He is not overflowing with joy / desborda alegría)

e) Preterit and Imperfect tense
English-speaking students sometimes fail to understand the Spanish preterit/imperfect contrast because English uses just one verb form (together with adverbial phrases or paraphrases) to express the concepts communicated in Spanish by two different verbal inflections. Thus, transfer of the English one-tense usage is the cause behind this type of errors. Errors in the use of the preterit and imperfect are difficult to cite since the context may often justify the selection of either form. The following constructions have been considered erroneous depending on the immediate context in which they appeared.\textsuperscript{10}

Cuando yo \textit{tuve} dos o tres años

(cf. When I \textit{was} two or three years old / tenía)

No mojaba mis pantalones y \textit{no tomé} mi leche en botella

(cf. I didn't wet my pans and I \textit{didn't drink} from my baby bottle / no tomaba)

Ella \textit{fue} pálida, baja y parecía muy triste

(cf. She \textit{was} pale, short and she seemed very sad / era)

Ella \textit{fue} a la iglesia casi diariamente

(cf. She \textit{went} to church almost daily / iba)

Ella \textit{tuvo} muchas amigas y era sociable

(cf. She \textit{had} many friends and was sociable / tenía)

\textsuperscript{10} As in previous examples, the first sentence in this list of errors show the erroneous construction as it was produced by the student. In brackets, we show the English equivalent expression followed by the correct Spanish verb tense that should be used in this context.
Tuvo pelo gris y parecía como su abuelo
(cf. He had grey hair and he looked like her grandfather / Tenía)

El fontanero tenía que hacer un gran agujero
(cf. The plumber had to make a large hole / tuvo)

Susana iba a tantas fiestas durante el fin de semana
(cf. Susana went to so many parties during the weekend / fue)

Alberto sufría mucho cuando su novia rompió su noviazgo
(cf. Alberto suffered a lot when her girlfriend broke off their engagement / sufrió)

En julio muchos calles de nuestra ciudad apestaron
(cf. In July, many streets in our city stank / apestaban)

Echó la té en una lata que contuvo las bolsitas de té
(cf. She put the tea in a tin that held the tea bags / contenía)

Mili era forzado madurar
(cf. Mili was forced to mature / fue)

Los naipes se deslizaron y tenía que colocarlos otra vez
(cf. The cards slipped out of my hands and I had to put them in order again / tuve)

Viajaba por cinco años como un gitano
(cf. I travelled for five years like a gipsy / Viajé)

Era exactamente lo que recordé de mi niñez
Ella creó este mundo porque su vida real fue tan opresiva
(cf. She created this world because her real life was so oppressive)

Durante su niñez Alina era influído
(cf. During her childhood, Alina was influenced)

Los estudiantes siempre se portaban bien cuando el director entró el aula
(cf. The students always behaved well when the director entered the room)

Capturaron el narcotraficante cuando se preparó para salir
(cf. They captured the drug dealer as he prepared to leave)

Después de la cena de Navidad, Carlos tenía que aflojar su cinturón
(cf. After Christmas dinner, Carlos had to loosen his belt)

El guía señaló una reja que dató del siglo diez y seis
(cf. The guide pointed out a granting that dated from the 16th century)

Los gansos blancos que alguna vez eran muy numerosos aquí
(cf. The white geese that once were very numerous here)

Vi que la mesa que me gustó sentarme estaba ocupada
(cf. I saw that the table that I liked to sit at was occupied / gustaba)

*Permanecían* tres días en la ciudad, durante el cual nada ocurrió
(cf. They spent three days in the city, during which nothing happened / Permanecieron)

Su espíritu *era* vitalizado
(cf. His spirit *was* vitalized / fue)

Los dos *cambiaban* mi vida
(cf. Both *changed* my life / cambiaron)

Antes de salir de la iglesia *podía* hacer algo
(cf. Before leaving the church I *could* do something / pude)

Sabía que los *dejé* en buen recaudo
(cf. I knew that I *was leaving* then in good care / dejaba)

Aquí *estuve* yo, pensando de ellos
(cf. Here I *was*, thinking about them / estaba)

### 3.2.2 Syntax

A great deal of evidence has been found for syntactic transfer errors in studies of word order, relative clauses, negation and deletion of a compulsory grammatical category in the target
language. Before going any further in this analysis, we must bear in mind that transfer in syntax is sometimes related to morphology.

One of the most common types of syntactical errors is found in the arrangement of words due to the fact that languages vary considerably in the rigidity or flexibility of their word order patterns. The majority of human languages have one of these basic word order patterns: verb-subject-object (VSO), subject-verb-object (SVO), or subject-object-verb (SOV). However, some of SVO basic word order languages, as for example English and Russian, can present many differences in terms of rigidity. For instance, Russian seems to be a more flexible language in terms of word order patterns due to its reliance on bound morphology (it uses morphological case suffixes). Accordingly, languages could be subclassified in terms of the rigidity of their word order. As Odlin points out (87) it is actually this property, rigidity, that seems to be transferred from one language to another. Thus, speakers of a flexible language may neglect the word order constraints of a more rigid language system.

Spanish and English, both primarily SVO languages, differ in rigidity, since Spanish is more flexible than English. For example, Spanish allows the constructions: María viene mañana or Viene María mañana or Mañana viene María or even Mañana María viene while English allows just 'Mary comes tomorrow' or 'Mary is coming tomorrow.' Such a difference in rigidity may result in transfer of incorrect patterns into English by native speakers of Spanish. Spanish presents other word order patterns as well.
English 'I saw him' follows the SVO pattern. By contrast, Spanish Yo lo vi changes to SOV.

Duskova also found errors in word order and sentence construction in the English interlanguage of fifty Czech adult students. The errors found were clearly traceable to interference from Czech. All the errors reflected a word arrangement closer to the Czech word order patterns than to the English patterns. Learners constructed sentences in English influenced by the Czech functional sentence perspective rather than following the grammatical constraints of English word order. Some of these errors consisting in placing the direct object after an adverbia l modifier --a perfectly acceptable construction in Czech but not in English-- as in 'I met there some Germans' ('I met some Germans there') or placing a temporal modifier before a local one, as in 'I returned last month from Prague' ('I returned from Prague last month') (Duskova 220).

Odlin also reported evidence of word order transfer in constituents within clauses (96). A clear instance of this type of transfer error specific to the English interlanguage of Spanish native speakers is the use of a noun phrase (NP) with a prepositional modifier instead of the required genitive construction. As in 'The house of John' which resembles the Spanish NP clause La casa de Juan rather than the appropriate English clause 'John's house'. Similarly, the different placement of descriptive adjectives in English (before the noun) and in Spanish (generally after the noun) is also a
source of transfer errors in word order, by learners of either language acquiring the other.

The placement of relative clauses and relative pronouns is another source of syntactical transfer errors. Relative clauses are arranged either with a right branching direction or with a left branching direction. Right branching direction is characteristic of a language in which the relative clauses appear to the right of the head noun, as is the case in English. By contrast, in left branching direction languages, the modifying relative clause precedes the head noun, as is the case in Japanese. This difference in the arrangement of clauses interferes in the acquisition of a second language with a different principal branching direction (Flynn and Espinal's study reported in Odlin 98). This is not the case with English and Spanish since both languages rely on a right branching direction.

However, Spanish and English present other differences in the construction of relative clauses that may be the source of syntactical transfer errors. English allows pronominal omission, whereas Spanish does not. For example, in some English relative clause patterns the relative pronoun does not appear, but instead there appears a stranded preposition to mark an indirect object (IO) or prepositional object position in a clause. As in the acceptable English sentence 'The woman I came with,' wrongly translated into Spanish as La mujer yo vine con instead of La mujer con quien yo vine. This type of transfer error seems to be more probable at earlier stages of L2 acquisition. However, it continues to appear, though at a lower
frequency rate, in the Spanish interlanguage of advanced students, as it will be shown in the present study.

Odlin cites another example of this type of transfer from a different language environment. The sentence *Un chalet qu'on va aller à* ('A cottage that we're gonna go to') was recorded in a study of English-speaking children in a French immersion program. French, like Spanish, does not allow relative pronominal omission nor stranded prepositional constructions. Thus, the above example seems to prove that "preposition stranding is transferable to some extent" (104).

Another characteristic of English relative constructions is that English relative clauses permit not only preposition stranding but also verb displacement, while Spanish does not. Hence, the verb displacement in *que nos muestra quien la madre de Alberto es* ('which shows us who Alberto's mother is') which is not an acceptable Spanish construction may be regarded as an English interference error.

A third type of syntactical transfer errors is the one attributable to incorrect use of negative constructions. Languages can show either preverbal or postverbal negation or even both. In a preverbal negation language, negators precede the verb phrase, as in Spanish *María no está aquí* ('Mary is not here'), whereas in a postverbal, negators follow the verb phrase as in German *Mary ist nicht hier*. In English, negation patterns may be formed by either a negative adverb, as in 'Mary is not here', or its contracted form
which has the same properties of a suffix as in 'Mary isn't here'. Furthermore, English verb phrase negators are sometimes neither preverbal nor postverbal, due to the fact that English negative verbal constructions usually have both, an auxiliary and a main verb, as in 'Mary hasn't called'.

French has the possibility of having both, preverbal and postverbal negators in one clause. French negative constructions consist of two elements *ne . . . pas*, *ne* precedes the verb phrase while *pas* comes right after the verb, as in *Paul ne mange pas* ('Paul is not eating' or 'Paul does not eat').

The study of negative constructions in second language acquisition has been very controversial since it has sometimes been considered as merely an extension of the issue of word order. However, as Odlin points out (105), there exists a basic distinction between negation and word order. Negation conveys a semantic notion, while word order is just a formal arrangement of words.

Research has shown evidence of native language interference in negative constructions when the native language and the target language differ in negator placement and/or in complexity of negators. For example, there are many cases of Spanish native speakers learning English whose sentences show a preverbal pattern as direct influence from the Spanish negative pattern. As in 'You no watch T.V, no?' which shows transfer of the Spanish negation pattern of *no* + verb phrase, instead of the syntactically more complex English 'don't' (Schuman 372). Other instances of transfer errors are
also found in the English IL of German speakers as in 'John go not to the school', closer to the German postverbal negative pattern (Larsen-Freeman and Long 65).

Some Universal Grammar theories tried to discredit transfer as a fully satisfactory account of acquisition concerning negation. Their claim was based on the idea that both, first and second language acquisition presented a similar developmental sequence consisting of three major stages. First, the one-word negation 'no;' secondly, the two-or-more word negation 'no hungry' in which the negator may appear with either a verb or some other element; and finally, the intrasentential negation pattern as in 'I am not hungry' which required a broader syntactical and lexical knowledge of L2 (Odlin 106).

Some later researchers as Wode, Stauble and Schumann have shown how transfer is an important factor affecting the developmental sequence acquisition of negative constructors in the target language. As Stauble's study suggests, Spanish speakers learning English tend to employ the English negator 'no' with more persistence and frequency than the form 'not' and others, due to the phonological similarity of the English form 'no' and the Spanish negator no (Odlin 109). Similarly, Cancino arrives at the conclusion that this one-word negation stage will last much longer in the English of Spanish speakers than in the interlanguage of English-speaking children, since preverbal no is the only Spanish negator equivalent to the English 'no,' 'not,' 'don't' and 'doesn't.' Thus, the form 'no' will
be abandoned only after development of the Spanish speaker's English (Cancino 218). Little transfer in negative constructions is to be expected in the Spanish interlanguage of English-speaking students since negation patterns in English are far more complex than in Spanish.

Another type of syntactic transfer can be found in errors consisting of an omission of a compulsory grammatical element in the target language which has no counterpart in the student's native language. If we consider the native language as a source on which the learner may rely in many different situations and in many different ways, the absence or lack of a structural feature in the student's native language will affect the L2 acquisition as much as the presence of a different characteristic. According to Duskova: "What proves to be still more difficult is a category nonexistent in the mother tongue. Here the learner has no frame of reference to which he can relate his expression in the foreign language" (232). One of the most common types of this transfer error is the omission of English articles by speakers whose native language does not present articles. Evidence of this was shown by Duskova in her study of Czech adult learners of English, previously mentioned. She found that the largest number of errors were omission of the article. She attributed these errors to the fact that Czech possesses no articles, thus, Czech learners do not have any frame of reference to rely on in the production and comprehension of articles (221).
In reference to the Spanish IL a similar case is the general tendency of English speakers to omit the personal 'a.' Personal 'a' is used in Spanish before a direct object which is a person, as in Ves a Eduardo; English possesses no grammatical equivalent. This error is very frequent in the early stages of the learning of Spanish and is still present among advanced students.

Another example of omission attributed to native language interference is the omission of grammatical subjects found in the early IL of Italian and Spanish learners of English. In both languages, Italian and Spanish, subject pronouns can be left out since the subject can be discernible in the morphology of the conjugated verb. Thus, Italian and Spanish learners transfer this rule into English as in 'will come' ('He will come') which can be seen as a direct translation of the Italian verra (Kean 83). There is also evidence that native speakers of Spanish have difficulties in mastering the use of English subjects, since they tend to make use of null subjects in English as in 'No understand' ('I don't understand'), an error which is clearly attributable to native language interference (Kean 82 and White 224). Similarly, Azevedo reports that most of the errors in the use of the Spanish article appear in constructions whose English equivalent does not require an article and which "can be interpreted as resulting from mother tongue interference" (Azevedo 219).

3.2.21 Research Findings in Syntax
Syntactical errors attributed to native language interference specific to the Spanish interlanguage of English-speaking students appear when the student tries to equate parts of Spanish and English constructions. We have classified syntactical transfer errors within four categories: a) errors in word order, b) errors of omission, c) errors of addition, and d) errors of overuse.

a) Word order

Word order does not seem to be a major source for transfer errors. Relatively few word order transfer errors were found in this project. Those word order errors attributable to English interference are caused by a direct rendition of English word order involving single descriptive adjectives. English-speaking students tend to invert the order of noun and modifier by following the word order of the English parallel construction. This type of transfer errors appears in the following erroneous sentences:

Hace dos diferentes cosas
   (cf. He does two different things / Hace dos cosas diferentes)

Su enfermo hermano lloro
   (cf. His sick brother cried / Su hermano enfermo lloró)

Las más caras flores
   (cf. The most expensive flowers / Las flores más caras)

La isla, cuya estratégica importancia es grande
(cf. The island, whose strategic importance is great / La isla cuya importancia estratégica es grande)

Three more cases of word order errors attributable to native language interference were found in this project. As in the previous examples, these word order errors are caused by a word-for-word translation of the English equivalent expression. They are included in this section because the incorrect arrangement of words is the only error in the sentences. The three examples presented a verb displacement construction, perfectly grammatical in English but, mistakenly transferred into the Spanish counterpart expression.

Vargas Llosa nos muestra quien la madre de Alberto es
(cf. Vargas Llosa shows who Alberto's mother is / Vargas Llosa nos muestra quien es la madre de Alberto)

Encontré el lápiz azul, pero todavía no sé donde el rojo está
(cf. I found the blue pencil, but I still don't know where the red one is / Encontré el lápiz azul, pero todavía no sé donde está el rojo)

Les preguntamos a los estudiantes cual la capital del estado era
(cf. We asked the students what the capital of the state was / Les preguntamos a los estudiantes cuál era la capital del estado)

b) Omission
This type of syntactical transfer error is caused by the English-speaking student's tendency to omit a required grammatical element in Spanish which is optional, or non-existing, in the English parallel construction. The errors of deletion found in this project are caused by the omission of one of the following grammatical categories: Spanish definite article, personal 'a,' relative pronoun, relator que, dependent prepositions in verb clauses and deletion of one of the elements of Spanish compound prepositions and conjunctions.

Because English does not use definite articles in a number of instances where Spanish does, errors in deletion of this grammatical category may be traced back to native language interference. For instance, an English-speaking student will tend to eliminate the definite article el in El fútbol es un deporte muy emocionante ('Soccer is a very exciting sport') because English does not use definite articles to refer to nouns used in a general sense. Other examples which require the insertion of a definite article in Spanish but not in English are: before abstract nouns, in place of a possessive adjective for parts of the body and articles of clothing when it is obvious who the possessor is and before titles such as señor, señora or doctor. Errors of this type appear in the following sentences:11

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11 In the following list of errors, the first sentence shows the erroneous construction as it was produced in the students' written assignment. We have included this symbol (x) to show where the error omission took place. Immediately below this wrong construction, we provide the English translation followed by the Spanish required grammatical element omitted in the students' constructions.
Refugiados casi siempre echan de menos su tierra nativa
(c.f. Refugees almost always miss their native land / Los)

Tradiciones religiosas son la causa del canibalismo
(c.f. Religious traditions are the cause for canibalism/ Las)

El autor cree que (x) grupos religiosos hacen esto porque quieren
(c.f. The author thinks religious groups do this because they want to / los)

Niños jueguen con otro niños
(c.f. Kids play with other kids / Los)

Habían símbolos en todos (x) lugares
(c.f. There were symbols everywhere / los)

Como la mayoría de (x) niños
(c.f. As most of kids / los)

El sujeto de (x) conversación
(c.f. The subject of conversation / la)

Aunque (x) maridos no estan en casa generalmente
(c.f. Even though husbands are not at home generally / los)

Sin maquillaje y con (x) cabellos en desorden
(c.f. With no make-up and messy hair / los)

Sargento Marquiz le dejó afuera
(c.f. Sergeant Marquiz left him outside / El)

Modernismo ya había empezado
(cf. Modernism had already began / El)

Tenemos un problema con (x) inmigrantes
   (cf. We have a problem with immigrants / los)

Con su ayuda para (x) campesinos pobres
   (cf. With his help for poor peasants / los)

No hay nada que sepa mejor que (x) pescado fresco a la parrilla
   (cf. There is nothing that tastes better than fresh grilled fish / el)

Para (x) domingo compra un pavo
   (cf. For Sunday buy a turkey / el)

Llevaba a sus hermanos a (x) escuela
   (cf. He took his brothers to school / la)

(x) Computadoras tienen diminutas piezas
   (cf. Computers have extremely small pieces / Las)

(x) Jirafas comen hojas de las copas
   (cf. Giraffes eat leaves from treetops / Las)

Su opinión sobre (x) tradiciones
   (cf. His opinion about traditions / las)

(x) Vino se rezumaba por las resquebrajaduras
   (cf. Wine was seeping through the cracks / El)

Cuando (x) personas pueden creer en Dios
   (cf. When people can believe in God / Las)

El pescador se quitó su sombrero y se rascó su cabeza
(cf. The fisherman took off his cap and scratched his head / el / la )

Enrique se quitó sus gafas
(cf. Enrique took off his glasses / las )

The second type of omission error is caused by the deletion of the personal "a." This is probably one of the most persistent errors of omission in the Spanish interlanguage of English-speaking students. Personal "a" is required in Spanish before a human direct object as in Veo a mi madre ('I see my mother'); English has no equivalent. Thus, transfer of the English zero element is the cause behind the following errors:

Era asombroso que el gobernador pardonara (x) el dueño
(cf. It was astonishing that the governor pardoned the owner / al dueño)

No ve (x) sus padres
(cf. He doesn't see his parents / a sus padres)

Ella fue besar (x) su hijo
(cf. She went to kiss her child / a su hijo)

Su deseo de no perder (x) su hijo
(cf. Her desire not to lose her son / a su hijo)

Su necesidad de proteger (x) su hijo
(cf. Her desire to protect her son / a su hijo)
Ella ha visto (x) su padre
(cf. She has seen her father / a su padre)

Llevó (x) el niño a un hospital
(cf. He brought the kid to a hospital / al niño)

Oí (x) algunas personas hablando
(cf. I heard some people talking / a algunas personas)

Yo pidié a ver (x) el soldado
(cf. I asked to see the soldier / al soldado)

Una madre pierde (x) su hija
(cf. A mother loses her child / a su hija)

Un país puede aceptar (x) un presidente
(cf. A country can accept a president / a un presidente)

Ella quiere y cuida (x) sus hijos
(cf. She loves and takes care of her kids / a sus hijos)

Él temía (x) el profesor
(cf. He feared his professor / al profesor)

Trata (x) sus trabajadores como esclavos
(cf. He treats his workers as slaves/ a sus trabajadores)

Él extraña (x) su familia
(cf. He misses his family / a su familia)

Cuida (x) otros huérfanos del pueblo
(cf. She looked after other orphans from the village / a otros huérfanos)
Las campanas guiaron (x) los pastores
   (cf. The bells guided the shepherds / a los pastores)

La maestra nos permitió salir, pero no (x) ellos
   (cf. The teacher allowed us to leave, but not them / a ellos)

Preguntamos (x) los niños que querían
   (cf. We asked the kids what they wanted / a los niños)

Admiro (x) mis padres
   (cf. I admire my parents / a mis padres)

Es un crimen tratar de sobornar (x) un juez
   (cf. It's a crime to try to bribe a judge / a un juez)

Capturaron (x) el narcotraficante
   (cf. They captured the drug dealer / al narcotraficante)

Una mujer apareció con un niño, (x) quien estaba acompañando
   a la escuela
   (cf A woman appeared with a child, whom she was
    accompanying to school / a quien)

Quería conocer a esa actriz, (x) quien admiraba tanto
   (cf. I wanted to meet that actress, whom I have admired
    so much / a quien)

La familia puede apoyar (x) los miembros
   (cf. The family can support the members / a los
    miembros)

Seguí (x) la pequeña para protegerla
   (cf. I followed the little girl to protect her / a la pequeña)
Pedro ha perdido (x) las personas mas importantes
  (cf. Pedro has lost the most important people / a las personas)

Él conoce (x) Jane
  (cf. He knows Jane / a Jane)

Sin olvidar (x) Jane
  (cf. Without forgetting Jane / a Jane)

When the relative pronoun is optional in English but obligatory in Spanish, students tend to eliminate it producing erroneous sentences such as La casa (x) compramos la semana pasada ('The house we bought last week'). Pronominal omission may result in preposition stranding (English uses a stranded preposition to signal an indirect object or prepositional object position in a clause) which may be erroneously transferred to the Spanish equivalent construction as in Yo vi que la mesa me gusta sentar en fue ocupada ('I saw that the table I like to sit at was occupied). The English relative pronoun 'what' may correspond to the Spanish lo que or lo cual when the antecedent is a previous clause or phrase (rather than a person or thing) as in yo sé lo que él dijo ('I know what he said'). In such cases, the English-speaking student of Spanish tends to mistakenly omit either lo or lo que. The English relative pronoun 'which' is even more problematic because it may correspond to a greater number of Spanish relative pronouns. Thus, it may
correspond to *que* as in *El libro que te presté* ('The book which I lent you') or to *el cual, la cual, los cuales, las cuales, el que, la que, los que* and *las que*, as in *El trabajo al cual dedicó todo su tiempo* ('The work to which she devoted all her time') and also to *lo cual* and *lo que* in sentences like *Se negó a venir, lo cual no me sorprendió* ('He refused to come, which did not surprised me'). In these cases, English-speaking students mistakenly tend to omit the Spanish relative pronoun or one of its elements, as in the case of the relative pronoun 'what.' The influence of a zero choice in English is reflected in the following erroneous constructions:

Pierdo mucho de (x) que dice  
(cf. I miss much of *what* he says / lo)

Alberto es todo (x) ella tiene  
(cf. Alberto is all she has / lo que)

Nada (x) que hacía traía felicidad  
(cf. Nothing she did brought happiness / de lo)

Enseña a sus hijos todo (x) necesitan saber  
(cf. She teaches her sons all they need to know / lo que)

Yo recelé todo (x) que él dijo  
(cf. I distrusted everything he said / lo)

Desde el tiempo (x) salí para el colegio  
(cf. From the time I left for school / en que)
Han tratado proveerme con todo (x) que necesito
(cf. They have tried to provide me with all I need / lo)

La naturaleza era la escuela (x) la niña quería asistir
(cf. Nature was the school the child wanted to attend to / a la que)

Ella quería aprender todo (x) que podía
(cf. She wanted to learn all that she could / lo)

Las cosas (x) los adultos disfrutaban
(cf. The things adults enjoyed / de las que)

Para encontrar una buena vena de (x) que extraer sangre
(cf. To find a good vein from which to extract blood / la)

David terminó el trabajo en tiempo, (x) que nos sorprende mucho
(cf. David finished the work on time, which surprised us very much / lo)

Pasaron tres días en la ciudad, durante (x) que nada pasó
(cf. They spent three days in the city, during which nothing happened / los)

Todos sentados a la mesa guardaron silencio, (x) que hizo la cena muy desagradable
(cf. Everyone at the table was silent, which made the dinner very unpleasant / lo)

Es este paz que Pedro siente (x) que le dará el poder
(cf. It's this peace that Peter feels which will give him the power / la)
No importa (x) que ha pasado
(c.f. It doesn't matter what has happened / lo)

Ve la vida como un círculo en (x) que tienes que experimentar
(c.f. He sees life as a circle in which you have to experience / el)

Una vida (x) ellos piensan es perfecta
(c.f. A life they think to be perfect / que)

Escribía del nuevo doblado (x) su vida había tomado
(c.f. She wrote about the new turn her life had taken / que)

Mi hijo nunca ha hecho caso el buen consejo (x) le hemos dado
(c.f. My son has always ignored the good advice we have given him / que)

Con todo el valor (x) podía agregar
(c.f. With all the courage I could add / que)

The fourth type of error due to syntactical omission involves cases in which the English-speaking student eliminates the relator que in sentences in which this element is optional in English but compulsory in the equivalent Spanish construction. The only error found in the students' compositions appeared in the following sentence: Supongo (x) él está enojado ('I suppose he's annoyed') which shows the influence of zero use in English. This structural
difference in the two languages does not seem to pose difficulties among third-year Spanish students.

Another type of syntactical transfer errors of omission is found in the use of Spanish verbs clauses with dependent prepositions when the preposition is not required in the corresponding English verb construction. Such is the case of verbs like 'to enter' which corresponds to *entrar en* or 'to play' which corresponds to *jugar a*. The following sentences show other instances of this type of transfer error.

A Carlos le sería fácil jugar (x) fútbol americano
( It would be easy for Carlos to play football / al fútbol)

Luis juega (x) el tenis
(cf. Luis plays tennis / al tenis)

Esta sistema esta manteniendo (x) la clase élite
(cf. This system is supporting the elite / a la clase élite)

Cuando él entra (x) su pueblo
(cf. When he enters his village / entra en)

El profesor entró (x) el aula
(cf. The professor entered the classroom / en el aula)

Las víctimas estaban agradecidas (x) que la ayuda llego tan pronto
(cf. The victims were grateful that help arrived so soon / agradecidas de)

Luis insiste (x) que tú puedes ir al parque
Estoy feliz (x) que tú la hayas esperado a ella
(cf. I'm glad that you have waited for her / Me alegro de)

Las plantas que se enfrentan (x) la extinción
(cf. Plants that face extinction / se enfrentan a)

Estaba aterrorizado (x) que los interventores se enteraran
(cf. He was terrified that the auditors would find out / aterrorizado de)

Sospechaba (x) su hermano
(cf. She suspected her brother / sospechaba de)

Está seguro (x) que su vida va a ser el modelo
(cf. He's sure his life is going to be the model / seguro de)

El padre trató de influir (x) las decisiones de Alina
(cf. Her father tried to influence Alina's decisions / influir en)

Alina disfruta (x) la naturaleza
(cf. Alina enjoys nature / disfruta de)

El barco acercó (x) el puerto
(cf. The ship approached the harbor / se acercó al puerto)

Nos acercamos (x) el cementerio
(cf. We approached the cemetery / al cementerio)

Salió (x) el camino para cogerlo
(cf. He left the road path to pick it up / Salió del camino)
No podfa olvidarme (x) la angustia de mi niñez
   (cf. I couldn't forget the anguish of my childhood / olvidarme de)

Quería reunirse (x) los dos amores
   (cf. He wanted to meet the two loves / reunirse con)

Debemos acordarnos (x) lo que Pedro sabe
   (cf. We must remember what Pedro knows / acordarnos de)

The final source of omission error is found in the use of some two-word Spanish prepositions when the English parallel consists of just one word as in después de which corresponds to 'after' or dentro de which corresponds to 'inside.' English-speaking learners tend to transfer the zero element of the English construction to the Spanish counterpart. Thus, they omit the second constituent of the Spanish preposition as in Voy después (x) desayuno ('I'm coming after breakfast').

Furthermore, Spanish differentiates between prepositions and conjunctions as in después de / después (de) que whereas English uses the same form 'after' functioning as both, a preposition (before a noun construction) and a conjunction (before a dependent clause). As a direct influence from English, English-speaking learners tend to a) transfer the zero element and omit the second constituent of the compound preposition, as in Después (x) la película voy a buscarte ('I'll pick you up after the film'), and b) use the same form después
to function as either a preposition or as a conjunction, as in *Después (x) (x) el testigo había salido, la policía llegaron* ('The police came after the witness had left'). Examples of this type of syntactical transfer errors may be observed in the following constructions.

Vino cerca (x) el parque
(cf. She came near the park / cerca del parque)

Después (x) vimos muchas televisiones escogieron la más grande
(cf. After looking at many television sets/ después de ver)

Los niños empezaron a comer una tarta antes (x) sus abuelos
(cf. The grandchildren began to eat a cake before their grandparents / antes de que)

La madre ha cambiado mucho desde (x) su esposo se marchó
(cf. The mother has changed a lot since her husband left / desde que)

Antes (x) su esposo se marchó
(cf. Before her husband left / antes de que)

Después (x) las ambulancias se fueron al hospital la playa estaba desierta
(cf. After the ambulances went to the hospital the beach was deserted / Después de que)

Antes (x) Alberto fuese a colegio
(cf. Before Alberto went to school / Antes de que)
Antes de (x) nosotras salimos para Barcelona, mi hermano puso a punto el carro
(cf. Before we left for Barcelona, my bother tuned up the car / Antes de que)

Desde (x) ella era muy joven
(cf. Since she was a kid / Desde que)

La luna brillando dentro (x) los árboles
(cf. The moon shining inside the trees / dentro de)

c) **Addition**

Sometimes English constructions cause interference in corresponding Spanish patterns because the student transposes a compulsory English element literally into the Spanish construction where that element has no correspondence. Such cases include English verb constructions with dependent prepositions which correspond to Spanish simple verb forms. For example, the English verbs 'to wait for' or 'to look for' which correspond to the Spanish verbs *esperar* y *buscar* respectively. The learner wrongly tends to add the compulsory English preposition to the equivalent Spanish construction. Thus, erroneous sentences like *esperé por él todo el día* clearly reflect the effect of English transfer since the student has mistakenly inserted the preposition *por* in the Spanish expression. Other instances of mistaken additions are:

Estoy feliz que hayamos esperado *para* ella
(cf. I'm glad that we have waited for her / Estoy feliz que la hayamos esperado)

Ella le llamó para decirle que esperara por ella en la oficina
(cf. She called him to wait for her at the office / Lo llamó para decirle que la esperara en la oficina)

Carlos le pidió a su jefe por un anticipo
(cf. Carlos asked his boss for an advance / Carlos le pidió a su jefe un anticipo)

Claudio buscaba por un auto usado
(cf. Claudio was looking for an used car / Claudio buscaba un coche usado)

Buscan por un conductor que sepa tres lenguas
(cf. They are looking for a driver who knows three languages / Buscan un conductor que sepa tres idiomas)

Cientos de estudiantes solicitan para becas
(cf. Hundreds of students apply for grants / Cientos de estudiantes solicitan becas)

English possesses two different adjectives 'another' and 'other' which have just one word equivalent in Spanish (otro). English-speaking students wrongly tend to translate 'another' into a two-word construction (un otro) by following the English parallel structure of indefinite article and adjective. The mistaken addition of the indefinite article un into the Spanish construction may be
considered as a transfer error under the students' attempt to mark the English two-word distinction which has no correspondence in Spanish. Students add an element which is required in English but has no equivalent in the Spanish construction. Other instances of this type of syntactical transfer error of addition are shown in the following sentences:

\[
\begin{align*}
un\ otro & \quad \text{artículo} \quad \text{(another article)} \\
una\ otra & \quad \text{circunstancia} \quad \text{(another circumstance)} \\
una\ otra & \quad \text{palabra} \quad \text{(another word)} \\
un\ otro & \quad \text{país} \quad \text{(another country)} \\
causar\ a\ un\ otro & \quad \text{persona} \quad \text{(to cause another person)} \\
una\ otra & \quad \text{razón} \quad \text{(another reason)} \\
una\ otra & \quad \text{vez} \quad \text{(another time)} \\
un\ otro\ año & \quad \text{(another year)}
\end{align*}
\]

d) Overuse of emphatic prepositional objects

English-speaking students overuse Spanish emphatic prepositional objects ('\textit{a} + object pronoun'), functioning as either direct or indirect object, induced by English word order. In English, object pronouns follow the verb as in 'I miss her' whereas in Spanish they precede the verb (\textit{La extraño}). English-speaking learners of Spanish tend to produce redundant sentences like \textit{La extraño a ella} with a higher frequency rate than Spanish native speakers, probably because they try to follow the word order of the English parallel
construction (where the object pronoun, either direct or indirect, follows the verb). When using Spanish sentences whose English counterpart requires the use of an object pronoun, English-speaking learners often either forget to include the Spanish object pronoun and make use of a redundant prepositional construction ('a + pronoun'), or they tend to use both, the object pronoun before the verb (following Spanish word order rules) and the redundant form 'a + object pronoun' (as a direct influence from English word order). Thus, the source of this prepositional overproduction is, in most cases, English interference. Overuse of the emphatic prepositional construction 'a + object pronoun' is illustrated in the following sentences:

Ella le preguntó si él la había extrañado a ella
(c.f. Ella le preguntó se él la había extrañado)

La madre preguntó a su hijo si él compadecía a ella
(c.f. La madre preguntó a su hijo si él la compadecía)

Piensa que Dios puede ayudar a ella
(c.f. Piensa que Dios puede ayudarla)

Ultimamente la volvieron loca a su mamá
(c.f. Ultimamente volvieron loca a su mamá)

El modernismo ya la había influido a mi mamá
(c.f. El modernismo ya había influido a mi mamá)

Creo que mi madre lo hizo el blanco de su vida a mi padre
(cf. Creo que mi madre hizo el blanco de su vida a mi padre)

El pobre criminal no puede concebir que quieran colgar a él
(cf. El pobre criminal no puede concebir que quieran colgarlo)

El médico sugirió a él que llamara a una especialista
(cf. El médico le sugirió que llamará a un especialista)

Ella lo llamó a él
(cf. Ella lo llamó)

A las cuatro el novio de Juanita la va a recoger a ella
(cf. A las cuatro el novio de Juanita la va a recoger)

La policía trató de cogerlo a él, pero él se escapó
(cf. La policía trató de cogerlo, pero él se escapó)

Siempre estaban reñiendo a ella
(cf. Siempre le estaban riñiendo)

Su padre mostraba a ella como gozar
(cf. Su padre le mostraba como gozar)

Los padres no le permitieron a ella estudiar
(cf. Los padres no le permitieron estudiar)

Su visita al cementerio lo cambia profundamente a Pedro
(cf. Su visita al cementerio cambia profundamente a Pedro)

Una reacción lo cambió a Pedro
(cf. Una reacción cambió a Pedro)
Vivía un Dios esperando a él  
(cf. Vivía un Dios esperándolo)

Dios quitó todo a él  
(cf. Dios le quitó todo)

3.2.3 Morphology

Transfer errors in morphology can be found in the use of gender and number markers, subject-verb concordance and verb tense when there is a difference between the native and the target language usage, as well as in areas where the target language presents a feature non-existent in the native language.

The issue of morphological transfer involving independent words is not questioned any longer. However, transfer of bound morphemes, i.e., prefixes, suffixes and any other forms that cannot stand alone, is quite controversial. Some scholars claim that many strong constraints are at work to prevent transfer of bound morphemes. However, later researchers have provided great evidence to refute this theory. For example, Fantini's 1985 study (cited in Odlin 82) shows examples of this type of transfer in the interlanguage of a Spanish-English bilingual child, as in 'too manys cars,' which reflects a number agreement rule in Spanish according to which a modifying adjective must agree in number with the noun it modifies. Furthermore, it has been proved that morphological
transfer takes place not only in similar languages, as first thought, but also in very dissimilar languages, as in the case of Turkish and Greek. Turkish suffixes were detected in Greek nouns and verbs in the Greek spoken in some parts of Turkey (Odlin 82).

In the case of English learners of Spanish, a very common error is the failure to make adjectives agree in gender and number with the noun they modify. This error is attributable to transfer since it is due to a difference in the morphological rules of the two languages. English adjectives are invariable for gender and number (except 'this' and 'that' which have a plural counterpart), whereas Spanish adjectives agree in gender and number with the noun they modify. Thus, English speakers may construct incorrect sentences such as Los amigos son necesario. This error is very frequent at a beginning and intermediate level and is still present at an advanced phase of learning.

The grammatical category of gender in nouns is also very easy to transfer from one language to another. English marks only clear inherent gender such as 'sister' and 'brother' or some subject pronouns such as 'he' and 'she,' whereas all Spanish nouns are classified as either masculine or feminine (even if they do not have any inherent gender). This gender distinction in Spanish may cause learning problems to English speakers. Andersen analyzed the marking of gender in the Spanish of an English-speaking learner of Spanish. He found three different types of English interference in which the subject seemed to be following English rules rather than
Spanish rules. For example, the student tended to make use of redundant constructions such as _nenes y nenas_ ('boys and girls') to refer to groups of people with mixed sex while a native speaker would have used the masculine plural form _nenes_. Secondly, the subject marked natural gender in possessives as _él mamá, ella cuarto_ in a more marked way than the Spanish possessive constructions (_su mamá, su cuarto_). And finally, the learner did not make any gender differentiation in the use of articles and quantifiers. The learner's indefinite article was _un_ ('a') and his definite article was _la_ ('the') irrespective of the gender of the following noun. With regard to the use of quantifiers, the learner used the unmarked masculine forms (_eso cosas, todo la leche, la otro nene_) in all the contexts.

Another type of morphological transfer error is the lack of agreement between the subject and its verb. This can be due to the fact that English does not present any inflection in verbs, except for 'to be' and for the third person singular in the present tense of all verbs. In Spanish, however, the finite verb agrees with its subject in person and number. For example, an English-speaking student who learns that 'The ambulance left for the hospital' corresponds to the Spanish _la ambulancia se fue al hospital_ may erroneously assume that the plural counterpart 'The ambulances left for the hospital' is also _las ambulancias se fue al hospital_. Because English uses the same past tense form 'left' for plural and singular verb structures, English-speaking students fail to mark the person and number agreement in Spanish verb forms. Errors in verb morphology as
related to person and number are attributable to mother tongue interference.

A final type of morphological transfer error can be found in the use of Spanish subjunctive verb form structures. Spanish requires the use of a subjunctive verb form in many constructions where it is often not required in English (or is used unknowingly because most verbal forms of the subjunctive are identical to those of the indicative, with the exception of the third person singular forms). In these cases, the English-speaking learner tends to produce inappropriate Spanish sentences whose verb form structure resembles the native language construction. For example, Spanish uses subjunctive verb forms after impersonal expressions like *Es posible que* ('It's possible that') or *Es importante que* ('It's important that') whereas English uses indicative verb forms. In such cases, English-speaking students tend to transfer the English indicative tense to the equivalent Spanish construction, producing erroneous sentences like *Es posible que Alberto necesite un modelo* 'It's possible that Alberto needs a model', instead of using the required subjunctive mood (*Es posible que Alberto necesite un modelo*). We may attribute this lack of mastery to native language interference.

3.2.31 Research Findings in Morphology
In data collected for this study, morphological errors attributed to transfer were classified into four different types: a) errors of gender and number marking, b) errors of subject-verb agreement c) errors in the use of Spanish subjunctive mood and d) errors in the use of gerund and infinitive.

a) **Gender and number marking and agreement**

As previously noted, Spanish nouns, articles and adjectives agree in gender and number whereas English articles and adjectives are invariable for gender and number except for 'this' and 'that'. The fact that English does not present marking for concord of gender and number induces the English-speaking student to omit the agreement rule in Spanish. Agreement errors are very frequent at a beginning and intermediate level and persist in the third year. Errors of noun-adjective agreement seem to appear more often in constructions consisting of non-immediate constituents as in *La leche es bueno* ('Milk is good'). The English-speaking student may make the agreement between the noun and the adjacent article or adjective, but forget to make the same agreement with an adjective which appears at the end of the same sentence or in a subsequent dependent clause. Omission of the agreement rule is the cause behind the following errors:

Ninguna idea es bueno  
*Este* ciudad había llegado a ser tan cara
Una tradición *antiguo* y *distintivo* (antigua y distintiva)

La causa *verdadero* (verdadera)
Las escuelas *elementarios* (elementarias)
La cultura *japones* (japonesa)
Los personajes son muy *obediente* (obedientes)
La preparatoria es bastante *divertido* (divertida)
*Otro* niños (otros)
La academia es muy *duro* (dura)
La *primer* cosa (primera)
Una pobre mujer *abandonado* (abandonada)
Una mujer casi *opuesto* (opuesta)
*Este* es la mujer (Esta)
La relación está *mostrado* (mostrada)
La posición es *discutido* (discutida)
*Demasiado* vergüenza (demasiada)
*Un* mujer abandonada (una)
Una vida ellos piensan es *perfecto* (perfecta)
Cuando ella estaba sola se sintió *seguro* (segura)
Borrándose *su* arrugas (sus)
Ella no era *un* mujer muy religiosa (una)
Su vida termina mas *fragmentado* (fragmentada)
Esta situación esta *repleto* (repleta)
Emociones que son *dificil* a entender (difíciles)
Casi *el* misma edad (la)
Tiene un piel muy blanca
Una muñeca muy bonito
La nación estaba pasmado
La madre es reemplazado
Las vidas verdaderos
Todo la información
Una realidad escrito
Muchas medicinas son perdidos
Mamá se sintía asfixiado
De un niña a una mujer
La autopista estaba cubierto
Plantó una hilera largo de rosales
En la historia escrito
Las cosas son divertidos
Nuestra relación no ha sido tan bueno
La carretera lleno de baches
María permanece indeciso
Subimos a la montaña desde cuyo cumbre
La mesa estaba ocupado
La isla es mal defendido
Las gallinas blancas son muy numeroso
Una fe que quizás fue renovado
Todo su vida
Una depresión profundo
Una soledad triste y profundo
Una parte esperanzado
En la primero parte
Esta es un casita cerrada
Su esposa muerto
Con la descripción de nuevos murallas
La pena causado
Los libros son muy interesante
No les dejó lo otros
Las luces se hicieron más brillante
Todo estábamos determinados
Todo su energías
Nos pusimos un poco bebido
Los reciente acontecimientos
Las plantas circundante

(esperanzada)
(primera)
(una)
(muerta)
(nuevas)
(causada)
(interesantes)
(los)
(brillantes)
(todos)
(Todas sus)
(bebidos)
(recientes)
(circundantes)

b) Subject-verb concordance

Because English does not present verb inflection (except for 'to be' and for the third person singular in the present tense of all verbs) and agreement, we may expect that English-speaking students will have trouble with Spanish verb morphology as related to person and number. For example, the English verb 'to do' presents the same form for the first person singular 'I do' and for the first person plural 'We do' whereas Spanish presents two different verb forms hago and hacemos. If the English-speaking student learns that 'I do my
homework' corresponds to *Hago mi tarea*, he may establish the false one-to-one correspondence and assume that 'We do our homework' corresponds to 'Hago nuestra tarea'. Errors of subject-verb concordance may be observed in the constructions written below:

Un autor aún *creen*
   Un autor aún cree

Su madre *relucen* sus zapatos
   Su madre reluce sus zapatos

Las ambulancias se *fue* al hospital
   Las ambulancias se fueron al hospital

Los papeles nunca *cambie*
   Los papeles nunca cambian

Ellos me *permitiría* hacer
   Ellos me permitirían hacer

Los gansos que una vez *fue* muy numerosos
   Los gansos que una vez fueron muy numerosos

Nuestros padres nos *permitiríamos*
   Nuestros padres nos permitirían

Nosotros *saltó*
   Nosotros saltamos

Si Pandora y su esposo *viviera*
   Si Pandora y su esposo vivieran
Other instances of interference errors of subject-verb agreement may be found in the misuse of verbs such as *gustar* and *faltar*. These two verbs employ a different sentence structure in the two languages. The error may be attributable to English transfer when the incorrect Spanish sentence closely resembles the construction of the equivalent sentence in English. All the errors found in this project appear in the constructions written below.

Él no gusta que su madre sale
(cf. He doesn't like his mother to go out / A él no le gusta que su madre salga)

La cara faltaba color
(cf. Her face lacked colour / A su cara le faltaba color)

Ella gustaba la soledad
(cf. She liked loneliness / Le gustaba la soledad)

c) **Subjunctive mood**

Spanish uses subjunctive verb forms in many constructions in which they are not required in English, or they are used unknowingly because most English subjunctive forms are identical to their indicative forms. English uses subjunctive in clauses introduced by 'that' after a) impersonal expressions such as 'It is important that I be here tomorrow' and b) verbs as 'to advise,' 'to ask,' 'to demand,' 'to recommend,' and 'to suggest' as in 'I recommend that she study
harder,' in clauses after the verb 'to wish' and in some fixed expressions such as 'Heaven forbid' or 'So be it.' Only in examples using a third-person singular or a present form of 'to be' would it be possible to contrast the subjunctive verb forms with the indicative equivalents. This difficulty in recognizing the use of the English subjunctive, together with the fact that Spanish uses it much more frequently, induces English-speaking students to transfer the English verb form --in many cases indicative or infinitive forms-- into the Spanish counterpart, rather than to use the required subjunctive verb form. Errors of this type are usually word-for-word translations of the English corresponding expressions which present an incorrect verb tense.

Es increíble que a tan tierna edad, Carlitos usa lenguaje tan vulgar
(cf. It's incredible that at such a tender age Carlitos uses such filthy language / Es increíble que a tan tierna edad Carlitos use un lenguaje tan vulgar)

Sera necesario para usted tomar el transbordador
(cf. It will be necessary for you to take the ferry / Será necesario que Ud. tome el transbordador)

Es increíble que ayuda llegó tan pronto después del accidente
(cf. It's incredible that help arrived so soon after the accident / Es increíble que la ayuda llegara tan pronto después del accidente)
Sería preferible para él estudiar de un otra parte.
(cf. It would be preferable for him to study elsewhere / Sería preferible que estudiara en otro lugar)

A él es natural estar cansado; pasó todo el noche al volante
(cf. It is natural for him to be sleepy; he spent the whole night at the wheel / Es natural que esté cansado; pasó toda la noche al volante)

A ella sería injusto no recibir la promoción
(cf. It would be unjust for her not to receive the promotion / Sería injusto que no recibiera la promoción)

A él habría sido mejor haber terminado escribir su libro
(cf. It would have been better for him to have finished writing his book / Habría sido mejor que hubiera terminado de escribir su libro)

No te molestas. Lo más que tú lo explicas, el menos que comprenderé
(cf. Don't bother. The more you explain it, the less I'll understand / No te molestes. Mientras más lo expliques, menos lo entenderé)

Lo menos que habla mañana, lo menos errores hará
(cf. The less he talks tomorrow, the fewer mistakes he will make / Mientras menos hable mañana menos errores cometerá)

La meta es que el niño se siente muy cómodo
(cf. The aim is that the child feels very comfortable/ La meta es que el niño se sienta cómodo)
Hasta que llega una resolución
  (cf. Until a resolution arrives / Hasta que llegue una resolución)

Es posible que Alberto necesita un modelo
  (cf. It is possible that Alberto needs a model / Es posible que Alberto necesite un modelo)

Es posible que siente abandonado
  (cf. It's possible that he feels abandoned / Es posible que se sienta abandonado)

Es probable que no esta listo
  (cf. It's probable that he is not ready / Es probable que no esté listo)

Existe la posibilidad de que Alberto cree
  (cf. The possibility exists that Alberto thinks / Existe la posibilidad de que Alberto crea)

Es mejor que sus padres solamente se pelean
  (cf. It's better that his parents only quarrel / Es mejor que sus padres solamente se peleen)

Antes de su esposo se marcha
  (cf. Before her husband left / Antes de que su esposo se marcha)

Alberto exige que le dedica todo su tiempo
  (cf. Alberto demands that she devotes all her time to him / Alberto exige que le dedique todo su tiempo)

No le gusta que sus padres se separan
(cf. He doesn't like it that his parents are separating / No le gusta que sus padres se separen)

Nunca sugerí que ellos se casan
(cf. I never suggested that they get married / Nunca sugerí que ellos se casaran)

Es triste que ellos matan
(cf. It's sad that they kill / Es triste que ellos maten)

Quería hablar con él antes que tomó la decisión
(cf. I wanted to talk with him before he made his decision / Quería hablar con él antes de que tomara la decisión)

No es malo que todos tienen aspiraciones
(cf. It's not bad that they all have aspirations / No es malo que todos tengan aspiraciones)

La madre le dijo a su hija no frotar los ojos
(cf. The mother told her daughter not to rub her eyes / La madre le dijo a su hija que no se frotara los ojos)

Nos quedamos allí dos años antes de que compraron una casa
(cf. We stayed there two years before they bought a house / Nos quedamos allí dos años antes de que compraran una casa)

Yo pensé así antes de murió mi prima
(cf. I thought so before my cousin died / Yo pensé así antes de que muriera mi prima)
d) Gerund and Infinitive

At an advanced level, learners have acquired a second language frame of reference and their hypotheses about language will rely not only on their native language but also on their L2 knowledge. This reliance on their L2 knowledge will help students to build their own hypotheses about L2 structure as well as to become aware of some structural differences between their native language and the language being learnt. Progressively, their interlanguage rules will conform to target language rules. This interlanguage development may be seen in some errors that can be clearly attributable to native language interference but show the learner's awareness of a structural difference in the two languages. We refer here to Spanish constructions which require the use of a gerund or an infinitive clause.

Spanish equivalents for the English '-ing' form and the infinitive are confusing to English-speaking learners since there some areas of overlap and the learner may wrongly extend the equivalence to an area where the overlap no longer exists. The learner's production of these constructions reflects, in many cases, English interference. English uses '-ing' forms more frequently than Spanish. For example, English requires the use of a gerund after a preposition as in 'after closing the book' whereas Spanish uses an infinitive verb construction (*después de cerrar el libro*). This structural difference is a pitfall for English students of Spanish. At a beginning level, English-speaking students of Spanish tend to
produce a word-for-word translation, or calque, as in *Después cerrando el libro*. But at an advanced level, the learner is more aware of the structural difference in the two languages and generally tends to avoid establishing one-to-one correspondences between English and Spanish. Instead, the learner tries to generate a more acceptable L2 construction by using L2 rules. Yet, most of the attempts reflect a direct influence from English which prevents the student from rendering an appropriate Spanish construction. When using Spanish sentences whose English counterpart requires the use of a gerund, the advanced student will either produce a word-for-word translation of the English parallel structure, or will combine both L1 and L2 rules to conform to the appropriate target language structure. In any of the two choices the student may take, the resulting construction would reflect interference from the student's native language and would not correspond to the correct Spanish equivalent.

La profesora enseña la obediencia *por leyendo* libros  
(cf. The teacher teaches about obedience *by reading* books)

Expresa su enojo *por echar* la culpa a su madre  
(cf. He expresses his anger *by blaming* her mother)

In the first example, the student has followed the English parallel expression and he has directly translated 'by reading books' as *por leyendo libros* whereas the appropriate Spanish sentence
would omit the preposition *por* (*La profesora enseña la obediencia leyendo libros*). By contrast, in the second example the student has combined both, L1 and L2 rules. The student has inserted the preposition *por* following the English parallel but has tried to avoid the direct word-for-word translation of the English gerund form by placing an infinitive right after the preposition, which is a more acceptable construction in Spanish. However, the resulting sentence is still incorrect because Spanish uses gerund forms immediately after finite verb forms to express modality (*Expresa su enojo echando la culpa a su madre*). Other instances or this type of transfer errors appear in the following sentences:

No me sentiría bien **visitarlo**
(cf. I wouldn't feel right visiting him / No me sentiría bien visitándolo)

Pasa horas enteras **lamentarse** de su destino trágico
(cf. He spends hours complaining about his tragic destiny / Pasa horas enteras lamentándose de su trágico destino)

No aconsejamos **usando** un aceite espeso
(cf. We do not recommend using a heavy oil / No aconsejamos usar un aceite espeso)

Pasa el tiempo **lamentarse** de su suerte
(cf. He wastes his time complaining about his lack / Pasa el tiempo lamentándose de su mala suerte)

**La muchacha tenía éxito en explorar otros mundos**
(cf. The girl was successful in exploring other worlds / La muchacha tuvo éxito explorando otros mundos)

Gastó la mayoría de su tiempo en estudiar los detalles
(cf. He spent most of his time studying other details / Pasó la mayoría de su tiempo estudiando otros detalles)

With respect to the use of Spanish infinitives functioning as objects, English-speaking students either tend to transfer the English infinitive marker "to", resulting in errors of mistaken additions, or to omit infinitival markers in all contexts, resulting in errors of omission. On the contrary, students may sometimes randomly insert any infinitive marker in a Spanish infinitival clause. The sentences below show transfer errors where students have omitted a required infinitival marker in the Spanish construction:

Habría sido mejor haber terminado (x) escribir su libro
(cf. It would have been better for him to have finished writing his book / Habría sido mejor que hubiera terminado de escribir su libro)

Se siente obligado (x) mandar a sus niños a la escuela
(cf. He feels obliged to send his kids to school / Se siente obligado a mandar a sus hijos a la escuela)

Ella se abandonó su vida y trató (x) apretar a su hijo
(cf. She abandoned her life and tried to hold her child / Abandonó su vida y trató de retener a su hijo)
Sus amigas la persuadieron (x) abandonar
(cf. Her friends persuaded her to give up / Sus amigas la persuadieron a abandonar)

Primero tenemos (x) tener todo la información
(cf. First we have to have all the information / Primero tenemos que tener toda la información)

Le tomó al parque (x) jugar con otros niños
(cf. She took him to the park to play with other kids / Lo llevó al parque a jugar con otros niños)

Tran pronto como su tristeza empezaba (x) tomar control del cuerpo
(cf. As soon as her sadness started taking control of her body / Tan pronto como su tristeza empezaba a tomar control de su cuerpo)

Mili estaba forzada (x) madurar de un niña a una mujer
(cf. Mili was forced to mature from a child to a woman / Mili fue forzada a madurar de una niña a una mujer)

Siempre estaba dispuesta (x) compartir
(cf. She was always ready to share / Siempre estaba dispuesta a compartir)

La policía trataron (x) agarrarlo
(cf. The police tried to catch him / La policía trató de agarrarlo)

Una oleada de turistas forzó al gobierno (x) relajar muchas leyes
(cf. A wave of tourists forced the government to relax many laws / Una oleada de turistas forzó al gobierno a relajar muchas leyes)

Es un crimen tratar (x) cohechar a un juez
(cf. It's a crime to try to bribe a judge / Es un crimen tratar de cohechar a un juez)

Su resolución (x) vivir y continuar en su viaje
(cf. Her resolution to live and to continue in her trip / Su resolución de vivir y continuar en su viaje)

Me decidí (x) visitar la tumba de Alfredo
(cf. I decided to visit Alfredo's tomb / Me decidí a visitar la tumba de Alfredo)

Errors in the use of Spanish infinitival clauses may also involve a mistaken addition. The following sentences show examples where students have wrongly transfer the English infinitive marker "to" to the Spanish equivalent expression:

Olvidaría a ir a la iglesia
(cf. She would forget to go to church / Olvidaría ir a la iglesia)

Yo pedí a ver al soldado
(cf. I asked to see the soldier / Pedí ver al soldado)

Nunca he creado que sea un pecado a decir la verdad
(cf. I have never thought it would be a sin to say the truth / Nunca he creído que decir la verdad fuera un pecado)

Cuesta mucho para pagar los cuestos de ellos
(cf. It is very difficult to pay for their expenses / Cuesta mucho pagar sus gastos)

Será difícil a hacer investigaciones
(cf. It will be difficult to do research / Será difícil hacer investigaciones)

Ella decidió a separar de su esposo
(cf. She decided to leave her husband / Decidió separarse de su esposo)

No le permitieron a ella a ir a las Américas
(cf. They did not allow her to go to America / No le permitieron que fuera a las Américas)

The following examples show transfer errors due to a wrong choice of infinitive marker:

Porque no está acostumbrado de tratar con problemas
(cf. Because he is not used to deal with problems / Porque no está acostumbrado a tratar con problemas)

Esta moda de vida es muy difícil para obtener
(cf. This way of live it's very difficult to get / Este modo de vida es muy difícil de obtener)
Tratamos a aparecer contentos
   (cf. We tried to look happy / Tratamos de parecer contentos)

Empezó de tener vida otro vez
   (cf. He began to live again / Empezó a tener vida otra vez)

El empezó de curar sus heridas
   (cf. He began to dress her wounds / Empezó a curar sus heridas)

### 3.2.4 Orthography

Writing systems often reflect the sound patterns of a language. A difference in the symbolization of the native and the target language writing systems may result in orthographic errors in the target language. Therefore, any consideration of transfer in orthography must take into account the relation that exists between pronunciation and writing in the languages being compared. In languages which possess the same alphabet, one symbol may represent two different sounds in the two languages and a learner will tend to transfer the symbolization of the native language to the language being learned (Lado 20). Oller and Ziahosseiny showed evidence of this type of transfer of the native language symbolization to the target language. They compared the spelling errors of English
learners whose native language used the Roman alphabet to the spelling errors of English learners whose native language used the non-Roman alphabet. They reported that learners whose native language used a non-Roman alphabet made fewer spelling errors than learners whose native language used the same alphabet as English. Furthermore, they concluded that a significant number of the spelling errors made by the learners whose native language employed a Roman alphabet were the result of "false generalizations" attributed to native language interference (186). These learners will tend to transfer the symbolization of the native language sound system to the target language writing system. For example, a German speaker wrote 'r-i-e-c-h-e-s' for 'riches' since the German sound /i/ may be represented by ie. Similarly, a Spanish speaker frequently spelled 't-r-a-i-e-d' for 'tried', because diphthong /ai/ in Spanish is spelled ai. Oller and Ziahosseiny called these errors 'interlingual' errors since they were the result of native language interference. They also reported another type of errors called 'intra-lingual' errors, i.e., errors that arise from developmental problems within the target language. Examples of these errors were confusions in writing the word 'since' as 'sence' or the word 'barely' as 'bearly'.

Odlin (126) cites another example of spelling error attributed to interference from native language pronunciation in languages with different writing systems. Thus, an Arabic speaker will tend to write 'blaying', 'picture' and 'bombous' instead of 'playing,' 'picture' and 'pompous' due to phonological influence from Arabic. Unlike English,
Arabic does not make a phonemic distinction between /b/ and /p/. The Arabic speaker will have trouble distinguishing between the two English phonemes /b/ and /p/, and therefore will represent both phonemes as 'b.'

A final type of transfer in orthography is found in the spelling of cognates when the cognates are spelled differently in the two languages. For example, an English speaker learning Spanish will frequently misspell *habilidad* without an *h* due to a confusion with the English cognate 'ability.' Similarly, a Spanish speaker will tend to misspell 'orthography' without the first 'h' because the Spanish cognate does not present an 'h' (*ortografía*).

### 3.2.41 Research Findings in Orthography

Two types of orthographic errors were found in the data collected for this study. The most common orthographic errors were caused by transfer of the spelling of an English cognate. When cognates are spelled differently in each language, the learner mistakenly tends to transfer the native cognate spelling to the target language word. This type of transfer affected both true cognates and false cognates. Orthographic errors of the second type are caused by transfer of native language sound system symbolization to a Spanish word:

a) *Cognates spelled differently*
This type of transfer error may be seen in the following examples. The left column shows the orthographic error as it was mispelled in the students' written assignments. The right column shows the correct Spanish spelling of the word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>accento</th>
<th>(acento)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acceptar</td>
<td>(aceptar)</td>
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<tr>
<td>aventura</td>
<td>(aventura)</td>
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<tr>
<td>afflicción</td>
<td>(aflicción)</td>
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<td>atractaba</td>
<td>(atraída)</td>
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<td>(atención)</td>
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<td>(beneficioso)</td>
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<td>(circunstancia)</td>
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<td>(cómodo)</td>
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<td>comunicar</td>
<td>(comunicar)</td>
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<tr>
<td>confusado</td>
<td>(confuso)</td>
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<tr>
<td>contrato</td>
<td>(contrato)</td>
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<td>demonstrar</td>
<td>(demostrar)</td>
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<td>(descendiente)</td>
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<td>(destrucción)</td>
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<td>(diferente)</td>
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<td>(distinta)</td>
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<td>embarrasada</td>
<td>(embarazada)</td>
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<td>English</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>expression</td>
<td>expresión</td>
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<td>frecuente</td>
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<td>identicales</td>
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<td>información</td>
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<td>pardonar</td>
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<td>profesor</td>
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<td>protectora</td>
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<td>recomendé</td>
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<td>reflejado</td>
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<td>rehusa</td>
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<td>resultado</td>
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<td>sorpresó</td>
<td>sorprendió</td>
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<tr>
<td>subjecto</td>
<td>sujeto</td>
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<tr>
<td>talentado</td>
<td>talentoso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>topaz</td>
<td>topacio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vegetables</td>
<td>vegetales</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
veina (vena)
visitores (visitantes)

b) **English sound system symbolization**

Two cases of transfer of native language sound system symbolization to a Spanish sound were found in a written composition at the beginning of the semester, and another one was found towards the middle of the semester. Two of the errors were committed by the same student and the third one by a different learner. English [kwa] is represented as 'qua' in words like 'quality,' 'quantity' and 'quarrel.' The students misspelled *cualquier* as *qualquier* (1 occurrence) and *cuando* as *quando* (2 occurrences) by transferring the English spelling of the sound [kwa] to the Spanish word.
4. HORIZONTAL COMPARISON FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Two written assignments were chosen for a longitudinal comparison of transfer errors in order to observe any relevant change as the semester progressed. The two written assignments consisted of a free composition on a topic related to the subject matter of the literary passage featured in the chapters being studied. The first literary excerpt belonged to La ciudad y los perros by Mario Vargas Llosa. In the passage studied in class, one of the protagonists, Alberto, a cadet in a military academy, visits his mother for a weekend. During this visit, Alberto discovers that his mother, who used to be a very amusing, beautiful and attractive woman, has become old, miserable and neurotic after her husband's unfaithfulness and later separation. Students were asked to write a short essay describing Alberto's thoughts about his parents' relationship and his feelings towards each of them. The second selection presented the conclusion of the novel La sombra del ciprés es alargada by Miguel Delibes. In this concluding passage, Pedro, the protagonist in the story, returns to his home town to visit his wife's and his best friend's tombs. Pedro is a very introverted person who is always struggling to defend his individuality. In this final scene, Pedro overcomes his loneliness and his sadness upon discovering the only true reason to live: God's love and existence. As a writing assignment, students were asked to write a short composition on the
psychological change Pedro experiences after visiting the cemetery. These two collection points of data were at the beginning (about the fourth week of classes) and at the end of the second semester (about the fourteenth week of classes).

Data collected for this project were taken from free compositions as well as from translation exercises, as previously stated. However, for this longitudinal analysis of change in transfer errors, the free composition approach was preferred over the translation method. The underlying assumption was that a free composition assignment was probably the least controlled of all elicitation procedures. Aside from establishing a topic, the teacher has no intervention in the students' production. A free composition allows the student to combine grammatical and communicative competence. Thus, at an advanced level, a free composition is thought to be a more accurate reflection of the student's language production capability.

Errors from these twenty-eight compositions were classified according to the criteria explained in the second and third chapters of this project. Errors were divided into two main groups: transfer errors and non-transfer errors. Transfer errors were divided into four main groups: errors in lexicon, syntax, morphology and orthography. These four main groups were then subdivided into fifteen subgroups.

A total of 676 errors were collected from 28 student compositions. Of the total errors, 296 were found to be caused by
transfer. Thus, native language interference is the cause behind 44% of all of these errors. The 296 transfer errors were categorized by type of error into four main groups. 40% of all interference errors were committed in the area of lexicon, 24% in syntax, 27% in morphology and only 9% of all transfer errors were found in orthography. Results may be observed in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

```
TOTAL ERRORS 676
  NON-TRANSFER 380 (56%)
    Lexicon 117 (40%)
    Syntax 72 (24%)
    Morphology 80 (27%)
    Orthography 27 (9%)
  TRANSFER 296 (44%)
```

The findings of the statistical comparison of change in transfer errors at these two data collection points show very interesting and significant results. The total of transfer errors found in the 14 compositions analyzed at the beginning of the semester were 173 (47% of all errors committed), whereas there were 123 transfer errors found in the 14 compositions analyzed towards the end of the
semester (39% of all errors committed). The change in transfer errors in the two data collection points is graphically shown in Figure 1.

**FIGURE1: TRANSFER ERRORS**

![Bar chart showing transfer errors](chart)

The most frequent area of transfer errors was lexicon, with a percentage of 41% of all transfer errors collected in the first written assignment and 37% of all transfer errors found in the second written assignment. In syntax, the percentages of transfer errors were 22% in the first point of collection and 28% in the second. In morphology, the results show 29% of all transfer errors at the beginning of the semester and 24% at the end. In the last linguistic
area, orthography, we can observe that the percentage of orthographic transfer errors, when compared to the total of transfer errors committed, is 8% in the first data collection point, and 11% in the second point of data collection. Findings are shown in Table 2 below.

**TABLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1ST COMPOSITION (TOTAL 173)</th>
<th>2ND COMPOSITION (TOTAL 123)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEXICON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 (41%)</td>
<td>46 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYNTAXIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 (22%)</td>
<td>34 (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORPHOLOGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 (29%)</td>
<td>30 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORTHOGRAPHY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 (8%)</td>
<td>13 (11%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Errors in these four main categories were then subdivided into fifteen subgroups by following the criteria explained in detail in the previous chapter. Five of these fifteen subgroups were identified as the most problematic areas for English-speaking students since 68% of all the transfer errors committed in the students' first composition, and 78% of all the transfer errors found in the students' second composition, fell into one of these five subcategories of error types. The most common transfer errors in this horizontal comparison were found in one of the following five subgroups: word-for-word
translations, an English lexical item corresponding to two or more Spanish lexical items, omission of a required Spanish element when that element has no counterpart in the English equivalent expression, failure to make adjectives and determiners agree in gender and number with the noun they modify and transfer of cognate spelling.

In the students' first composition, written after four weeks of classroom instruction, the most common errors in order of frequency were those caused by word-for-word translations (18% of all the transfer errors committed), errors caused by an English lexical item corresponding to two or more Spanish lexical items (14% of all transfer errors), errors caused by omission of a required Spanish element when that element has no counterpart in the English equivalent expression (14% of all transfer errors), errors caused by failure to make adjectives and determiners agree in gender and number with the noun they modify (14% of all transfer errors committed) and errors caused by transfer of cognate spelling (8% of all transfer errors). In the students' second composition, written after fourteen weeks of classroom instruction, the most common transfer errors were caused by omission of a required Spanish element when that element has no equivalent in the English parallel expression (24% of all the transfer errors), followed in frequency by errors of word-for-word translations (15% of all the transfer errors), errors caused by an English lexical item which corresponds to two or more Spanish lexical items, errors caused by failure to make adjectives and determiners agree in gender and number with the
noun they modify (14% in both subcategories), and finally, errors caused by transfer of cognate spelling (11%). Results are indicated in order of frequency in Table 3.

TABLE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1ST COMPOSITION</th>
<th>2ND COMPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word-for word translations</td>
<td>31 (18%)</td>
<td>Omission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One English lexical item corresponding to two or more Spanish lexical items</td>
<td>25 (14%)</td>
<td>Word-for-word translations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>25 (14%)</td>
<td>One English lexical item corresponding to two or more Spanish lexical items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender an number agreement</td>
<td>25 (14%)</td>
<td>Gender and number agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False cognate</td>
<td>13 (8%)</td>
<td>False cognate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These findings may help both, the advanced student and the teacher of Spanish, in the avoidance of the most common transfer
error types. The teacher may point out to students the specific areas where the most common interference errors are likely to occur.

Below, we show the rate of frequency of each of these fifteen subgroups, the number of occurrences of the type of error and the percentage with respect to the main category to which the error belongs. Numerical data in the students' first compositions will be followed by numerical data in the students' second compositions.

In the lexical area, the most common errors in order of frequency were those caused by word-for-word translation (31 occurrences in the students' first compositions --43% of all lexical transfer errors-- and 19 occurrences in the students' second compositions --41% of all lexical transfer errors), errors caused by one English lexical item corresponding to two or more Spanish lexical items (25 occurrences in the students' first compositions --35% of all transfer errors in lexicon-- and 17 occurrences in the students' second compositions --37% of all lexical transfer errors), errors in the use of preterit and imperfect tense (8 occurrences in the first data collection point --12% of all lexical transfer errors-- and 7 occurrences in the second data collection point --15% of all lexical transfer errors), errors caused by false cognates (6 occurrences --9% of all lexical transfer errors-- and 3 occurrences --6% of all lexical transfer errors-- in the first and second data collection points respectively), and finally errors caused by transfer of grammatical features in words with same meaning in the two languages (1 occurrence --1% of all lexical errors in the students' first
composition--and no occurrence in the students' second composition). Results may be more easily observed in Table 4 below.

**TABLE 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1ST COMPOSITION</th>
<th>2ND COMPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word-for-word translations</td>
<td>31 (43%)</td>
<td>19 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One English lexical item corresponding to two or more Spanish lexical items</td>
<td>25 (35%)</td>
<td>17 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Preterit and Imperfect</td>
<td>8 (12%)</td>
<td>7 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Cognates</td>
<td>6 (9%)</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer of grammatical features in words with same meaning in the two languages</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most common transfer errors in the syntactical category in order of frequency were those caused by omission of a required
Spanish element when that element has no counterpart in the parallel English expression (66% of all syntactical transfer errors in the students' first compositions and 85% of all syntactical errors in the students' second compositions) and errors caused by overuse of emphatic prepositional objects (26% of all syntactical errors in the first written assignment and 9% of all syntactical transfer errors in the second written assignment). By contrast, errors in word order and errors of mistaken addition were not very frequent in the students' compositions. Numerical findings are shown in Table 5:

**TABLE 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSFER ERRORS IN SYNTAX</th>
<th>1ST COMPOSITION</th>
<th>2ND COMPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>25 (66%)</td>
<td>29 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overuse of emphatic</td>
<td>10 (26%)</td>
<td>3 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prepositional objects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word order</td>
<td>2 (5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistaken addition</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In morphology, the most frequent transfer errors are caused by failure to make adjectives and determiners agree in gender and number with the noun they modify. The second most common morphological transfer error is found in the use of expressions which require the use of a gerund or an infinitive in Spanish. This type of
error is followed in frequency by errors in the use of subjunctive mood and errors in subject-verb concordance. Table 6 show the numerical results in the morphological category found in this project:

**TABLE 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSFER ERRORS IN MORPHOLOGY</th>
<th>1ST COMPOSITION</th>
<th>2ND COMPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender and number agreement</td>
<td>25 (50%)</td>
<td>17 (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerund and infinitive</td>
<td>10 (20%)</td>
<td>7 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constructions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive mood</td>
<td>8 (16%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject-verb concordance</td>
<td>7 (14%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 7 below, transfer errors in orthography are mainly caused by transfer of cognate spelling (13 occurrences in the two data collection points). Only one case of transfer of English symbolization of sound was found in data collected for this longitudinal comparison. One of the students misspelled *cualquier* as *qualquier* due to English interference. This error was found in the written composition assigned at the beginning of the semester.
TABLE 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSFER IN ORTHOGRAPHY</th>
<th>1ST COMPOSITION</th>
<th>2ND COMPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>False cognate</td>
<td>13 (93%)</td>
<td>13 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English symbolization</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of a Spanish sound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings of the horizontal comparison of change in errors at these two data collection points reveal that the number of transfer errors committed decreased by 17% throughout the semester whereas the number of non-transfer errors decreased by only 2%. From these findings we may conclude that transfer is the cause behind a fair amount of advanced students' errors, specially at the beginning of the semester. After a semester of instruction, however, students tend to rely more on L2 rules than on L1 rules. Students have acquired a better L2-frame of reference that prevents them from relying extensively on their L1 knowledge. At an advanced level, students learn complex Spanish structures and they start to feel more confident with the foreign language. Students begin to experiment with new complex structures that they would probably
have tried to avoid at the beginning of the semester. The students' effort to produce more sophisticated Spanish structures may explain the low rate of non-transfer error improvement throughout the semester (2%).

These findings are quite interesting and significant, but we must not forget that in any statistical comparison concerning the study of second language acquisition (a non-exact science), we must leave a margin for error attributable to other non-structural factors such as individual variation (personality, motivation, time pressure, subjects' performance can vary from task to task, etc.)
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY


