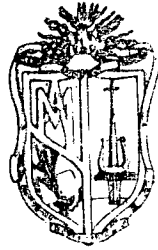


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# **Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja**

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

**"How the Spanish Language Interferes in the learning of English as a foreign Language in the Grammatical, Phonetic and Semantic areas"**

**A Research Work for Licentiate's Degree  
in English as a Foreign Language.**

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**1995**



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2017

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INTERFIERES IN THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH  
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN THE GRAMMATICAL  
PHONETIC AND SEMANTIC AREAS".

**CERTIFIES**

That the present work has been  
supervised and reviewed on all its parts,  
and therefore authorizes its  
presentation.

Loja, May 1995

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## **DEDICATION**

*With all my love and gratitude  
to my parents, María and Julio  
and to my sisters, Pola, Estela  
and Ester for supporting me in  
all the stages of my life and for  
giving me their continuous stimulus  
to go on in my work*

*Alba*

*To my husband, with love and  
gratitude for giving me the  
constant support to go beyond  
every moment of my life and to  
my dear children because they  
were the incentive to get my goal*

*Carmen*

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## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the importance of English as an international language increases more and more, the economical power of the most powerful countries as well as the enormous and unprecedented expansion on scientific technical and economic activities require people with knowledge of English to have access to the modern, scientific and technical literature.

Therefore, English learning has gained importance up to the point that educational authorities have made interesting changes in the curriculum and also many researches have been done in order to provide students with a better and efficient knowledge of English.

Nevertheless, there are some factors that influence on the achievement of English, one of them is the case of the native language which according to our criteria interferes in the proper learning of the target language specially in adult people whose native language habits have been deeply internalized causing serious problems of interference when learning a foreign language.

Very aware of this factor, we have aimed this research to determine how Spanish as a native language interferes in the learning of English as a foreign language. This was attained through a descriptive investigation by using direct observation and survey test techniques and also recordings.

In the first part of the present research work we have made a comparative description of the grammatical, phonological and semantic areas of both languages at issue.

In the second one we have analyzed the most frequent errors found in the use of those parts of speech we consider more important and in which more frequent errors of interference we have found when constructing English grammatical structures. We haven't deal with some points of English grammar. We hope not having neglected them by oversight but in the conviction that the matters we chose were more important or revealing.

In the third part of this research we have analyzed the most frequent pronunciation errors students have when pronouncing English sounds which do not exist in Spanish.

In the fourth part of this work we have made a brief analysis of the vocabulary which English and Spanish share, that is cognates and borrowings which if on one hand serve students to increase their vocabulary without much effort, on the other, they may be a source of transfer errors due to students tend to treat all words as cognates. Also false cognates are mentioned here because they are related to this point.

The last part refers to the conclusions and recommendations of the Spanish interference in the English language.

Specially, throughout the second and third chapters we have cited typical and frequent errors which in formal classroom drill or in prepared conversational material are not expected to be made by students but it is surprising the extent to which such errors creep back into the students' speech when they are using the language casually, as a result of the native language interference which does not permit a complete mastery of the target language rules.



C H A P T E R     I

## THEORETICAL FRAME

### 1. BACKGROUND

"Human existence is welded to language. No normal person is without this faculty and no other species are known to possess it. Only the human infant is endowed with a babbling instinct; this prepares him for speech, but many years of learning and practice are required before the individual achieves the virtuosity of the adult in the use of his mother tongue"<sup>1</sup>

This is true, as it is true also that the individual is able to learn any language he is exposed to specially, at the critical period at which He or She learns easier and faster than at the age of adulthood because at this stage the brain loses its plasticity, appearing at the same time some factors that could act as a barrier for an efficient foreign language acquisition, causing low students' achievement.

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<sup>1</sup> HOLT, Rinehart and Winston. *Psycholinguistics. A book of readings*, Edited by Sol Saporta, Indiana University, 1961

Many researches have been done to analyze those factors, since most of our graduated students from high schools and University don't get the basic English skills at a maximum level of proficiency. That is why we consider important to place our research work within this context.

Among the above mentioned researches we have:

1. Causes of the failure in the teaching-learning of English by Lic. Fanny Aguirre in 1980
2. Factors that fall into the levels of promotion in the English and National subjects in the basic cycle of Loja by Lic. Jaqueline Maldonado Rivera and Amada Morales Carrión in 1990.
3. A comparative study of basic cycle urban and rural high school student's achievement in the Subject of English in the Canton of Loja, by Maria Arias, Delma Arrobo and Pilar Cordova in 1989.

All of them agree in that factors such as: the educational system, the lack and inappropriate use of didactic material, curriculum content, the evaluation,

the teachers' proficiency, the students' predisposition are decisive factors in the failure or success of English learning.

We consider that these researches and others have contributed in a positive way to take into account the real importance of English in our modern life, that is why curriculum planners have done some important changes in many aspects of English teaching, in this way, the number of class-hour per week have been increased, teachers are carefully selected and trained to reach the proposed goals, and new pedagogic texts have been designed in order to teach English in a practical way in High Schools.

## 2. THEORETICAL POINT OF VIEW

As we can notice in all the works above mentioned, the purpose is to look for the causes of the low achievement in the English subject.

Generally, it seems that the object of our research work is similar but there is a marked difference. The above referred works deal with didactic, methodological and

instructional factors. As far as we are concerned with we will try to go beyond this field which is to study the correlation between the phonetic and grammatical structure of Spanish with the English ones in order to know how the former ones influence on the learning of the last ones.

First of all, it is important to refer to bilingualism and biculturalism because there is a marked relation between themselves and the learning of a foreign language. Many works have been done on this aspect for example it is pointed out that bilingualism implies a phenomenon of interrelation of two cultures which specifies that the individual tends to process and assimilate the culture of the place he lives in. Actually, the cited cultural assimilation is only possible through language.

So, the phenomenon of interaction of a culture with other, by itself implies the overcoming of a barrier: the native language; which in most of the cases interfiers the total assimilation of the target language.

## 2.1. BICULTURALISM AND BILINGUALISM

### 2.1.1. Biculturalism

As we can notice, Biculturalism suggests us the term culture, which can be defined as the set of ideas, customs, skills, arts, etc, of a group of people, that are transferred, communicated, or passed along, as in or to succeeding generations. Also, it can be referred as the personal assimilation of internal values which are inside each one of us, without our realization.

Then, Biculturalism is the combination of two distinct cultures in a single region in equal or nearly equal proportions, in this sense, it implies the alternance of two cultures, in other words, bicultural people use to do things corresponding to two different cultures, mixing all those internal values inside them. This term, also implies the use of two distinct languages, which is the aspect of our concern.

### 2.1.2. Bilingualism

Bilingualism has been generally defined as the use

of two languages in an alternate way. This term is used to refer to the use of two languages by the same individual, mostly in speaking and rarely in writing. So, the practice of alternately using two languages is called bilingualism and the persons involved bilinguals.

Relating the two above mentioned definitions - biculturalism and bilingualism- we can deduce that the two are directly related in the same way as culture and society, where the natural correspondence is given by their interdependence.

## 2.2. CONTACT AND INTERFERENCE

### 2.2.1. Contact

When one or more languages are used alternately by the same person, it is said, they are in contact.

Interference between languages occurs in linguistics - structural- or extralinguistic -non structural- factors. The formers are those which concern with grammar structure, phonology or semantics of which we will talk

about later. Being the last ones of great importance in linguistic studies, we are going to analyze them briefly.

Extralinguistic factors are those which refer to the individual himself as well as to his relation with the society. They are called extralinguistic because they lie beyond the structural differences of languages or even their lexical inadequacy.

Among the non structural factors are:<sup>2</sup>

- The speaker facility of verbal expression in general and his ability to keep two languages apart
- Relative proficiency in each language
- Especialization in the use of each language by topics and interaction
- Manner of learning each language
- Attitudes toward each language, whether idiosyncratic or stereotyped

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<sup>2</sup> VRIEL Wenreich. *Languages in contact*, page 376



However, extralinguistic factors are not restricted to bilinguals as individuals and the interference can be greater if contact occurs through groups of bilinguals. For this reason, other features of bilingual groups which are relevant to the study of interference are considered:

- Size of bilingual group and its sociocultural homogeneity or differentiation; breakdown into subgroups using one or the other language as their mother tongue; demographic facts; social and practical relations between these subgroups.
- Prevalence of bilingual individuals with given characteristics of speech behaviour.
- Stereotyped attitudes toward each language.
- Attitudes toward the culture of each language community.
- Attitudes toward bilingualism.
- Tolerance or intolerance with regard to mixing languages and to incorrect speech in each language

- Relation between bilingual groups and each of the two language communities of which it is a marginal segment.

This is the psychological and sociocultural field in which language contact can be best understood by knowing the conditions under which an influence of one language or another is possible and the ways it would work.

#### 2.2.2. Language Contact and Culture Contact

Anthropologists have considered language contact as one aspect of culture contact and language interference as a fact of cultural diffusion and acculturation. However, later studies have not found out a clear relation between the two fields.

Referring to linguistic interference, the major problem is the interaction of structural and non-structural factors, which permit or not such interference.

Studies dealing with language contact can not be carried out isolately, rather coordinated studies of

linguistics, psycholinguistics, psychiatrists, sociologists, anthropologists and even ethnographers and geographers have to be developed in order to describe multiple factors causing interference in learning a foreign language.

### 2.2.3. Interference

The term interference implies the rearrangement of patterns resulting from the introduction of foreign elements into the structure domains of other language such as phonetic, morphologic or syntactic systems or other areas of the vocabulary. And the enrichment or impoverishment of a system, needs the reorganization of all the old distinctive features of the systems.

At the present, language transfer is not viewed as the manifestation of a learner's inability to resist native language patterns; instead it is thought to interact with foreign language developmental processes, in ways that are far from fully understood.

In fact, the phenomena of interference can be considered as a deviation from the patterns or norms of

either language involved in speech as a result of their familiarity; however, the concerning differences implied may affect foreign language learning in various ways:

- a. They may influence the rate at which target language features are acquired (Keller-Cohen 1979).
- b. They may lead to the avoidance of certain target language structures (Schachter 1979).
- c. They may lead to the overproduction of certain language forms.
- d. Language transfer may also constrain the acquisition process.

When we are learning a foreign language we must learn two different verbal responses for each thing, event, attribute or relation as a requirement for acquiring the other language without negative transfer.

According to Weinreich, "a comprehensive psychological theory of bilingualism ought to account for

both the effectively separated languages and for interdependence of the languages with one another"<sup>3</sup>.

Referring for example to interference in speech and in language it is said that in speech it is like sand carried by a stream and in language it is the sediment deposited on the bottom of a lake. This means that in speech interference occurs as a result of the personal knowledge of the other tongue, while in language it results as a consequence of bad linguistic habits which have been habitualized and established. As an example we can mention the bad pronunciation that we acquire of certain terms.

Some authors consider that to learn a foreign language efficiently, the individual has to minimize interference in learning situations by increasing the distinctiveness of the two languages, that is to say, noticing the real differences between them and thinking only in the language which is being learned.

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<sup>3</sup> From *Journal and Social Psychology* 56, 239-44 (1958)

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF GRAMMAR, PHONETICS AND SEMANTIC AREAS

As we mentioned before, interference of native language on foreign language acquisition is present in all the domains, it is on phonetical, morphological and syntactic areas of speech. However it is important to clarify that when talking about interference, there are two types of errors:

- a. Those derived from the interference of the mother tongue (intralingual errors, which will be the matter of our discussion).
- b. Those derived from the strategies employed by the learner in language acquisition and from the mutual interference of items within the target language (interlingual errors: overgeneralization, ignorance of rules restrictions, incomplete application of rules and the building of false systems or concepts).

Through this work, we will try to determine how native language interfierees in the learning of a foreign language on the English students of our university.

Even when there is no easy way to determine exactly the manner in which interference occurs because there are many factors that can contribute to the existence or not of such interference.

The individual itself, the knowledge of the native language, cultural environment, the way in which an individual learns a foreign language, the native patterns highly used for this reason we think that the possible way of determining it, is by describing the various forms of interference and tabulating their frequency.

### 3.1. DESCRIPTION OF GRAMMAR

One area of language highly affected by interference in learning a foreign language is grammar. The phenomena of interference are considered as resultants from two opposing forces: stimuli of interference and resistance to it. Both, stimuli and resistance factors can be structural or non-structural in the linguistic sense.

As it is the matter of our research work, we will describe the grammatical parts we consider interference occurs frequently and strongly in both English and Spanish.

## N O U N S

- Gender
- Number
- Noun Phrase
- Nominalization

Noun.- It is a word or group of words that refer to a person, place, thing or activity. The noun can be used as the subject or object of a verb.

- |    |                       |                        |
|----|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | La mujer llegó pronto | The woman arrived soon |
| 2. | Yo vi a la mujer      | I saw the woman        |

### Gender in Spanish Nouns

Gender is the grammatical form which serves to indicate sex.

In Spanish, the noun has two main inherent grammatical genders which are not inflected, rather, they are marked with an /-o/ for masculine and with an /-a/ for feminine. With nouns referring to persons there is



generally an accord between grammatical gender and physical sex.

3. El sacerdote
4. El soldado
5. La señora
6. La poetiza

In some forms sex is simply ignored:

7. El tipo
8. La persona

However, some forms have common gender, being the same form for masculine and feminine

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| 9. El dentista | La dentista |
| 10. El turista | La turista  |

Another kind of nouns which have inherent grammatical gender are those referring to things and persons:

11. El puerto (masculine)

12. La fauna marina (feminine)

But, there are other nouns whose gender is determined by the context of the sentence, specially by articles and adjectives.

13. La nave (Femenine)

14. El agua está fría (Femenine)

15. El ave (Masculine), signaled by the article, but

16. El ave blanca (Femenine), signaled by the adjective

17. Las aves (Femenine), but not

18. Los aves

Moreover, nouns ending in SION and CION are always feminine

19. La profesión

20. La Institución

21. La comisión

Those nouns ending in D are also feminine

22. La verdad

23. La caridad

Excep. El alud, el ataúd, el laúd, el ardid, el césped

Gender in English Nouns.- It is said that names that represent male persons or animals, titles and professions performed by men are masculine and all of those nouns which refer to female persons or animals, titles and professions performed by women are feminine; the rest are neuter.

Children (Male or female) is assigned to a human being of any sex from its birth until the period of adolescence.

24. She is an only child.

While baby is used to refer to a little child before it begins to walk or speak. In this case sex is considered neuter (IT)

25. She is expecting a baby.

26. It is a pretty baby.

But sometimes we say a baby-boy or a baby-girl which is also assigned to animals.

27. A baby Monkey.

Words such as: ship, airplane are considered feminine in most of the cases.

28. The ship left the barbour.

### How to form Femenine in Spanish

Generally, masculine nouns ending in O change the O to A

29. El abuelo                      La abuela

30. El hermano                    La hermana

Nouns ending in a consonant add A

31. El marqués                    La marquesa

32. El león                        La leona

Except: El Actor                La Actriz

Some nouns are quiet different in masculine and femanine:

33. El toro                        La vaca

34. El hombre                    La mujer

### How to form Femenine in English

There are words which are completely different when referring to either both masculine or feminine.

Masc.	Fem.
35. Man	Woman
Boy	Girl
Brother	Sister
Father	Mother
Son	Daughter
Nephew	Niece
Uncle	Aunt
Barman	Barmaid
Bull	Cow

However, there are words that are the same for both masculine and feminine.

36. Writer (masculine and feminine)  
 worker (masculine and feminine)  
 cousin (masculine and feminine)

But if we want to clarify that any of these nouns in feminine, we can write the word woman before the noun.

37. A woman writer

38. A woman driver

Other words take the suffix -ess to form feminine

39. Heir	Heiress
Lion	Lioness
Tiger	Tigeress
Waiter	Waitress

Number.- Is the quality of nouns to express by certain forms the idea of unity or plurality.

#### Number in Spanish:

In spanish there are two forms of number: singular and plural. When we have a base form which is singular we can add it an /-s/ which converts this form to plural. However, when we have a stem ending in a consonant we have to add an /-e/ before the /-s/ because in spanish there is no cluster of consonant plus /s/ in the same syllable.

#### How to form the purals in Spanish

Words ending in an unstressed vowel add s:

- |     |          |            |
|-----|----------|------------|
| 40. | El piano | Los pianos |
| 41. | La chica | Las chicas |

Words ending in a stressed e also add s:

- |     |         |           |
|-----|---------|-----------|
| 42. | El nené | Los nenés |
| 43. | El café | Los cafés |

Words ending in z change z to c and add es:

- |     |     |       |
|-----|-----|-------|
| 44. | Pez | Peces |
|     | Luz | Luces |

Words ending in a consonant add es:

- |     |         |           |
|-----|---------|-----------|
| 45. | Mes     | Meses     |
|     | Español | Españoles |

Words ending in y add es too:

- |     |     |       |
|-----|-----|-------|
| 46. | Ley | Leyes |
|     | Rey | Reyes |

Words ending in an unstressed s or x on the last syllable have the name form for both singular and plural:

48. La crisis                                      Las crisis

49. El Télex                                      Los Télex

Words ending in a stress i add es:

50. Iraní    Iraníes

51. Marroquí                                      Marroquíes

Number in English.- As in Spanish, English has two forms of number: singular and plural.

#### How to form plurals in English

To form plural we have to add an -s to a singular form

52. Girl    Girls  
    cousin                                      cousins

Except nouns ending in a add -es; potato - potatoes; tomato-tomatoes.



But words such as: piano, radio, photo, tobacco;  
only add an s.

Nouns ending in ss, sh, x, ch y z add - es:

53.	glass	glasses
	church	churches
	brush	brushes
	box	boxes
	topaz	topazes

Words ending in y preceded by a consonant change y to i  
and add es:

54.	company	companies
	fly	flies

While, words ending in y preceded by a vowel add only an  
s:

55.	Day	days
	tray	trays

But, some nouns ending in f or fe, change these letters for the ending ves:

56. leaf	leaves
wolf	wolves

However, words such as roof, handkerchief, cliff, only add an s roofs, cliffs, handkerchiefs.

Other nouns change the vowel to form plural

Singular	Plural
57. Man	Men
mouse	mice
foot	feet

But other plurals are completely different from its singular form.

58. The plural of mother and father is parents.

A class of fish or animals have a single form for singular and plural.

59. salmon (singular or plural)  
 sheep (singular or plural)

Certain nouns take a verb in the singular form even though they are plurals. Ex: news, furniture, luggage, advice, information; but we can say also a piece of news, a piece of furniture, when referring to a single one.

Some nouns ending in ICS. are used both in singular and plural, but they are used more frequently in singular.

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| 60. politics | physics     |
| ethics       | acoustics   |
| athletics    | mathematics |

The nouns that keep its original form from Latin and Greek form their plural according to Latin and Greek rules.

- | Singular  | Plural   |
|-----------|----------|
| 61. datum | data     |
| medium    | media    |
| criterion | criteria |

phenomenon

phenomena

Some compound words take plural only in the first word.

Singular

Plural

62. son-in-law

sons-in-law

lady-in-waiting

ladies-in-waiting

mother-in-law

mothers-in-law

But other nouns take plural only in the second word.

Singular

Plural

shopping bag

shopping bags

shop steward

shop stewards

air hostess

air hostesses

shop assistant

shop assistants

### Noun Clasification

Spanish Nouns: We will classify spanish nouns according to the semantic and morphological order.

According to the semantic order we have:  
Connotatives and no Connotatives.

Connotatives:

Are those nouns that describe an object. They are known as common nouns and can be: concrete, abstract, individual and collective.

**Concrete Nouns:** They designate a thing or class of things that can be perceived by the senses. Ex. mar, edificio.

**Abstract Nouns:** Are those which can not be perceived by the senses. Ex. fé, bondad.

**Individual Nouns:** designate a noun which is singular in form but denotes a collection of things. Ex. Armada, alameda.

No Connotatives:

They do not describe objects. They are usually known as proper nouns, because they designate a noun that names a specific individual, place, etc. which is

normally used with an article and normally capitalized. When a noun shows derivation from a person's name it is said they are patronymic. Ex. Gonzalo-González

According to the morphological order, nouns can be:

Simple nouns: cara, bosque

Compound: lavacara, guardabosque, televisión

Parasyntetic: descabellado, añado

Primitive: niño, hombre

Derivados: They can be:

augmentatives: niño-niñote

diminutives: mujer-mujercita

casa-casita

despective: gente-gentuza

pájaro-pajarraco

English Nouns: English nouns can be classified as follows:

Common Nouns: designating a noun that refers to any of a group or class as book, apple, street.

Proper Nouns: It is a noun used to design a person or

thing in a particular way. This kind of nouns are written always with capital letters: Charles, Helen, Waterloo Station, The National Gallery

**Abstract Nouns:** Designing a concept or a quality which is not perceived by the senses: beauty, charity, hunger, strength.

**Collective Nouns:** It is a word designing a group of beings or things which is considered as a unity: Family, committee, team, crowd, pack.

### The Possessive case in English:

The possessive case is used to denote possession or belonginess. The possessor is an animate being, but it can be used also with time, spatial and measurement expressions.

Its formation is very different from the Spanish one. In English this is expressed:

- a. By the addition of a final s (for nouns and some pronouns, preceded or followed by an apostrophe, or sometimes by an addition of an apostrophe (') only after a final (s) sound. Ex. John's book, women's lives, boys' games.
- b. By a change of form in pronouns Ex: I, my, mine; you, your; yours; it, its; who, whose.
- c. By OF preceding a form without the possessive ending. Ex. Lives of men or preceding a form in the possessive case. Ex: a play of Shakespeare's, a friend of mine; which are commonly called double possessive

General rules for its use

- When the possessor is an animate being it goes first with an apostrophe and an s followed by the thing which is possessed, but without article.

64. My father's car
65. Our teacher's books
66. Peter's dog.



- But when a plural noun does not end in an s, we have to put the apostrophe followed by an s.

- 67. These women's hats.
- 68. The children's toys.

- When the possessor ends in an S, the s of the possessive is omitted:

- 69. My parents' car.
- 70. The boys' teacher.

- When two possessors are named, only the second takes the apostrophe and the s:

- 71. Helen and Tom's children.

- Phrases with Saxon possessive; take also an s.

- 72. an hour's walk.
- 73. at a yard's distance.
- 74. yesterday's newspaper.

An English learner student has serious problems when

learning English possessive because of the inflexion. Since in Spanish we don't have such construction, instead we have for example:

75. La casa de Luis.

So, Spanish speakers tend to use that construction in English such as:

- \* The house of Luis.
- \* The hat of my mother.

#### Noun Pharase in Spanish

It is a sequence of two or more words conveying a single part of the sentence. A noun phrase consists of a determiner plus a Noun plus a category of Number.

A determiner can be: el, un -in specified environments-, commonly known as definite or indefinite articles.

76. El libro (que te presté)

77. Un libro (cualquiera)

A noun phrase may also have an adjective which can go before or after the noun.

78. El pobre hombre se marchó.

79. La niña rubia se marchó.

In Spanish there are no nouns which are not either singular or plural, depending on what we want to say (In Spanish there is no marker for singular only for plural)

#### Noun Phrase in ENGLISH

In English as in Spanish the Noun Phrase has the same structure and there is no major problem in its construction, the problem that could arise is the position of the adjective, because it is a general rule in English that adjectives go before the noun they modify, and students tend to put it after the noun the same as in Spanish.

\* The rose red instead of.

The red rose.

Another problem is in the use of the determiners, specially the definite article (THE) because students

tend to abuse the use of it. For this reason, and considering useful to specify the general rules to its appropriate application we will analyze them.

The definite article shows that the noun refers to a particular person, place, thing.

It is used to show that we are referring to something specific.

80. The lion is the king of the forest.

81. The woman in black is my sister.

With something that is unique

82. The sun.

83. The moon.

Before some adjectives acting as nouns:

83. The poor.

84. The blind.

In front of Ordinal numbers, dates, kings' titles

- 85. The first in his class.
- 86. The twenty-first of January.
- 87. Henry the second.

Also, we have considered important to mention the rules for omitting this article, which are:

- THE is omitted before names of sports, games, arts, and sickness

- 88. I like chess.
- 89. She has got measles.

- Before names of foods in general:

- 90. Carrots are very good for the eyesight.
- 91. I like wine very much.

- Before abstract names which are used in a general way

- 92. Time flies.
- 93. Death is the final step.

- Before school, church, hospital, work, bed, home,

prison when referring to these words as buildings.

94. He goes to church.

95. Henry is in prison.

- Before titles followed by names or last names preceded by Mr, Mrs or Miss.

96. Mr. Brown

97. Captain Smith.

98. Doctor Ramirez

- Before days of the week, seasons and hours

99. On Sundays

100. In summer

101. At seven o'clock

- Before names of languages:

102. You can speak English well.

103. French is easy to learn.

- Before nouns followed by a cardinal number:

104. He is in room 425

However, we can not leave aside the little confusions when using the indefinite article A, AN.

The indefinite article shows that the noun refers to a general or not mentioned person place or thing. It is used in the following cases:

A is used in front of a word beginning with a consonantal sound or with an aspirated h. However A changes to AN when the following word begins with a vocalic sound.

105. A soldier

106. A house

107. An act

108. An hour.

In English the indefinite article A is used before all predicate nouns which show nationality.

109. He is a Spaniard.

110. She is an English writer.

A is used before professions and religions:

111. He is an architect.

112. He is a Christian.

In front of hundred, thousand and million

113. A hundred pounds.

114. A thousand men.

In phrases such as:

115. What a pity.

116. What a fright.

117. Such a nice girl.

Note: To form the plural of A/AN, we use the adjective SOME for both: feminine and masculine.

Some books

Some girls

## NOMINALIZATION

### Nominalization:

It is said to occur when a sentence element that



cannot be identified morphologically as noun -adjectives, verbs and particles- functions in the sentences as if it were a noun.

Spanish Nominalization:

Nominalization with adjectives:

- |                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 118. La <u>casa</u> nueva.        | La nueva   |
| 119. El <u>segundo</u> está aquí. | El segundo |

Nominalization with verbs:

120. El alimentarse bien es necesario
121. El sonreír es importante

Nominalization with particles:

122. El sí de las niñas.
123. De aquí en adelante.

Nominalization is very productive in Spanish. But, we can not properly talk about nominalization of verbs because they are always nominals and function as object complement or subject of a sentence.

When we use an infinitive as a nominal, the determiner EL will appear in a normal order

124. El recordar su nombre me es difícil.

But when we invert the order EL is omitted.

125. Me es difícil recordar su nombre.

In Spanish also we have that the pronoun class as: possessives, demonstratives and a little group of adjectives called indefinites are used as nominals.

126. La casa mía.                      La mía

127. Aquel niño.                      Aquel

128. Los otros estudiantes.      Los otros

In addition, the definite articles (el, la, los, las) are used as nominals:

129. El que me diste.

130. La que me compraste.

English Nominalization:

Nominalization in English is neither as active nor as extensive as in Spanish. It occurs with English Pronoun class: indefinite, demonstratives and even with descriptive adjectives which need the dummy carrier one to be nominalized.

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 131. Some people  | Some <u>one</u>     |
| 132. This book    | This <u>one</u>     |
| 133. The poor boy | The poor <u>one</u> |

English nominalizes verbs by using TO before the verb

134. TO study hard is our duty.

Or with ING at the end of the verb, as in:

135. Swimming is healthy.

**ADJECTIVES**

Adjective:

It is the word that expresses or describes the quality of the noun it refers to.

Spanish adjectives have inflection for two categories: Number and Gender.

**Number:** Adjectives form its plural exactly as nouns do, that is by adding a suffix -s directly after stems ending in a gender-marking vowel or after the empty syllable carrier -e. Ex:

Singular	Plural
blanco	blanco-s
verde	verde-s

**Gender:** Inflection for gender is a formal characteristic which distinguishes Spanish adjectives from nouns. The normal rule requires alternation between the gender suffixes -o and -a for masculine and feminine respectively, which appear at the end of the stem. Ex:

Singular		Plural	
masc.	fem.	masc.	fem.
gordo	gorda	gordos	gordas
guapo	guapa	guapos	guapas

There are many adjectives that have common gender since by the criterion of noun adjective agreement, they can modify either masculine and feminine nouns. Ex.

masc.

fem.

El cuadro azul

La casa azul

Types of adjectives in Spanish:

1. Adjectives of quality

The adjective of quality agrees with the noun, it refers to in gender and number

137. Unas casas grandes

138. Unos árboles pequeños

The adjective of quality normally follows the noun it refers to, except for proper names.

139. El buen Sancho

140. La buena Otero

## 2. Possesive Adjectives

masculine and feminine feminine	masculine	and
Singular	Plural	
mi	mis	
tu	tus	
su	sus	
nuestro/a	nuestros/as	
vuestro/a	vuestros/as	
su	sus	

The Possesive adjectives in Spanish agree with the thing possessed and not with the possessor

141. nuestro hijo

nuestros hijos

### 3. Adjectives of comparison:

There are three degrees of comparison:

Positive: the adjective of quality on its own

142. María es alta.

Comparative: there are two types of comparative:

The comparative of superiority which we form by placing the word más before the adjective, sometimes followed by que so as to compare with another noun or pronoun.

143. María es más alta que Pedro.

The comparative of inferiority which is formed by placing the word menos before the adjective, sometimes followed by que so as to compare with another noun or pronoun.

144. Pablo es menos listo que tú.

The Superlative shows the highest degree of the

quality of a noun. We usually place el más before the adjective. The article before más changes according to the gender or number of the noun.

145. Susana es la más guapa de todos.

Sometimes, when we mean an absolute superlative we use the word muy before the adjective or add the suffix ísimo to the adjective,

146. El es muy rico. or El es riquísimo.

But there are comparatives and superlatives that do not follow the rules explained above.

Here is a table of some irregular comparatives and superlatives.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
bueno	mejor	el mejor
malo	peor	el peor
grande	mayor	el mayor
pequeño	menor	el menor

#### 4. Demonstrative Adjectives



Masculine  
singular } este, ese, aquel

Femenine  
singular } esta, esa, aquella

Masculine  
Plural } estos, esos, aquellos

Femenine  
Plural } estas, esas, aquellas

These words are considered adjectives when they accompany a noun. They are used for indicating persons, animals or things.

You must use este, esta and their plural forms when we mean the person, animal or thing near the speaker.

Esa, ese and their plural forms are used for the person, animal or thing far from the speaker.

The demonstrative adjectives agree with the noun in gender and number

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 147. esta mesa  | estas mesas  |
| 148. ese hombre | esos hombres |

#### 5. Indefinite Adjectives

Here are some of the commonest indefinite adjectives used in the Spanish language: alguna/na, algunos/as, mucho/a, muchos/as, poco/a, pocos/as, cada, ninguno/na, varios/as, otro/a; otros/as; demasiado/a, bastante, cuanto/a, etc.

#### 6. Interrogative Adjective

This adjective que is an invariable word Ex:

149. Que día de la semana es?  
150. Qué libro quiere?

The adjective cuanto changes in number and gender

according to the noun it refers to

151. Cuántas naranjas tienes?

152. Cuánto dinero necesitas?

#### 7. Identification

These adjectives refer to nationalities of people or things and continents Ex. europeo, americano, español, lojano, etc.

#### 8. Numerals

These adjectives are invariable in gender except for uno but the numbers: 200, 300, 900 change the gender when they refer to a feminine noun. Ex. Quinientas personas; doscientas coronas.

#### 9. Ordinal Numbers

These adjectives agree with the noun they refer to. We use the ordinal numbers when we mention the order of kings and queens, and also with Popes.

## English adjectives

English adjectives as we know have no inflection for number and gender.

Types of adjectives:

### 1. Adjectives of quality

They describe the condition or quality of the noun they refer to. These adjectives go before nouns or after the verbs: to be; look; appear, seem.

153. An expensive book

154. A pretty girl

155. She looks ill

156. Ann is pretty

But except in the following words:

Court martial; Heir apparent, Mother Superior, from time immemorial.

When referring to a group of people, we have to use the adjective alone preceded by the definite article THE

157. The dead

The rich

Comparatives and superlatives

English adjectives have three degrees of comparison:

Positive as in: tall, dark, expensive, etc.

Comparative as in: taller, darker, more expensive

Superlative as in: the tallest, the darkest, the most expensive

As we can see in English we also have inflection for comparatives and superlatives, but to form them we have to follow some rules.

Rules to form comparatives

To form the comparative of superiority, it is added the suffix er to the one or two syllable adjective; but if it has three or more syllable we have to place the word more in front of it. If the two syllable adjective ends in y it is changed by f and we have to add -er.

158. happy - happier

159. pretty - prettier

Adjectives ending in Ful are preceded by more Ex:

160. Wonderful - More wonderful

161. Important - More important

### Rules to form Superlatives

To form the superlative we add est to one or two syllable adjective, but if it has three or more syllables it is added most before the adjective.

162. The richest

163. The happiest

164. The most wonderful

There is a little group of adjectives which have its own form for positive, comparative and superlative: We call them irregular

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Good	Better	The best
Bad	Worse	The worst
Little	Less	The least
Much	more	The most

Far

Farther

The farthest

## Comparative of equality

Comparatives of equality are formed with as... as...  
and the same as.

165. He is as good as Charles.

166. It is the same as yours.

## 2. Demonstrative adjectives

These type of adjectives agree with the noun it refers to only in number

masculine/feminine	this
Singular	that
masculine/feminine	these
Plural	those

This and these are used to show that the person, place or thing we are referring to, are near to the speaking person.

That and Those show that the person, thing or place are far from the speaking person.

Singular	Plural
167. This man	These men
168. That tree	Those trees

### 3. Possessive Adjectives

The possessive adjectives always go with the noun and agree with the possessor but never with the possessed thing. They are:

my	its
your	our
his	your
her	their

169. I love my family.

170. We and our children.

The possessive adjectives are used with parts of the body



171. She hurt her leg.

172. I wash my hair.

Also they are used with clothes:

173. They put on their jackets.

#### 4. Indefinite Adjectives:

The main are:

**SOME:** it is used generally in affirmative statements.

174. Some of them were my friends

**ANY:** it is used in questions and when it takes the adverb "not" before it, it means "ninguno".

175. She does not have any friend here.

**MUCH:** It is followed by a singular noun and normally used by negative statements:

176. He does not eat much rice.

**MANY:** Always followed by a plural noun and normally used in negative phrases:

177. We do not have many houses.

**NO:** It is always followed by a noun and takes the verb without negation

178. No one is there.

**OTHER:** It normally precedes the noun:

179. The other day he came.

**EACH:** It is also followed by a noun:

180. Each one of you has a duty.

**EVERY:** It is always followed by a singular noun with the verb in singular form.

181. Every man is intelligent.

NEITHER: (No one of two things or persons).

EITHER: (Any one of the two things or persons).

5. Ordinal Numbers:

Cardinal numbers are also considered as adjectives as for example:

182. There were two victims in the accident.

When referring to years in English we have to divide the number into two parts and read each one of them separately.

183. : 1994 is read nineteen ninety-four.

But, when expressing quantities we use the same form as in Spanish.

184. 7692 is read seven thousand six hundred and ninety two.

Here we have to pay attention to the word hundred which is always singular and also with the conjunction and.

before the two last numbers since it is different in Spanish that is why there is interference.

## PRONOUNS

Pronouns: Pronouns are the words used instead of a noun

Unlike nouns and adjectives, pronouns are a small, closed class in both Spanish and English. Borrowings or new forms are not easily introduced, and several grammatical categories are expressed by the inflected variants.<sup>4</sup>

To determine the point where there are problems of interference from Spanish to English we will discuss each type of pronouns.

### Spanish PRONOUNS

#### Types of Pronouns

##### 1. Personal Pronouns

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<sup>4</sup> STOCKWELL Rober P. and others, *The Grammatical Structures of English and Spanish*, The University of Chicago press, pág. 51

Personal Pronouns function as the subject, object of a verb and the object of a preposition.

As Subject:

yo	nosotros
tu	vosotros
él	ellos
ella	ellas

As subject, pronouns are usually omitted unless a certain emphasis is required.

185. No quiero                      Yo no quiero (emphasizer)

The subject pronoun is normally implicit in the verb ending.

186. Escribo, bailamos, cantaron.

But it is necessary to include the pronoun to avoid ambiguity:

187. Cuando vine, él me contó.

- As object of a verb:

DIRECT		INDIRECT	
me	nos	me	nos
te	os	te	os
le, lo	los	le	los
la	las	le	las
lo		le	

The object pronoun always precedes the verb (te veo, os digo), except when the verb is in the infinitive, the gerund or the imperative, in which case the pronoun is enclitic (tráemelo, escríbele, búscaló).

- As object of a preposition:

mi	nosotros
ti	vosotros
él	ellos
ella	ellas
ello	

188. Te buscó a tí

Here in this example Te is the object of a the verb "buscar" and Í is the object of a preposition.

When a personal pronoun acts as object of a preposition, it goes accompanied by the prepositions: a or para.

## 2. Reflexive Pronouns:

me, te, se, nos, os, se

They are used when the action of a verb refers back to the subject

189. Te fuiste temprano.

The position of the reflexive pronouns is the same as that of object pronouns.

## 3. Relative Pronouns

The relative pronouns must never be omitted in Spanish

190. El libro que me diste.

They may be:

- The subject:

191. Esta es la niña que ganó el premio.

- The object:

192. El carro que vimos era bonito.

- The object of a preposition

193. El hombre con quien hablé era sabio.

Que: Can be the subject or a direct pronoun when the antecedent is a person or thing:

194. La niña que soñé.

195. El libro que compramos.

Quien: It is used only for persons; agrees in number with its antecedent. It can be the subject, the direct object or the preposition object.



196. Fué él quien lo dijo.  
 197. El señor a quien esperaba.  
 198. No había quien contestara.

El que, los que, la que, las que, el cual, la cual, las cuales and los cuales, sometimes replace QUE and QUIEN as the subject pronoun when the antecedent is a person and the relative clause gives extra information about the subject.

199. Vi a tu hermano el cual (que) cantaba.

Lo que, lo cual are used when the antecedent is a verb or a clause.

200. Lo que más me gusta es cantar.

CUYO: agrees in number and gender with the object possessed

201. El chico cuyo perro murió.

#### 4. Interrogative Pronouns

The interrogative pronouns bear a written accent

both in direct and indirect questions.

Qué?

Quien, quienes?

Cuál?

#### 5. Indefinite Pronouns

Alguien, Nadie, Cualquiera, Quienquiera

Alguno, Ninguno, Algo, Nada

All the indefinite adjectives may also be used as pronouns.

#### 6. Possessive Pronouns

	ONE POSSESSOR		SEVERAL POSSESSORS	
	Sing.	Plural	Sing.	Plural
1. Person	mío-a	míos-as	nuestro-a	nuestras-as
2. Person	tuyo-a	tuyos-as	vuestro-a	vuestros-as
3. Person	suyo-a	suyos-as	suyo-a	suyos-as

7. Demonstrative Pronouns

Masculine and Feminine

Neuter

	Singular	Plural
aquí	éste-a	éstos-as
esto		
ahí	ése-a	ésos-as
eso		
allí-allá	aqué1-aquella	aquellos-as
aquello		

## ENGLISH PRONOUNS

1. Personal Pronouns

## PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Subject

I

you

he

she

It

we

## OBJECT PRONOUNS

Complemento

me

you

him

her

it

us

7. Demonstrative Pronouns

	Masculine and Feminine		Neuter
	Singular	Plural	
aquí	éste-a	éstos-as	
esto			
ahí	ése-a	esos-as	
eso			
allí-allá	aquél-aquella	aquellos-as	
aquello			

## ENGLISH PRONOUNS

1. Personal Pronouns

## PERSONAL PRONOUNS

## Subject

I  
you  
he  
she  
It  
we

## OBJECT PRONOUNS

## Complemento

me  
you  
him  
her  
it  
us

you	you
they	them

Personal pronouns are never omitted in English. In affirmative sentences, the ones which function as subject are placed before the verb: (he writes), and the ones which function as complement go after the verb (I saw her). The personal pronoun I is always written by using capital letter I. It is used for impersonal constructions. (It is raining).

It is the point where English students have one of the main problems, because they tend to omit the subject, specially in long paragraphs talking about, the same person; and also when referring to the use of impersonal IT, because in Spanish we do not have such construction.

202. They came, ate, and then they went, but not:

\* they came, ate and then went.

203. Is raining            instead    It is raining

## 2. Reflexive Pronouns

- Reflexive pronouns are used to signal that the action of the verb refers back to the subject:

204. I did it myself.

- English reflexive verbs correspond to the Spanish pronominal particles: me, te, se nos, os, se. Note that not all the Spanish reflexive verbs are reflexive in English.

205. dormirse            to sleep

206. irse                to go

In the case of Reflexive Pronouns the problem appears when using each one of them, because in Spanish we only have to use me, te, os, etc, while in English we must use at the end of the phrase the pronoun plus the particle -self.

207. me corté.        I cut myself.

### 3. Possessive Pronouns:

	1 pers.	mine
Sing:	2 pers.	yours
	3 pers. masc	his

	fem.	hers
	neut.	its
	1 pers.	ours
Plural:	2 pers.	yours
	3 pers.	theirs

Possessive Pronouns are variable with the possessor, but invariable with the possessed thing or object. When the possessor is indefinite we use one's.

208. It is difficult to know one's skills.

Es difícil saber las habilidades de uno.

OWN is used to show belongingness:

209. Demonstrative Pronouns:

		Masc. and Fem.		neuter
		singular	plural	
here		this, this one	these these ones	this
there		that that ones	those those ones	that

## 5. Relative Pronouns

	Subject	Complement	Possessive
Human Beings	who what	whom that	whose
Things animals	which that	which that	whose of which

Relative Pronouns have the same form for singular or plural, masculine or feminine; so, they are invariable words. They can function as: subject, complement or possessives; when it functions as subject, they are never omitted.

209. The man who speaks

However, when it is used as complement, it can be omitted

210. The man who I spoke to or The man I spoke to.

WHO, WHOM is only used with people. WHICH is used for animals or things. THAT is used for people as well as things or animals.



## 6. Interrogative Pronouns

	Subject	Complement	Possessive
People	Who	Who, Whom	Whose
Things or animals	What, which	What, Which	Whose

When it is used for persons:

- WHO refers to the identity of someone (who-quien)
- WHAT refers to the function of someone (what-qué)
- WHICH refers to the selection (which-~~la~~ cual)

## 7. Indefinite Pronouns

The commonest indefinite pronouns are: each, either, several, all, some, any, little, few, much, enough, not any, none, other, another.

- Either, neither, and each are followed by a singular verb
- Some, is used in affirmative sentences, and

sometimes in interrogative ones.

- Any, is used in interrogative, and negative, singular or plural forms.
- Little and much are used with not count nouns and always with a singular verb.
- Few and many are used with count nouns and with a verb in plural form.

Little	-	poco	much	-	mucho
Few	-	pocos	many	-	muchos

- Each other and one another, are used to express reciprocity. The first one is found in constructions where the action of the verb indicates that there are two people who are involved and the second one when there are more than two persons who are involved.
- Other, as a pronoun is a variable word.

Ex: The other one is in the desk

- None, can be used with affirmative verbs.
- Ex: None can go the picnic.

## VERBS

A verb is a word for saying something about some person or thing. It is the part of the speech by which we are able to say what a person, animal or thing is, does or what is done to that person, animal or thing.

### Spanish Verbs

The spanish verb system is the most complex of the morphologically distinct classes. Verbs are inflected for FINITE (finite and non-finite) TENSE (or more accurately, for a combination of tense and aspect), MOOD, PERSON and NUMBER. These five categories produce a total of forty-six or forty-seven distinct forms. Also, Spanish verbs can be regular and irregular; both can be included in two main subclasses usually identified by the vowel in the infinitive ending: -ar, -er, -ir. Many irregular verbs follow a few major systems, in which a substantial number of verbs show the same modification from the regular verbs which consists of a modification of the stem as seen in the stem-changing verbs. There are also minor systems, where few verbs, or even a single verb may follow a particular rule.

The spanish verb form contains the following constituents:

1. Stem: which is the base of the verb
2. Theme: The theme class depends on the verb stem, since every stem belongs to a particular class. The theme is given in the endings of the verbs and can be: -ar, -er, -ir.
3. Tense-Aspect: Which distinguishes the sets and represents a residue of phonological material.
4. Person Number Marker: which derives from the subject

We will analyze the two last ones which we consider of major importance because the conflict they cause for Spanish speakers learning English

#### Tense Aspect Variations:

There is complete consistency of these markers within all sets except the future, where /rá/ alternates with /ré/; the imperative, where /O/ alternates with /d/ and the preterit, which has the most erratic pattern of the whole paradigm.

As we have seen, Spanish verbs express tense by the verb endings, however, we also use auxiliaries for forming certain tenses. Those tenses are the compound ones (perfective and progressive), in which, the auxiliary gives the tense. The auxiliaries which Spanish uses are: Haber, tener, ser and estar

1. Tener: (to have) is used as a main verb, and really means to hold to possess: Tengo una casa nueva.

2. Haber: (to have) is used only as an auxiliary to form the compound tenses of other verbs. It must therefore precede a past participle:

211. El niño había sufrido un accidente.

3. Estar: (to be) is used in speaking of any temporary condition or action or of the place in which a person or thing is:

Estamos siguiendo las instrucciones.

Estar before any present participle expresses what one is doing at the time:

212. Somos profesoras

Ser, is used to express property: Es mío.

Ser is also used to form the passive voice:

213. El hombre es buscado

Person Number Marker:

Spanish verbs have variations for all the persons, except for the first and the third singular which maintain an almost regular pattern given in most of the cases by the theme vowel. For instance, the present and past subjunctive, the imperfect and the conditional, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> singular always are the same.

**Present Subjunctive**

**Past Subjunctive**

yo escriba

yo escribiera - ese

tú escribas

tú escribieras - eses

él escriba

él escribiera - ese

nos escribamos	nos. escribiéramos - ésemos
vos. escribáis	vos. escribiérais - éseis
ellos escriban	ellos escribieran - esen

### ENGLISH VERBS

English verbs have only four or five distinct forms, with categories of tense, person-number, and two participles -imperfective and perfective-. They are divided into two main subclasses which are called weak and strong. Weak verbs have only four inflected forms and strong verbs five. the verb be has 8.

#### Tense Aspect

We have seen that in Spanish, tense is given by the verb endings (i.e. yo comí, ellos estudiaban); while in English verbs have only two simple tenses -present and past- plus six complex tenses using auxiliaries. In addition, transitive verbs form eight passive tenses, also with auxiliaries. Using the modals, a further eight modal tenses can be formed (including the traditional future). Four of these modal tenses are active and four

are passive.

So, it is important to clarify that in English the present simple is the unmarked tense. This means that it is used for very general time where specific marking for non-present time is unimportant and so unnecessary. In other words, any period that includes the moment of speaking (whether extending into the past or the future) can be regarded as a present time and use a present tense. The past simple, marked usually by inflection, is a marked tense and it is not so much past as non-present. English has no future simple tense, though, plenty of ways of talking about future time.

#### Aspect:

It is a characteristic of verbs, expressed in some languages by inflections, indicating the nature of an action as been completed or single called PERFECTIVE; or as been uncompleted, repeated or habitual called IMPERFECTIVE or PROGRESSIVE.

As we know, both, present simple, are unmarked for aspect; but if we wish, we can emphasize:



- a. That the action or state referred to by the verb is in some way completed or achieved, though still relevant. This is called perfective aspect, and is indicated by the use of have + past participle of the lexical verb:

214. I am reading.                      I was reading.

Speaking of aspect and tense in English and Spanish, we have seen that the auxiliary is the one which carries the tense, however, Spanish only uses them in two compound tenses -progressive and perfective- and the rest of them are signaled by the verb endings; in contrast, English requires more auxiliaries for expressing tense.

That is why Spanish speakers omit the auxiliaries in English constructions where an auxiliary is necessary, or in the case of past tense they use the auxiliary for past and also the verb in past tense.

- |   |                      |                        |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| * | I not study English. | I don't study English. |
| * | Understood you?.     | Did you understand?.   |
| * | Did I spoke?.        | Did I speak?.          |
| * | I did not worked .   | I did not work .       |

For this reason, we consider important to analyze English auxiliaries in a detailed way.

## AUXILIARIES

English auxiliaries are of three kinds: Modal auxiliaries, primary auxiliaries and the periphrastic auxiliary.

### 1. Modal Auxiliaries:

They can be classified into two groups:

#### GROUP A

can	could	} MODALS
may	might	
shall	should	
will	would	
must	ought to	

#### GROUP B.

need	} SEMIMODALS
dare	
used to	

The first eight words in groups A are often treated as pairs and analyzed as present or past of the same verb (ie. can-could) but in fact the second words in these pairs have very limited past meaning and are mainly non-past in usage, so they are all better treated separately, as verbs having one form each.

Modal forms, are not base forms. They can not be used as imperative or infinitive. They are finite, but need a lexical verb<sup>5</sup> with them, there is no inflection for 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular.

These modals -so called because they indicate MOOD precede verb stems and give them special shades of meaning like futurity, volition, possibility, probability, permission and necessity. They are often described as defective verbs because they lack a full set of forms and they have a great variety of communicative functions, which sometimes appear unrelated.

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<sup>5</sup> *Lexical verbs: so called because they carry full dictionary meanings. This group includes: Be, Do, Have, when used with full meanings (ie. Be = exist, have quality of; Do =perform; Have = take experience)*

The modals are sometimes called verb markers because they signal that a verb is about to follow. Most of them are said to have tense.

	Degrees of Freedom to act	Theoretical Possibility	Example
Scale top bottom	Complete freedom to Necessity to act/not act	Possibly true Necessarily true/not true	
Can (+ needn't)	general possibility (opportunity)	general theoretical possibility	You can catch the 5:50 train if you hurry What can the matter be?
Could	Sometimes past or tentative/hypothetical can		I could speak English when she was six I could telephone you tomorrow
may/may not	permission	likelihood	May I help you? Oh well, you may be right
might/might	occasionally past or tentative/hypothetical may		We might have a picnic Might I remind you of your promise
ought/ought not to ought should/should not shouldn't	(avoidable) obligation (Should = past of speech)	(avoidable) assumption shall only in rep	I ought to listen to my parents
shall/shall not shan't	obligation/promise	prediction	I shall kill him for this You shall be paid
will/will not won't	volition/insistence	strong prediction	If he will just wait two moments Will we ever discover the truth
would/would not wouldn't	sometimes past or tentative hypothetical will		You would marry him It every up, would you
must/must not (+need)	(unavoidable) necessity to act/not act	(unavoidable) deduction of truth	Must you go so soon? You must be crazy
can't (+ couldn't)	necessity not to act	(unavoidable) deduction of impossibility of truth	I cannot be there

The verbs in group B -need, dare and used to- are called SEMIMODALS because they behave partly like modals and partly like lexical verbs. they sometimes use question-inversion and not negation, and they sometimes use Do. Tag questions are usually with DO.

As modals, Dare and Need are mainly used in questions and negatives only; they have no -s inflection for third person singular and they are followed by bare infinitive. As regular verbs they take -s inflection, and regular need always takes to - infinitive.

#### DARE:

This modal occurs mainly in:

- A few set phrases:

I dare say (one word, first person singular only) roughly means "I expect or probably".

How dare you/he, etc. expresses annoyance at something already done.

You dare or Do not you dare, expresses annoyance at a proposed action and it is a kind of prohibition.

- Negative:

Daren't is used for past and present, but there are alternative regular forms.

215. She daren't tell him.

216. She doesn't/didn't dare (to) tell him.

217. I wouldn't dare (to) tell him either, would you?.

- Non-assertive:

Modal DARE is also common in subordinate clauses after expressions of doubt, uncertainty, though, again there are regular alternatives. When it is used as a regular lexical verb (i.e. with another modal -do not, would not dare, etc) it can take bare infinitive.

**NEED:**

- Need is the only one of these three verbs that fits into the modal meaning scale of possibility-necessity

- Need as modal is non-assertive and has only one form.
- Regular need to , with DO, can make a complete range of complex tenses
- The two forms mentioned above must be distinguished from regular need + DO:

218. I need money.

219. The whole place needs cleaning.

#### USED TO:

Used to has past simple only, and means past habits and states, usually no longer existing. Questions and negatives with DID are usual. Moreover, DID is virtually essential in tags.

## 2. PRIMARY AUXILIARIES

The second kind of auxiliary is constituted by the two primary auxiliaries HAVE and Be.

The auxiliary HAVE has five forms:

have	→	stem
has/have	→	present tense
having	→	present participle
had	→	past tense
had	→	past participle

The auxiliary BE has eight forms:

Be	→	stem
am	}	present tense
is		
are		
being	→	present participle
was/were	→	past tense
been	→	past participle

When immediately preceding a main verb, have, is followed by a past participle, as in "He has eaten" and be is followed by either a past participle, as in "the white cat was found", or a present participle as in "they studying".

When auxiliaries are employed in groups of two or three, an obligatory sequence is followed:



Modal + have + be
-------------------

	Modal	Have	be	
220.	I might	have	been	working
221.	John may		be	reading
222.	Mary and Charles	had	been	walking

### 3. PERIPHRASTIC AUXILIARY

The third kind of auxiliary is the periphrastic auxiliary DO (Do, does, did), and it is a special case. DO is a "dummy" form that has the following uses:

1. The carries the tense in questions and provides the inversion that signals a question.

223. Does your mother teach English?

224. When does he come?

2. In negative sentences it carries the tense and places the negative word NOT *between* an auxiliary and the verb following the pattern and modal auxiliaries.

225. Michael didn't study.

3. In declarative affirmative sentences it provides emphasis and requires a primary or a secondary stress

226. Alice did study.

4. In tag questions it replaces a main verb in the simple present or in the past tense.

227. She wants a cup of tea, doesn't she?.

5. In sentences beginning with a negative adverbial like seldom, never, not only, it expresses, in an inverted structure the tense.

228. Never did I dream of such a thing?.

#### PERSON NUMBER MARKER

English verbs are not inflected for person, except for the third person singular, in which an -s- or -es- is added to the base in both regular and irregular verbs.

I learn            He learns

We have to mention that at this point there is a conflicting problem for Spanish speakers learning English, since, they omit the -s- of the third person, making sentences like:

He speak a good English. **instead** He speaks a good English.

### 3.2. DESCRIPTION OF PHONOLOGY

If there is any point in each language in which geographical and social distinctions are clearly noticeable it is undoubtedly the field of pronunciation. That is why languages as Spanish, Russian, French, Chinese, etc, are blended in this sense, due to the number of accents that each language has.

The native language is an important factor in learning to pronounce a foreign language; this is clearly demonstrated by the fact that a foreign accent has some of the sound characteristics of the learners' native language. But it also interferes the proper learning of pronunciation of the target language.

Because of the role that native language plays, there has been a great deal of research in which the sound systems of English and other languages are compared and the problems and difficulties of learners predicted. This applies not only to the individual sounds but also to combinations of sounds and features

such as rhythm and intonation to put it very crudely, the more differences there are, the more difficulties the learner will have in pronouncing English. We can even say that there are more favoured languages. But we must be careful not to over-simplify the situation and think too much in terms of handicap or barriers to learn.

We commonly assume that if someone pronounces a foreign language like a native, they probably started learning it at an early age, because it is known that children learn foreign languages faster and more properly than adults, however it does not mean that adults can not acquire a native-like pronunciation.

In teaching English pronunciation it is important for the teacher as well as for the students that the teacher speaks the language with reasonable fluency and accuracy, so that this pronunciation is an acceptable model for imitation.

Teachers would not claim that a native -like pronunciation is necessary or even desirable for their learners. instead the most sensible teacher's goal must be intelligibility<sup>6</sup>. Since words are made up of sounds. If the foreign speaker substitutes one sound or feature of pronunciation for another, the listener

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<sup>6</sup> *Intelligibility is the speaker's ability to produce sounds and words which can be easily understood by most people*

would hear a different word or phrase from the one the speaker was aiming to say. However, there are cases in which the substitution of one sound for another would not cause unintelligibility because the sameness of the produced sounds make them understandable.

In trying to learn a new set of sounds, learners use a variety of strategies which can lead to intelligibility problems. Here, we have some of them: The use of intonation, the use of rhythm, the use of stress, sound substitutions, sound deletions, sound insertions, links between words; of which we will analyze the four last ones because they constitute the matter of our research work.

#### Sound Substitutions:

There are two kinds of sound substitution:

The first one which does not cause too much unintelligibility because the substitution sound is close enough to count as similar to the listener. for example, the substitution of the vowel /a/ as in part for /ɔ/ (caw)

And the second one, which cause a serious problem of intelligibility because the substituted sound is a significant

one in English as it happens when Spanish speakers pronounce the /s/ of sick instead of /th/ of think, resulting a different word.

#### Sound Deletions:

The speaker tends to omit or delete one or two of the consonants in a group cluster or certain consonantal sounds either at the beginning, middle or end of a word.

#### Sound insertions:

Non-native speakers may add sounds. For example, many learners when pronouncing words like: "speak", "spoon", "student" add a short vowel sound at the beginning of these words. So student may sound like "e-student", a two syllable word.

#### Links between words

Problems may also be at the borders of words when pronouncing two words in sequence. We have three kinds of links: a linking sound, a sound merger and a composite sound.

- a. A linking sound.- it is the insertion of a sound between the two words.

- b. A sound merger.- it is the merger of the last syllable of the first word with the first syllable of the second word.

Ex: "nice shoe" can be pronounced as "ny shoe".

- c. A composite sound.- It is the fusion of the sounds /s/ + /y/ at the border between two words as in: "this year" in which spanish speakers pronounce /ʃ/ instead [s+y].

So the phrase will sound quite like "the shear"

[ðe ʃiy ]

All of these strategies used by Spanish speakers sometimes do not cause unintelligibility, however, when they are applied, they can show certain kind of interference of the native language sounds, since speakers tend to substitute those existing sounds in his native language by the new ones to make easier the new pronunciation.

### 3.2.1 HIRARCHY OF SOUNDS DIFFICULTY

#### 3.2.1.1. Phonemes that are similar in both Spanish and English

##### Vowels:

i	as in feet	It is equivalent to Spanish as in <u>hilo</u>
ɛ	as in bed	It is equivalent to open e as in <u>perro</u>
a	as in car	It is equivalent to Spanish a as in <u>cargo</u>
ɔ	as in body	It is equivalent to Spanish o as in <u>corro</u> or a as in <u>vamos</u>
u	as in June	It is equivalent to Spanish u as in <u>uno</u>

English consonantal sounds which exist in Spanish do not cause **mis**understanding. Their bad pronunciation can cause a heavy foreign accent.

These consonantal sounds are:

Phonetic

Symbol



p	p <sup>h</sup> as in put	It is an aspirated p. It has no Sp. equivalent
	p as in open	It is equivalent to Spanish. p as in papá
k	k <sup>h</sup> as in key	It is an aspirated k. It has no Sp. equivalent
	k as in oaken	It is equivalent to Spanish. K as in Kiosko, casa
l	l as in late	It is equivalent to Spanish. l with little variation at the point of articulation
s	s as in face	It is equivalent to Spanish. S as in sopa
f	f as in face	It is equivalent to Spanish f but it differs at the point of articulation
h	h as in house	It is equivalent to Spanish h but differs in the manner of articulation
m	m as in mouse	It is equivalent to Spanish m but differs in the manner of articulation
d	d as in doctor	It differs from Spanish d at the point of articulation but it is similar to it.

n	n as in nose	It is equivalent to Spanish n as in nene, but differs in the manner of articulation
ch	as in cheen	It is equivalent to Sp. ch as in chaleco
y	y as in yes	It is equivalent to Spanish as in yo
r	r as in run	It causes heavy foreign accent because it is articulated further back than Spanish.
t	t as in stop	It is equivalent to Spanish t as in todo
t	t <sup>h</sup> as in take	It is an aspirated t, and does not have Spanish equivalent
	tt as in battle	It is a trilled t which is equivalent to Spanish d, but not exactly
w	w as in will	It is equivalent to Spanish as in Wilson

### 3.2.1.2. Phonemes that do not exist in Spanish

The group of sounds we will mention below cause high or low degree of misunderstanding because Spanish learners associate the new sounds with sounds in their native language. This is why we consider important to analyze them and the problems that their mispronunciation cause.

#### Vowel Sounds:

The vowels whose mispronunciation causes problems are:

/ɪ, e, æ, ʊ, ə, ʌ /

- |   |           |   |
|---|-----------|---|
| ɪ | /ɪ/ bit   | Learners may use the Spanish vowel sound /i/. this may lead to confuse those pairs of words such as: /ɪ/ - /i/ bit-beat |
| æ | /æ/ man   | Learners always pronounce this sound using Spanish vowel /a/  |
| ə | /ə/ adult | Spanish students tend to pronounce this vowel as the Spanish vowel /a/ or /ɔ /  |

- ^ /ʌ/ but This vowel is also pronounced as Spanish vowel /a/
- U pull Spanish Speakers may use Spanish vowel /u/ (uno) confusing it with the vowel used in pool /u/

#### Diphthonghes:

- e /ei/ ages Learners tend to use Spanish vowel sound /e/ causing misunderstanding in such words like /ei/ [ɛ] ages - edges
- o /ou/ mode Learners pronounce this sound using Spanish vowel /o/

It is important to clarify that there is no variation in length in Spanish vowels so, learners will tend to make English vowels equally long, which will be too short for the English ear. eg. car /kar/

#### Consonantal sounds:

The consonantal sounds that cause problems are : /b, v, ð, θ, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, d, and ŋ /

For better explanation we will treat them in pairs to make clear the contrast

**b**     **[b] - v [v]**     Spanish speakers do not distinguish between  
**ban**         **van**         /b/ and /v/, so, they tend to substitute one  
   for the other in either cases, causing  
   misunderstanding in words such as: ban and  
   van. In English the difference between the  
   two is that /b/ is bilabial, oralstop and  
   /v/ is labiodental fricative, therefore they  
   are two different sounds.

**th**     **[θ] - th [ð]**     These two sounds do not have equivalent in  
**ether**     **either**     Spanish and learns watch out for -t- or -s-  
   of Spanish words 'tina' and 'sin' as  
   substitutes for [θ]. And -d- of 'dia' for  
   [ð] as in then. These two sounds are  
   varieties of /d/. They are different  
   because [θ] is voiceless and [ð] is  
   voiced.

**[ð]**                     In Spanish a sound which is similar to English  
   [ð] occurs only in intervocalic position (eg.  
   cada) while in English it can occur either at the  
   beginning or end of words; (eg. this [ðɪs], with

/WIð/ or before /s/ (eg. clothes /kloðz/). so it is not surprising that its occurrence in other environments result difficult for Spanish learners.

[θ]

In spite of [θ] occurrence in Spanish we have to point out that it is characteristic only in Spanish dialects.

The letter th, used to represent the two English phonemes of our concern ( θ, ð ) have the following phonemic values:

a. [θ]

Occurs always at the beginning of words, except the words in group b below. Also in author, either, catholic, method, panther, arithmetic and others from latin origin. And even in one syllable words such as: health, north, month, and their derived forms.

b. [ð]

Occurs in initial position in the following words: than, they, then, this, that, them, though, thus, the, there, therefore, thencefort.

In the middle of words from Germanic origin:  
brother, clothing, fathom, leather, etc.

In final position only in bequeath, both, smooth,  
to mouth, beroth, with.

c. [θ] or [ð] Occurs depending on whether is a noun or a  
verb:

NOUN		VERB	
bath	[bæθ]	bathe	[bæð]
wreath	[riθ]	wreathe	[rið]
lath	[læθ]	lathe	[leð]
mouth	[maʊθ]	to mouth	[maʊð]
breath	[brɜθ]	to breath	[brɪð]

d. /t/ This sound occurs in a very limited group of words  
because the most likely to happen is that initial th  
be pronounced / θ / or / ð /: Thames, Thailandia,  
Anthony.

e. /θ/ And / θ / occurs in words as: asthma /æθmə/ e  
isthmus /ɪsməs/

And [θ] occurs in words as: asma: [æsmə] e  
istmus [ɪsməs]

**s**            **z**     These    two    sounds    contrast    in    English.  
**sip**          **zip**     The      first    one    exist    in    Spanish  
but the second does not, the problem is that  
Spanish students use Spanish S instead of English  
s or z.

/s/ or /z/ can occur:

In initial position /s/ is always pronounced [s],  
except sure [ʃʊr] and sugar [ʃʊgə]. And also  
when it is followed by c eg. scissors [sɪzəz].  
but /z/ in initial position is voiced sound eg.  
zeal [zil]

In singular forms in words ending in as, is, os,  
us /s/ is pronounced [s]: bus [bʌs], miss [mɪs]  
except: is [ɪz], has [hæz], as [æz], was  
[wɒz], his [hɪz]

At the end of words, plural nouns, verbs in third  
singular person or forms derived from Saxon  
Genitive we have to distinguish:



1. If [s] is preceded by /p,t,k or /θ / as in lips [lɪps] cats [kæts], s sounds [s]
2. When /s/ is preceded by other consonants distinct from the above mentioned or vowels, /s/ is always /z/ as in bags [bægz], rings [rɪŋz]

When /s/ is followed by a voiced consonant it sounds always [z] prisma [prɪzəm] and raised [reɪzɪd]

In words Ending in se the pronunciation of /s/ depends on whether the word is a noun or a verb

NOUN

VERB

use [jus]

to use [juz]

close [klos]

to close [kloz]

/ʃ / /ʒ / These two sounds do not exist in Standard Spanish, that is the reason why it is difficult for a Spanish speaker to produce these two variants.

They are laxer than the previous ones and are produced with lip rounding

At the end of words both can occur while at the beginning only /ʒ/ can occur

In word endings: -SION, -SURE, -SUAL, preceded by a vowel, /s/ sounds /ʒ/

revision [rɪvɪʒən]

measure [mɛʒər]

usual [juʒwəl]

/ʒ/ occurs in the following environments

[s,c,t] +  $\begin{bmatrix} e \\ i \end{bmatrix}$  + vowel + consonant

apreciable [əprɪʃjəbl]

essential [əsɛnʃəl]

action [ækʃən]

expression [ɪksprɛʃən]

j / dʒ /

jet

It is an unfamiliar sound for Spanish speakers, so, they will substitute it by Spanish ch /tʃ/ and say chet /tʃɛt/ instead of jet /dʒɛt/

This sound can occur in both prenuclear and postnuclear position

judge [dʒʌdʒ]

[dʒ] results from a process of palatalization of /g/ or /d/ plus /j/. For instance strange [streɪndʒ]. Also it occurs in internal position as in stranger [ˈstreɪndʒr]

The endings: geon, gion, gian, geous, gious are also palatalized:

pigeon [ˈpɪdʒən]

religion [rɪˈlɪdʒən]

georgian [dʒɔːrdʒən]

georgous [dʒɔːrdʒəs]

religious [rɪˈlɪdʒəs]

n / ŋ /  
sing

In the middle of words (eg. bank [bæŋk] this sound will cause no problems. However, at the end of words the learner may:

- a. Pronounce the /g/, so the word sing will end with a consonant cluster
- b. Substitute /n/ as in 'no' so, wing may be pronounced as win [wɪn] causing unintelligibility

'ŋ'

This phonetic symbol corresponds to the two letters ng, in this sequence the most likely is that the two sounds be pronounced [ŋ] as a simple sound when they occur at the end of words as in long [bŋ]

However, there are some cases where in internal positions the sequence ng is pronounced as two different sounds [ŋg]. According to the following rules:

If ng is part of the same syllable the two letters are pronounced [ŋ] as in winged [wɪŋd]

If in a word the sequence ng does not belong to the same syllable both sounds are pronounced, eg. finger [fɪŋgə]

In adjectives where ng occurs in internal position and are followed by -ISH the two sounds are pronounced [ŋ] as in young-ish /jʌŋɪʃ/

Comparatives and superlatives do not eliminate the pronunciation of the voiced velar g

Adverbs ending in -LY preceded by ng are pronounced with /ŋ/: wrongly /rɔŋli/

C H A P T E R     I I

## INTERFERENCE IN GRAMMAR

In learning foreign languages we find that each one has its own rules for arranging its components into grammatical structures. For this reason we think grammar is the most striking area of a language, because it happens that when a person learns a foreign language the most likely is that he tends to apply his own native rules in the learning of the target language grammar.

That is why we think useful analyze the conflicts between the structures of a language which has already been learned -Spanish- and the structures of the aimed language (English).

Concretely, through this chapter we are interested in knowing if the Spanish grammatical structures interfere in the learning of English grammatical structures.

Basically, we developed a descriptive investigation by observing the development of the classes directly, making some recordings, correcting the differente extra-class homework -in order to find the errors committed by the students- and finally by applying a survey test in order to know the mastery of the basic grammatical structures of both English and Spanish.

All this work has been done with all the population constituted by 29 students who were registered at 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of the English Faculty of the Universidad Técnica Particular of Loja, during the period October 94- february 95 to whom, we thank sincerely for their invaluable collaboration during the development of the present research work. And our sincere acknowledge to the teachers of the different subjects who helped us to make real our goal.

After analyzing the written and recorded material we have found the following results:

## 2.1. GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES

### 2.1.1. Nouns

#### Gender in nouns

When we speak about gender in nouns we can say by sure that there is no Spanish interference since students grasp easily that English nouns do not have inflection for gender as Spanish nouns.

Number:



When referring to number we found out that some problems of interference appear in learning English. So, we will mention them:

First, we observed that students have problems in forming the plural of nouns because they make sentences like:

- \* The womansg of my country
- \* The childs are playing
- \* There were then wolfs in the zoo
- \* The sheeps are in the country

In all these sentences we have observed that Spanish students add an S -like in spanish nouns- to form plural as in the cases of womans (women), childs (children), wolfs (wolves), sheeps (sheep)

The second type of error is the pluralization of plurals. We have detected the following errors (specially when talking)

- \* how many mens are in the room?
- \* The childrens were at the picnic yesterday

- \* The peopleses of my country are friendly
- \* The sheeps were sacrificed
- \* The furnitures are beautiful
- \* They analized the datas.
- \* Sons in Lows.
- \* The shops assistants were polite
- \* He is collecting money for the blinds.

In these sentences, we can see that there is a strong tendency to add an S to the nouns that already are plural.

The possessive case:

The possessive case is a structure in which there is a lot of interference because in Spanish we do not have the "apostrophe: + S ('S) to signal possession; instead we use "de" whose English equivalence is OF for that purpose. However, we must clarify that OF is also used to express possession but only for inanimate possessors.

The following are examples of mistakes committed by the students:

- \* The house of Mary
- \* The father of Peter
- \* The coat of my father
- \* The son of Anny
- \* The book of Charles
- \* The dog of my daughter

Noun Phrase:

The most common mistake in constructing English Noun Phrase is in the use of the definite article since it is highly frequent used in Spanish but restricted in English.

Concerning with this problem it has been found that students make the following mistakes:

They use it before sports:

- \* I like the football
- \* She knows the rules of the chess very well
- \* She has got the flu
- \* The modern music scares me

- \* Michael knows about the modern painting
- \* He has got the measles
- \* The architecture is an art
- \* She loves the dance
- \* The old painting is understandable
- \* Rolando Vera practices the athleticism
- \* The ordinal and cardinal number

They also use THE before meals:

- \* Where did you eat the lunch?
- \* At what time is the breakfast?
- \* It is the tea time
- \* Did she eat the dinner with her family?
- \* I don't like the hot food
- \* My father hates the onions
- \* The alcohol is not good for the health
- \* The orange juice is delicious

Also THE is used before abstract nouns:

- \* They did not know the strenght of the love
- \* The death surprised him
- \* The laziness is the mother of all vices
- \* The life is beautiful

- \* That tree represents the faithful, the hopeness and the charity
- \* The love is a beautiful sentiment.

THE is also used before titles followed by names or last names preceded by Mr, Mrs or Miss.

- \* The doctors said she was very sick
- \* The president Sixto traveled to New York
- \* The captain Smith was killed
- \* The doctor Pérez was not there
- \* The Miss Mc. Donald came after him.

Some students also used THE before days of the week and seasons

- \* They traveled to Galapagos in the winter
- \* The spring is a beautiful season
- \* The summer is an enjoyable season
- \* Alice visited her parents the Saturday
- \* The Sunday was a nice day to take a walk
- \* The Monday is the beginning of a new week.

Also it was found that students have problems in the use of the indefinite articles A, AN.

1. The use of the indefinite article is obligatory in English when referring to professions; however we have observed that students tend to omit it. In this case it may be because in Spanish we do not use the article before professions. Ex. soy profesor, es albañil, es mecánico. So, they make sentences like:

- \* She is a teacher
- \* I am architect
- \* He is mechanic
- \* Mary is dentist
- \* John is lawyer
- \* Helen is doctor

2. The second type of mistake was the use of the definite article A before plural nouns instead of using SOME with the proper plural form.

- \* I have a house
- \* There are a bags on the table
- \* He has a books in his library
- \* He bought a cars
- \* She gave him a apples
- \* There were a girls in the party
- \* There are a agreements.

### NOMINALIZATION

Eventhough, nominalization in English is neither as active, nor as extensive as in Spanish, (English nominalizes indefinite and demonstrative pronouns; descriptive adjectives and verbs), some problems appear.

The first one of them appears because English requires the "dummy carrier ONE" to nominalize indefinite and demonstrative pronouns as well as descriptive adjectives, while in Spanish we do not need the "dummy carrier One". Students make mistakes like:

- \* There were two boys. The poor was kind
- \* The black is on the table and the blue is

on the desk

- \* The little went to my house
- \* The nice I bought was the most beautiful
- \* The big on the window was the worst
- \* The curled and haired was fat
- \* The important was taught

The second problem was found in nominalizing verbs with the particle TO. We observed that students omitted the particle TO before verbs, making sentences like:

- \* Smoke is harmful.
- \* Study is important.
- \* Walk by the river is nice.
- \* Find the solution was almost impossible.
- \* Visit historical places is a good experience.
- \* Be kind is a good quality.
  
- \* Memorize the most important items was necessary for the exam.
- \* Be punctual requires organization.

The third problem students have is in nominalizing verbs with -ING because they omit this suffix which is obligatory in nominalizing English verbs, making



sentences like:

- \* Buy things is amusing
- \* Read books is necessary for increasing knowledge
- \* Investigate is important for developing science
- \* Visit new countries is a good idea
- \* Eat is necessary
- \* Camp alone would be dangerous
- \* Drink alcohol is harmful for health
- \* Swim is healthy.

### 2.1.2. Adjectives

As we mentioned before, adjectives are words that express or describe some quality of the noun.

Spanish adjectives have inflection for number and gender while, English adjectives do not have such inflection. Dealing with adjectives we have found some problems of interference which we will refer to.

One of the problems is the addition of the -S suffix to adjectives when qualifying English nouns.

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One of the problems is the addition of the -S suffix to adjectives when qualifying English nouns.

- \* The blacks houses
- \* The greens books are over there
- \* The bigs ones were more than the small ones
- \* The tallis were important
- \* The happies girls were dancing
- \* The importants documents were copiled

Other problem is the one referring to the position of the adjective within the sentences. As we know, in Spanish Adjectives go after the noun they modify, position in which English adjectives are never permitted. However, some students placed the adjective after the noun they modify, the same as they do in Spanish.

- \* The girls found two balls little
- \* The students brought the books interesting
- \* We bought two dresses wonderfuls
- \* The girls happy were dancing
- \* She went to the party with her dress nice
- \* The student little is intelligent
- \* I like the woman pretty
- \* There is an agreement gender with the noun they modify

Another problem referring to adjectives is the one related with nouns acting as adjectives. In this case, when students want to refer to a group of people having a common characteristic they always pluralize these adjectives as we can see in the following sentences.

- \* The reaches are not kind
- \* Peter gave money for the blinds
- \* The government does not worry about handicappeds
- \* The deafs are intelligent
- \* The poors live far from the city
- \* The blacks are lazy people

In analyzing comparatives and superlatives we concluded that there is another problem. It is that Spanish students do not take into account the English rules for forming those degrees of comparison, placing MORE and MOST before any adjective.

- \* The more tall boy was handsome
- \* She was the most nice girl I have seen
- \* I went and saw the more happy smile
- \* The most big building is famous
- \* The more small city was wonderful

- \* It was the more short toy I found
- \* It was the more dark street I have ever seen

Referring to possessive adjectives, we found another problem, concerning specially with the use of HIS, HER and ITS. Students use any one of them for any person. It is because Spanish "SU".

- \* His house            when referring to her house
- \* Her book            when referring to him
- \* His milk            when referring to it

### 2.1.3. Pronouns

In the case of pronouns there is a considerable number of errors. The most striking problem is the use of the impersonal IT. Through our research we have seen that students do not use it in impersonal sentences.

- \* , She didn't want to believe what her mother told her, but was the true
- \* I think is the only way of doing that
- \* Is important to be on time
- \* Is raining today
- \* He said: "Is necessary to study every day"

- \* The student said: "But in Spanish is obligatory"
- \* Is nice to see the stars
- \* Is wonderful to travel around the country

The other problem with pronouns is obviously the inappropriate use of reflexive pronouns

ERRORS:

SPANISH	ENGLISH	ERRORS
<u>Me</u> golpié	I hit myself	I hit
<u>Me</u> coté el dedo	I cut the finger myself	I cut
<u>Se</u> cayó	It fell down itself	It fell down
<u>Me</u> lavo	I wash myself	I wash

We found a third problem of interference in the use of pronouns. It concerns with the omission of pronouns. We observed that students tend to omit pronouns specially in long constructions where it is necessary to repeat the pronoun each time we need to refer to the person performing the action, as in the following example:

"Yesterday, Mary had an exciting day first, went to her office, then, went to fulfil an appointment with her doctor, then, went to her house's friend to ask for a favour, then went to the bank and finally went to her house, prepared lunch and ate".

In this paragraph, the student has mentioned the performer of the actions only one time, then he has referred to that person only by the actions she performed, the same as in Spanish we do.

When pronouns are used as complement or object of a sentence, They are never omitted in English, but in Spanish they are implicit in the verb. So, the fourth problem of interference appears. In this case students omit the object pronouns as in:

ERROR	ENGLISH	SPANISH
I saw going away	I saw <u>him</u> going away	Lo ví alejarse
I gave to you	I gave <u>it</u> to you	Te di el libro
I bought for you	I bough <u>it</u> for you	Te lo compré para tí
They visited yesterday	They visited us yesterday	Nos visitaron ayer

They called early	They called <u>us</u> early	Nos llamaron temprano
She read for him	She read it fo <u>him</u>	Se lo leyó para él.

#### 2.1.4. Verbs

English verbs are very specific and most of the times they do not have the same connotation as in Spanish. So, we must be careful in finding their appropriate meaning and using them properly.

However, through this work we have observed that some students do not pay attention to the different connotations of verbs producing incorrect sentences like:

- \* Students do not put attention to the instructions
- \* He constructed a building
- \* María wanted her husband too much
- \* She did a cake for ther mother
- \* He is put a black suit
- \* She was lossing her time in buying luxurious things



- \* Alice knew a man in the desert
- \* She shut her eyes momentarily

However, the main problem of interference when using verbs is in the use of the proper auxiliary. In our research work we found that some students have difficulties in using Modal Auxiliaries

## ERROR

## CORRECT

Can I go to dance with Mary?  
Mary

May I go to dance with

She may died

She could have died

She may not understand the  
understand the problem

She could not  
problem

She mays study

She may study

Meanwhile, a great percentage of students make errors when using the auxiliar DO, (does, did), We have analized them because it is a highly frequent error; though, we think they can be classified as interlingual errors.

A group of students do not use DO in questions and negatives

- \* You speak?
- \* Where you go?
- \* I not study English
- \* He go?
- \* They died?
- \* When you arrived?
- \* When they come?
- \* What you understand?

Other students do not use the auxiliary DO instead, they use the main verb in past tense in constructing questions and negative sentences.

- \* I not traveled through the world
- \* When you spoke?
- \* Where they ate?
- \* Susan not worked yesterday
- \* They not knew how to do it
- \* She not loved him
- \* They not loved each other

It is also difficult for the students learn to use DOES for the third person singular when talking in the present tense, instead they use DO for all persons.

- \* She do not know what to do to save her father
- \* But he do not say anything
- \* Do not Peter know where the treasure is?
- \* Do Margaret understand why her father lives sad?
- \* Mr. Brown do not traveled alone
- \* The boy do not speak french but his father does
- \* English do not take "the" before names
- \* "Mil cien" do not take a determiner.

Errors with verbs HAVE and BE are not of the kind of the interference of the mother tongue, they mainly derive from the learner strategies and from the mutual interference of items within the target language (interlingual errors). We have some examples of this kind which are most frequently in our students. However we will not quantify them because they are not of our concern.

- \* We are go to school every day
- \* He did not agreed

- \* It was happened
- \* I could heard it
- \* He does not has
- \* We must to hope
- \* She cans write
- \* The population growing fast
- \* I am interesting in that
- \* This house is belonged to me.

#### 2.1.5. Person Number Maker

Referring to the use of the third person singular we found out students, do not use the third person singular. They make sentences like:

- \* She speak English very well
- \* Possessive in Spanish have two forms
- \* I see what she want
- \* She look very sick
- \* Mary study hard in order to pass the course
- \* The cat eat its milk
- \* Mary's dog want too much meat
- \* He get up early in the morning
- \* Vincent live far from the city

In the learning of English grammar we have found that foreign students face considerable problems of native language interference as it was shown through the above analysis. Besides that, it was observed that Spanish students consider English learning difficult and sometimes they are affraid about the learning of it.

Thinking on this, we got interest in finding the reason for those negative behaviours and after asking the students we realized that it was the result of a very artificial introduction to the study of English right at the beginning when their learning habits were being established. This poor orientation seems to result chiefly from: strong emphasis given to grammar and to "correctness" as well as to the delayed introduction of practice in speaking.

Actually, the teacher is so much concerned about the memorization of grammatical rules and correctness, but too little about their practice. Students memorize the rules they know, for example that they have to add S to verbs when referring to third person singular but they do not have the opportunity to apply the rule constantly that is why, they are not capable of using that rule in oral and written speech.

On the other hand, correctness is a good mechanism for avoiding mistakes, however, teachers aware of their responsibility hope their students do not commit errors and they are always interrupting the student for correcting errors. Teachers' intention is excellent but the effect on the students who have not been trained from the beginning to react automatically is negative.

Of course, we agree in that correctness is important, but we think that it should be done in such a way that the students do not realize that he is being corrected. For this, we propose that students should be corrected through constant practice by means of different activities that permit them to internalize the rules.

Moreover, the delayed introduction of practice in speaking causes negative results. Students who have not been trained from the beginning in oral speech have demonstrated that neither their minds, nor their physical reflexes have been disciplined to prompt reaction. There are certain basic structures that have to be conditioned in the students' mind, have to become more or less automatic with them. These provide them with a source from which they can find words and structures to convey

their thought while they are not fluent enough to shape their own sentences.

Really, students start learning the language with little or not oral practice and when demanded to answer something they become embarrassed, they find it difficult to understand the teacher and at the same time to work out in their minds the form of their thoughts and to present them in meaningful English sentences, so the most likely to happen is that they construct the answer in their native language, then they translate it into English, it is the moment when interference appears. Of course we can not blame on teachers on this phenomenon; they do what they can but it is the curriculum and the time that force them to carry on the learning this way.

This problem highly observed inclusive in advanced students of our university has worried teachers who have looked for the way of solving the problem. We consider it so important, however, it is not sufficient because it is not only important the way teaching is given but also the predisposition and interest students have to learn English. A state of emotional relaxation is very important in the process of learning. The mind has to be free from stress to allow the new notions to flow easily

into the nervous centers causing them to vibrate and become engaged in the mind.

All the above exposed make us think it is so important to avoid the problem of interference from the beginning for that reason we have permitted to propose some suggestions in order to diminish the problem of interference:

- In order to master the complicated structure of language efficiently students attention should be drawn to one -and only one- new point at a time. Not only should grammatical patterns be presented in their simplest forms, but should be enough drill for control and sufficient review for mastery. The student needs the experience that will enable him to call on any pattern in this repertory, fill it with any appropriate vocabulary item he has learned, and place sentences in a logical sequence without any thought of analysis, that is without thinking in his native language to construct the answer. This experience can be given only in drill sessions which exhaust a large proportion of the possibilities of sentence formation that exist at any point in the student's progress. That is, more and simpler drills should be carried out with dispatch and efficiency, with



the range of choices confined to a single point in each drill.

- The process of language learning can be viewed as an experience by means of which new habits of sentence formation are acquired and used for communication. So, it should result useful to help the student to acquire good habits from the very beginning by means of different drills, to avoid the big transfer problems that could arise later, due to bad habits.

- It is necessary to prevent the student when it is observed that he would make a false analogy in any pattern that it is being learned. Only a carefull explanation of the limitations and restrictions of that structure, could supply the student security to the moment of using it.

- Encourage the student to be active in the learning process, involve him in the different experiences of learning activities by allowing him to express his initiative in the development of classes.

- The grammatical structures should not only be presented in written exercises, but also in oral

exercises where they can be practiced in oral communication because it is noted that here is where most transfer errors occur, without this mean that the students do not know the different grammatical rules of the language; the problem is that they get influence from their native language.

- Oral and written composition would provide the student the opportunity to become acquainted with a wide variety of English constructions and learn the limits within which these can be correctly applied if the teacher introduces them at an early and appropriate level.

- The native language of the learners should be used judiciously when comprehension is at a complete standstill and you have honestly made every effort to explain whatever he needs explaining in the target language. There is nothing as frustrating to students as feeling completely left out of an entire lesson because they didn't understand something at the beginning of it.

- It is important to keep the motivation of the students at a high level, not only by varying the

presentation of the instructional materials but also by giving students a sense of security, avoiding boring classes.

- The teachers should provide for individual differences, taking into account that students have different learning capacities and may come to classes with different degrees of skill and also that students learn in different ways and at a different rates. Some can learn by intensive repetition and overlearning; some learn best by trial and error; and some learn by applying generalizations to a new situations, so, the different classroom activities should be prepared with such awareness.

## STATISTICAL TREATMENT

### PROCESSING AND VERIFICATION OF THE HIPOTHESIS # 1

#### HIPOTHESIS:

"The master of the Spanish grammatical structures as a native language incidences significantly on the learning of the English grammatical structures".

#### DEPENDENT VARIABLE:

Significative Incidence on the learning of the English Grammatical Structures.

In order to verify the hipothesis # 1 we will analyze the students' domain of both Spanish and English grammatical structures through the following indicator: percentage of students who master the following grammatical structures: Nouns: gender and number; Nominal phrase: definite and indefinite articles; adjectives; pronouns, verbs and person number markers in:

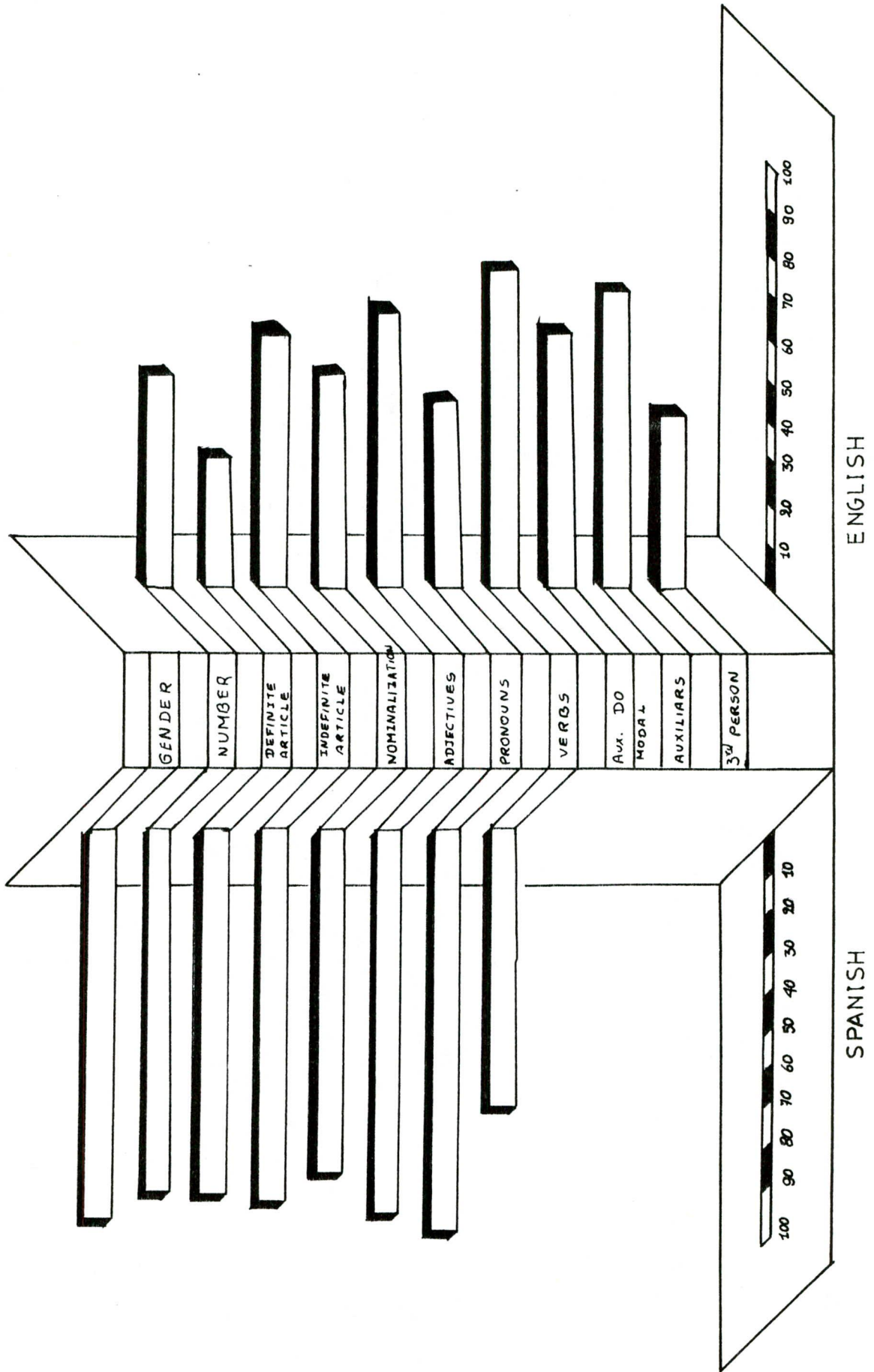
- Simple and compound sentences
- Affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences in present, past and future tenses.

C H A R T   N o .   1

**COMPARATIVE CHART OF THE MASTERY OF ENGLISH AND SPANISH GRAMMATICAL  
STRUCTURES BY STUDENTS FROM 5<sup>th</sup> AND 7<sup>th</sup> CYCLES OF THE U.T.P.L.**

GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES		SPANISH		ENGLISH	
		STUDENTS	%	STUDENTS	%
N O U N S	GENDER	28	96,55	----	----
	NUMBER	26	89,66	15	51,72
NOMINAL PHRASE	DEFINITE ARTICLE	26	89,66	9	31,03
	INDEFINITE ARTICLE	27	93,10	18	62,06
NOMINALIZATION		25	86,20	15	51,72
ADJECTIVES		28	96,55	20	68,97
PRONOUNS		29	100,00	13	44,82
V E R B S		20	68,97	23	79,31
	AUXILIAR "DO"	----	----	18	62,06
	MODAL AUXILIARIES	----	----	21	72,41
PERSON NUMBER MARKER: THIRD PERSON SINGULAR		25	86,20	12	41,37
			90,08		56,55

GRAPHIC # 1



In the above chart and graphic # 1 we can appreciate the correspondent percentages of the mastery of the grammatical structures of both Spanish and English. It is important to point out that considering grammar as an extense area to deal with, we have chosen only few structures, those which according to our criterion were considered more important and in which we thought more problems of interference appear.

Analyzing the chart we have that 28 students representing the 95,55% of the population master gender in Spanish nouns, while, in English we do not have any percentage because English does not have any inflection and this constitutes an advantage for Spanish students who grasp easily that rule. In what to number concerns we observe that 26 students representing 89,66% of the population master the rules for number while in English only 15 students show to use it correctly. In this case, we can deduce that eventhough in Spanish a great number of students use well the number; in Spanish it does not constitutes an advantage for Spanish students because they use the same Spanish rules in English making many mistakes when forming English plurals.

When analyzing the Nominal Phrase we learned that

the main problems are in the use of definite and indefinite articles in English, so, we wanted to know the number of students who use them correctly in both English and Spanish. The results were: 26 students representing a significative percentage of 89,66% use them well in Spanish while, in English there is a marked difference since only 9 students representing 31,06% of the population use well the definite article and 18 (62,06%) the indefinite article. It permits us to appreciate that even in Spanish definite and indefinite articles are used correctly it does not mean that in English it happens the same. In this way we prove that interference in the use of those articles is big, since it was observed that students use them in the same way as they use in Spanish; so a big percentage of error was produced due to English definite and indefinite articles are not used in the same way in both languages. As we know, in Spanish definite articles are used very frequently while in English they are very restricted.

Referring to Nominalization in Spanish it is observed that 25 students representing 86,20% apply correctly the process of nominalization while in English only 15 students, that is to say 51,72% do that. As we can see, there is a marked difference between the number



of students who handle well the process of nominalization in both English and Spanish.

Referring to English verbs we have to deal also with auxiliars (be, have, do modal auxiliars) which are so close to verb system since all the tenses require them. Spanish uses only four auxiliars (ser, estar, haber and tener) which are similar to English be and have causing no problem for Spanish students; being Do and Modal Auxiliars the ones which show highly transfer errors due to they do not exist in Spanish. As it is noticed in chart #1, which shows that 18 students representing 72,41% and 21 students representing 62,06% misuse Do and Modal Auxiliars respectively showing in this way the interference of the native language in the learning of the target language.

As we mentioned before, English verbs have only the -S inflection for the third person singular in the present tense; contrary six inflections Spanish has for present tense. It shows the simplicity of the English present tense. However, as the chart shows it does not constitute an advantage for Spanish students -as it should be- because we observed that only twelve students that is 41,37% handle English third person singular

without any problem. This is a low percentage if we consider that in Spanish all the students master the six inflexions for present tense.

The obtained data show us that there is a total domain of the Spanish grammatical structures, as it is shown by the percentages which go from 68,97% that corresponds to verbs to 100% in the mastery of pronouns contrary to English where the lowest percentage is 31,06% that corresponds to the use of the definite article in the nominal phrase and the higher one corresponds to the use of verbs with 79,31% of mastery. Summarizing we have that the domain of the Spanish grammatical structures, as it is shown by the percentages which go from 68,97% that corresponds to verbs to 100% in the mastery of pronouns contrary to English where the lowest percentage is 31,06% that corresponds to the use of the definite article in the nominal phrase and the higher one corresponds to the use of verbs with 79,31% of mastery. Summarizing we have that the domain of the Spanish grammatical structures reaches a percentage of 90.08% of mastery and English reaches only 56,55% of mastery.

All the above explanation let us affirm that the Spanish grammatical structures interfiers in the learning of the English Grammatical structures. It is seen that students have a strong tendency to structure sentences in the same way they do in their own native language - Spanish- without taking into account the English rules which in spite of being well known by the students, they are not used satisfactorily specially when talking the nominalization process is simpler that the English one since in Spanish we do not have to use the "dummy carrier One' to nominalize adjectives; neither the particle TO, nor the sufix -ING to nominalize verbs. So, students tend to nominalize those parts of speech in the same way as in Spanish, showing in this way the interference of the native language on the target language.

On the other hand, chart and graphic # 1 also shows that 28 students who represent a significative percentage of 81,20% use correctly adjectives in Spanish, while a group of 20 students representing the 68,97% utilize them without problem. In this case, there is an evident native language interference because we observe that students use English adjectives in the same way as Spanish adjectives are used that is to say pluralizing or placing them wrongly. All this, reflects that the

mastery of Spanish adjectives is interfering the learning of English adjectives.

When talking about Spanish Pronouns we have that all the students, that is to say the 100% master them, on the contrary, in English only 13 students who represent 44,82% do it correctly. In the case of pronouns, the major problem constitutes their omission in contexts when referring to the same person, which is not permitted in English. Moreover, a highly frequent error in English is the omission of the impersonal IT which does not exist in Spanish, being it the reason for its constant omission specially in impersonal sentences.

Continuing with our analysis, we notice in chart # 1 that the percentage of Spanish verbs is the lowest one; since only 20 students representing the 60,97% master them. Actually the Spanish verb system is more complicated than the English one; the variety of inflections that it has for each person as well as the aspect -perfective and progressive- make it difficult to master even for native speakers. However, the opposite happens with the English verb system which has very few inflections: BE has 8; DO has 5; HAVE and irregular

lexical verbs have only four because past simple and past participle are the same, irregular lexical verbs have 3, 4 or 5. Also verbs have the -S inflection for the third person singular. All of this, constitutes an advantage for Spanish native Speakers and maybe this is the reason why a highly percentage of students (23 students; representing 70, 31%) handle English verbs correctly.

Consequently, the facts before mentioned, the percentages found in our investigation and the mistakes analyzed through all the chapter constitute valid arguments to affirm that the hypothesis #1 is true that is to say: "The mastery of the Spanish grammatical structures as a native language incides significantly on the learning of the English grammatical structures"

C H A P T E R      I I I

## INTERFERENCE IN PHONOLOGY

In this chapter, we will analyze how Spanish Phonology interferes in the learning of English Phonology. As we say before, there are some sounds which are similar in both languages and do not cause much problem in learning them, but they may cause heavy foreign accent. On the other hand, there is another group of sounds that do not exist in Spanish, so, their mispronunciation causes misunderstanding.

The following analysis about errors in pronunciation is based on the recorded data obtained from the students of 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cycles of the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, which constitutes the object population of our research work.

### VOWELS:

From the point of view of problems caused by the likeness or difference of the two involved languages -in phonological system- the vowels are the ones that more resistance present at the moment of being described and imitated.

This difference or likeness can occur in acoustic terms, even though for practical purposes it is also convenient to consider them in articulatory and auditive terms.

Phonemes: / i / and / I /

In this case, a Spanish student learning English faces two sounds which are not totally unknown for him but whose domain causes a big problem from the very beginning because he is not able to grasp that these phonemes share some phonetic characteristics which are not exactly similar to the characteristics of his native sound /i/, which is the cause for his confusion.

This problem arises from the fact that the student does not perceive that these two sounds differ in length -the one [ɪ] is shorter than the other [i]-, so, trying to imitate /I/ he produces [e] as in the case of "it" [ɪt] which is mispronounced [et], or in the case of /i/ in which the student tends to reduce the sound.

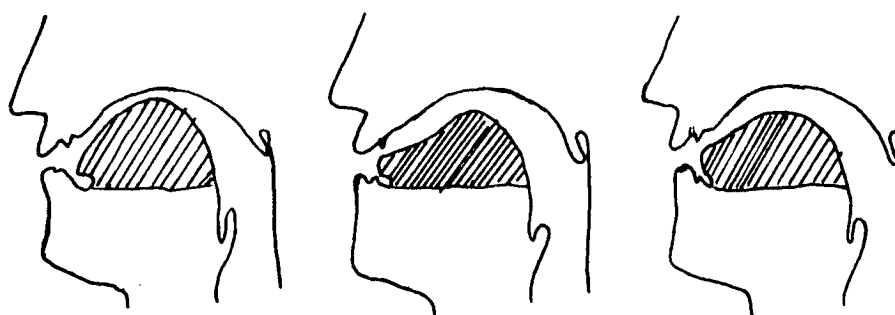
Summarizing, the two English phonemes differ one from the other in length and also with the Spanish one as it is showed in the following figures:



ENGLISH [i]

ENGLISH [ɪ]

SPANISH [i]



Here, the main source problem seems to be the length of these two vowels which is not perceived by most of the students, who mispronounce them.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
ship	[ʃɪp]	[ʃip]
it	[ɪt]	[it]
this	[ðɪs]	[dis]
significant	[sɪgnɪfɪkənt]	[signɪfɪkənt]
silk	[sɪlk]	[sɪ'lk]
pig	[pɪg]	[pɪ'g]
prince	[prɪns]	[pɪns]
sick	[sɪk]	[sɪ'k]
frivolity	[frɪvəlɪtɪ]	[frɪvəlɪtɪ]
injury	[ɪndʒərɪ]	[ɪndʒurɪ]
malignant	[mə'lɪgnənt]	[mə'lɪgnənt]
interference	[ɪntər'fɪərəns]	[ɪntərferəns]

interpret	[Intɹpɹɪt]	[interprɪt]
interfere	[Intɹfɪr]	[interfɪr]
indirect	[Indɹɛkt]	[indɹɛkt]

The other problem with these two sounds arises from the fact that students trying to pronounce English /I/ correctly, they tend to pronounce Spanish /e/ for English /I/.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
hinder	[hɪndɹ]	[hender]
it	[ɪt]	[et]
this	[ðɪs]	[des]
involve	[ɪnvɔlv]	[envolv]
inward	[ɪnwɹd]	[enward]
its	[ɪts]	[ets]
itself	[ɪtself]	[etself]
ink	[ɪnk]	[enk]

---

7 It is necessary to clarify that these type of errors were found mostly at the beginning of words

The last problem concerning with these two sounds is the shortening of the long English vowel /i/.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
bees	[bi:z]	[bis]
meal	[mi:l]	[mil]
seat	[si:t]	[sit]
tease	[ti:z]	[tis]
seed	[si:d]	[sid]
seen	[sin]	[sɪn]
lead	[li:d]	[lid]
heel	[hi:l]	[hil]
sleep	[sli:p]	[slip]
heal	[hi:l]	[hil]
sheep	[ʃi:p]	[ʃip]

In order to avoid the mispronunciation of the English vowel /I/ -which is the one more problem presents- we can help the students with the following explanation:

---

<sup>e</sup> It has been adopted this symbol / i̇ / for Spanish i to differentiate it from English / i /

The sides of the tongue touch upper premolars and molars, with the back of the tongue as to pronounce Spanish i but with the middle of the tongue a little bit farther from the alveolar ridge as if in a concave position. We have to use minimal pairs to show the contrast. There has to be a lot of practice.

Phonemes: / æ /                      / ʌ /

These two phonemes are the ones which more problems cause due to the variations they experiment within the proper language -English- and also because they do not exist in Spanish.

/ æ /      This is a neutral vowel which has the characteristics of being lax, low, front and unrounded

/ ʌ /      It is a low centralized sound and articulated back in the mouth. Its pronunciation has an approximated equivalence to the Spanish vowel a in Spanish words: 'nazi', 'madera' 'wars'.

The above mentioned differences of the two vowels among themselves and with our Spanish vowel /a/ are not

perceived by Spanish students learning English and this is why most of them tend to pronounce all of them in the same way as Spanish vowel /a/

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
back	[bæk]	[bak]
bad	[bæd]	[bad]
past	[pæst]	[past]
passage	[pæsɪdʒ]	[pasædʒ]
pat	[pæt]	[pat]
sack	[sæk]	[sak]
chap	[tʃæp]	[tʃap]
slap	[slæp]	[slap]
but	[bʌt]	[bat]
duck	[dʌk]	[dak]
cover	[kʌvə]	[kover]
does	[dʌs]	[das]
fudge	[fʌdʒ]	[fadʒ]
funny	[fʌni]	[fani]
public	[pʌblɪk]	[pablik]

In this group of vowels we find more difficult to pronounce English /æ/, for that reason we suggest that the student needs to have an auditive training to

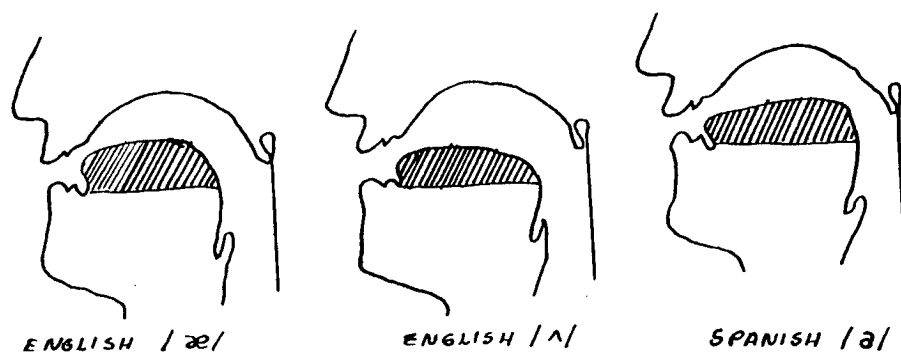
differentiate / æ / from Spanish vowel /a/ using Spanish words (pan, las, sal) pronounced as English ones if it is necessary.

This vowel is pronounced with the lips tenser than Spanish /a/ and with the back of the tongue as to pronounce Spanish /e/.

To teach these phonemes [ ʌ, æ ] it is useful to begin with [ ʌ ] because it is similar to Spanish /a/ in phrases as that's, fun, wonderful, much; then we could introduce [ æ ] until students discriminate the two English sounds. It is convenient also to perform exercises containing the two phonemes

but [ bʌt ]

man /mæn/



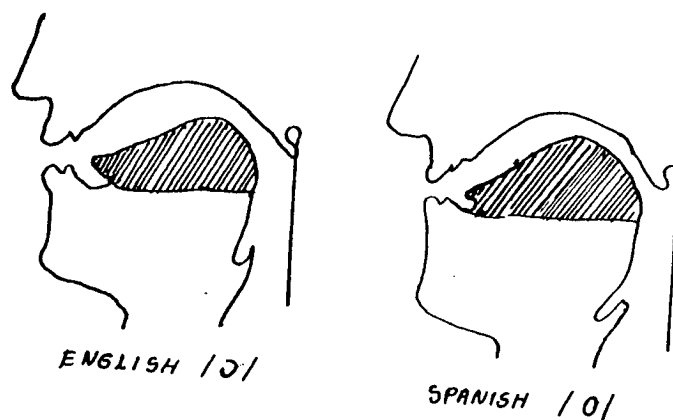
Phoneme: / ɔ /

This phoneme has acoustic characteristics close to Spanish /o/, but English / ɔ / is longer and requires

certain acoustic adjustment in direction to /u/. This vowel causes some trouble for Spanish students learning English. In our research we found the students pronounce it like Spanish /o/ without the proper lengthening.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
bought	[bɔt]	[bot]
born	[bɔrn]	[born]
border	[bɔrdɪ]	[border]
cough	[kɔf]	[kof]
cause	[kɔz]	[koz]
off	[ɔf]	[of]
often	[ɔfən]	[ofen]
fall	[fɔl]	[ofen]
law	[lɔ]	[lo]

To pronounce well this vowel, students have to lengthen it as to pronounce three Spanish /o/. Example: bought (boooight)



Phoneme: / ʊ /

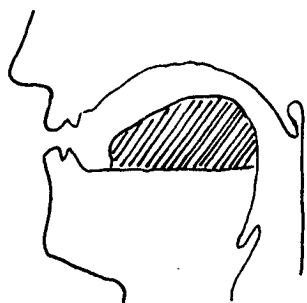
This phoneme is longer and tenser than Spanish /u/ and English /ʊ/ requires more liprounding and the lips in the position as to pronounce /o/ but pronouncing /ʊ/

From the auditive point of view, the two English phonemes /ʊ/ are associated by Spanish students with their native vowel /u/.

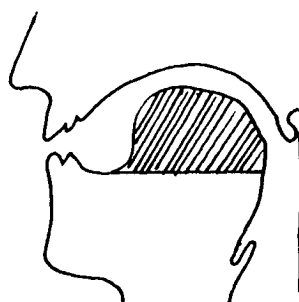
WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
pull	[pʊl]	[pul]
bull	[bʊl]	[bul]
good	[gʊd]	[gud]
full	[fʊl]	[ful]
poor	[pʊr]	[pur]



put	[pʊt]	[put]
book	[bʊk]	[buk]
could	[kʊd]	[kud]
would	[wʊd]	[wud]
should	[ʃʊd]	[ʃud]
wood	[wʊd]	[wud]
moon	[mun]	[mun]
pool	[pu:l]	[pul]
mood	[mu:d]	[mud]
roof	[ru:f]	[ruf]
moon	[mun]	[mun]
room	[rum]	[rum]
root	[rut]	[rut]
cool	[ku:l]	[kul]
fool	[fu:l]	[ful]



ENGLISH /u/



SPANISH /u/

Phonemes: / ɜ / / ə /

Both phonemes represent sounds that are totally unknown for Spanish speakers; being its mastery fundamental due to the fact that both of them, specially the second is the commonest one in English.

/ ɜ / It is a central sound pronounced between /e/ and /o/; very similar to /a/ but little longer.

/ ə / This symbol represents neutral vowel sounds, without any stress, often used at the beginning, middle or end of words. It is not clearly identifiable with any other vowel sound. It is the typical sound of /a/ in ago, of the letter /e/ in over, of the letter /i/ in sanity, etc.

As these sounds do not exist in Spanish, they are so difficult to pronounce for Spanish speakers learning English, but the problem is yet bigger if we consider that the shwa is a sound of the majority of the unaccented nuclei of derived and compound words as we will observe in the following chart:

/ɑ/	in <u>part</u> icle	/ə/	in <u>partic</u> ular
/e/	in <u>pen</u> ce	/ə/	in <u>six</u> pence
/ɒ/	in <u>con</u> duct	/ə/	in <u>con</u> duct
/æ/	in <u>val</u> id	/ə/	in <u>val</u> idity
/ɔ/	in <u>war</u> d	/ə/	in <u>back</u> ward
/u/	in set <u>to</u>	/ə/	in <u>to</u> day
/ɝ/	in <u>Ber</u> th	/ə/	in <u>Her</u> bert
/ʌ/	in <u>so</u> me	/ə/	in <u>hand</u> some
/aɪ/	in <u>shir</u> e	/ə/	in <u>York</u> shire
/eɪ/	in <u>fac</u> e	/ə/	in <u>pre</u> face
/ɛə/	in <u>ther</u> e	/ə/	in <u>There</u> isn't
/aʊ/	in <u>mo</u> uth	/ə/	in <u>Play</u> mouth
/oʊ/	in <u>mo</u> st	/ə/	in <u>top</u> most

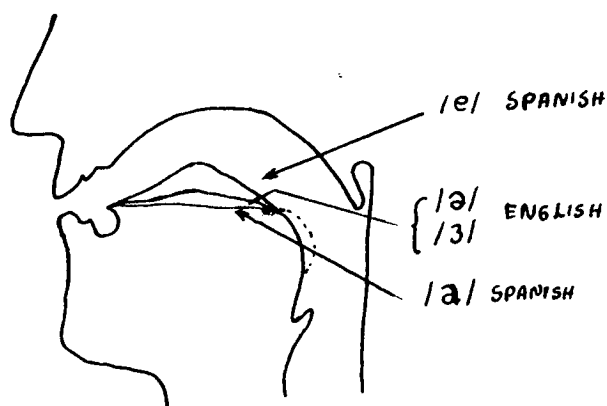
The most likely problem in pronouncing this vowel is that students replace the neutral shwa sound with the distinct vowel sound of the spelled vowel.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
<u>di</u> gestion	[dʌdʒestʃən]	[didʒestʃən]
<u>ac</u> cording	[əkɔrdɪŋ]	[akɔrdɪn]
<u>col</u> laborate	[kəlæbəret]	[kolæboret]
<u>edi</u> fy	[ɛdɪfaɪ]	[edifaɪ]

dramatic	[drəmə'tɪk]	[dramatic]
adult	[ədʌlt]	[adult]
educate	[edʒə'keɪt]	[edʒu'keɪt]
habitual	[hə'bɪtʃʊəl]	[hə'bɪtʃʊəl]
direction	[dɪ'rekʃən]	[dɪ'rekʃən]
hamburger	[hæm'bɜ:gə]	[hæm'bɜ:ɡer]
advantage	[əd'væntɪdʒ]	[əd'væntədʒ]
possessive	[pə'zɛsɪv]	[pə'sesɪv]
editor	[ɪ'dɪtə]	[ɪ'dɪtər]
combustion	[kəm'bʌstʃən]	[kəm'bʌstʃən]
advice	[əd'vaɪz]	[əd'vəʊs]
select	[sə'lekt]	[selekt]
domestic	[də'mɛstɪk]	[də'mɛstɪk]
doctor	[dɒktə]	[dɒktər]

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	COMPOUND WORD	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	ERROR
Fatal	[fɛtəl]	fə'tality	[fətæ'lætɪ]	[fətælɪtɪ]
exclaim	[ɛxklaɪm]	ɛxkla'mation	[ɛxklaɪ'mɛʃən]	[ɛxklaɪ'mɛʃən]
prospect	[prɒspekt]	prɒs'pɛcting	[prɒspek'tɪŋ]	[prɒspektɪŋ]
diploma	[dɪplɒmə]	dɪplə'matic	[dɪpləmæ'tɪk]	[dɪplə'mætɪk]
grammar	[græmə]	græ'matic	[græmə'tɪk]	[grə'mætɪk]
homogenize	[həmə'dʒənəɪz]	həmə'dʒi:nɪəs	[həmə'dʒɪniəs]	[həmə'dʒɛniəs]

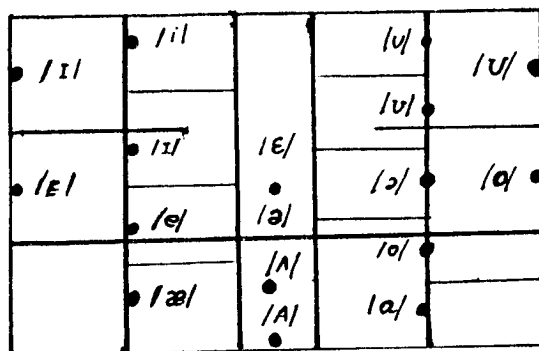
In order to pronounce well the shwa sound we can explain students that the position of the lips is neutral, that the tongue should be slightly upper as to produce Spanish /a/. It is also suggested that the tip of the tongue should be pressed toward inferior teeth. If the student is not able to do this job by himself it is suggested to maintain his tongue in low position with an object, the same as it is done when the doctor examines the throat and also he has to do the mental effort of wanting to produce an /e/ instead of an /a/.



If we compare Spanish vowel system with English one, we can see clearly the source of the difference and problems that students have to face and also we can establish four levels of difficulty beginning from the less difficult one to the most difficult one.

1. the less difficult English vowels seem to be /i/, /u/, /ɔ/ and /ʌ/ because they are close to Spanish ones.

2. In the second group are /I/, /U/, /O/. The phonemic limit of vowel /I/ coincides almost exactly with the center of Spanish /e/, that is why it is difficult to appreciate the differences between English /I/ and /e/. In the same way, English vowel /U/ is mostly perceived as Spanish /u/ but a little part of it is covered by Spanish /o/. The same we can say of English vowel /o/ whose pronunciation is near /a/ rather than /o/.
3. The inferior part of the diagram contains the most complex vowels. Spanish /a/ covers all the phonemic area of the three English phonemes: [æ], [ʌ], [ɑ], the major part of /o/ and a little part of /e/.
4. The center of the diagram is occupied by /ɛ/ and /ə/ which are totally unfamiliar to our phonetic system, consequently the most difficult of acquiring for learners. For a better explanation we include the diagram:



## Problems with Consonants:

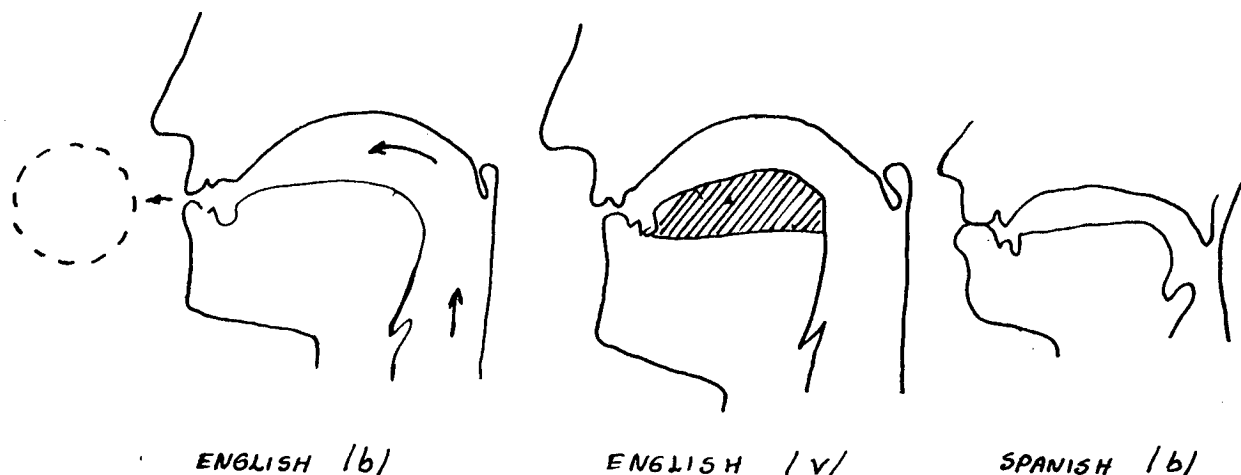
## Consonants /b/ and /v/

The problem with these two English phonemes is not of identification but of production; since Spanish has only one sound for both morphemes contrary to English that has two different sounds. That is why Spanish students learning English pronounce them equally causing misunderstanding in those English pairs of words such as: ban / *bæ*n / van / *væ*n / which have different meaning.

The most likely error is that students do not pronounce them differently as it would be. Most of them pronounce both sounds as Spanish /b/ is pronounced.

WORD /b/	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	WORD /v/	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
base	[ <i>b</i> es ]	vase	[ <i>v</i> es ]	[ <i>b</i> es ]
best	[ <i>b</i> est ]	vest	[ <i>v</i> est ]	[ <i>b</i> est ]
ban	[ <i>b</i> æn ]	van	[ <i>v</i> æn ]	[ <i>b</i> an ]
bind	[ <i>b</i> oɪnd ]	vine	[ <i>v</i> aɪn ]	[ <i>b</i> aɪn ]

baste	[bæst]	vaat	[væst]	[best]
bat	[bæt]	vat	[væt]	[bat]
beer	[bir]	veer	[vir]	[bir]
bent	[bent]	vent	[vent]	[bent]
bite	[baɪt]	vile	[vaɪl]	[baɪl]
bin	[bɪn]	vin	[vɪn]	[bɪn]
bold	[bold]	volt	[volt]	[bɒlt]



Consonants     / θ /     and     / ð /

These two English phonemes are articulated at the same point of articulation, the only difference is that / θ / is voiced and / ð / is voiceless.

The problem arises from the fact that Spanish Students use Spanish /s/ or /t/ in attempting a right pronunciation of / θ / causing misunderstanding



We have found that students use /t/ instead of /θ/ in words like

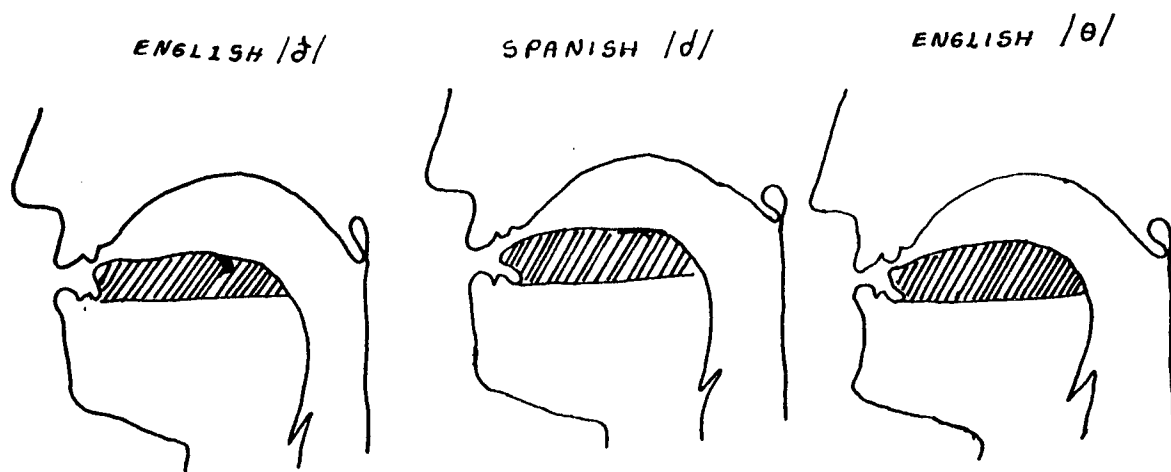
WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
thirsty	[θɜːstɪ]	[tɜːstɪ]
think	[θɪŋk]	[tɪŋk]
thick	[θɪk]	[tɪk]
thank you	[θæŋkjʊ]	[tɛŋkjʊ]
athletic	[æθlɛtɪk]	[atlɛtɪk]
ethnic	[ɛθnɪk]	[ɛθnɪk]
throw	[θrɔ]	[tro]
mythology	[mɪθɔlədʒɪ]	[mitɔlədʒɪ]
thing	[θɪŋ]	[tɪŋ]
enthusiastic	[ɪnθʊzɪæstɪk]	[ɛnθʊsɪastɪk]

While another group of students pronounce /s/ instead of /θ/.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
think	[θɪŋk]	[sɪŋk]
authentic	[ɔθentɪk]	[ausentɪk]
Catherine	[kæθerɪn]	[kaserɪn]
earth	[ɛθ]	[ɛs]
thing	[θɪŋ]	[sɪŋ]
thirsty	[θɛstɪ]	[serstɪ]
health	[helθ]	[hels]

In the case of [ð] students substitute English [ð] for Spanish [d]

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
father	[faðɾ]	[fader]
otherwise	[ʌðɾwaiz]	[oderwaiz]
they	[ðe]	[dey]
then	[ðen]	[den]
bother	[baðɾ]	[boder]
those	[ðoz]	[doz]
that	[ðæt]	[dat]
brother	[brʌðɾ]	[broder]
together	[təgəðɾ]	[togéder]
although	[ɔlðó]	[oldó]
there	[ðer]	[der]

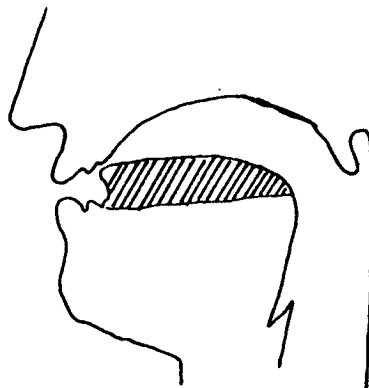


Consonants /s/, /z/.

Due to the variation of the rules for a right pronunciation of /s/ and /z/, it is difficult for a learner to know when one or the other sound is pronounced.

This problem has been observed in a group of students who pronounce /s/ in almost all the cases where /z/ must be pronounced.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
is	[iz]	[is]
his	[hiz]	[his]
as	[æz]	[as]
was	[wɔz]	[was]
has	[hæz]	[has]
dogs	[dɔgz]	[dɒgs]
tours	[tʊrz]	[tʊrs]
rings	[rɪŋz]	[rɪŋs]
to abuse	[təbjuːz]	[təabjuːs]
to close	[təkloʊz]	[təkloʊs]
possess	[pəzɛs]	[posɛs]
possession	[pəzɪʃən]	[posɪʃən]
visit	[vɪzɪt]	[bɪsɪt]



ENGLISH /z/-/s/

Consonants: / ʒ / / ʃ /

These two phonemes do not have counterpart in Spanish, that is why they are so difficult to master. They are articulated between the alveolar ridge and the hard palate with the tongue touching the molars and premolars, when there is vibration of the vocal cords / ʒ / is pronounced but when not / ʃ / is pronounced.

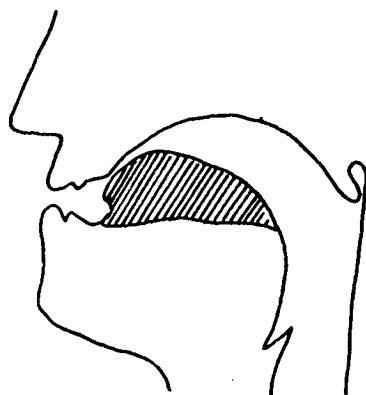
The problem that arises from these two phonemes is not actually of transference but of confusion because learners find that most of the words which are pronounced with / ʒ / are written with /s/ (casual) and pronounce English / ʃ / where an English / ʒ / must be pronounced.

We have found that this problem appears in a big percentage of students who pronounce bad this consonant.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
pleasure	[pléʒʁ]	[plɛʃʊr]
vision	[viʒən]	[biʃən]
exposure	[ɛkspozʁ]	[ɛksposʊr]
revision	[riviʒən]	[reviʃən]
casual	[kæʒʊəl]	[kəʃʊəl]
conclusion	[kənkluzən]	[kənklʊʃən]

confusion	[kən'fju:ʒən]	[kɒnfju:ʒən]
conversion	[kən'veɜ:ʒən]	[kɒn'veɜ:ʒən]
division	[dɪ'veɪʒən]	[dɪ'veɪʒən]
diversion	[dɪ'veɜ:ʒən]	[dɪ'veɜ:ʒən]

ENGLISH /ʒ/-/ʒ/



Consonant: / ʒ /

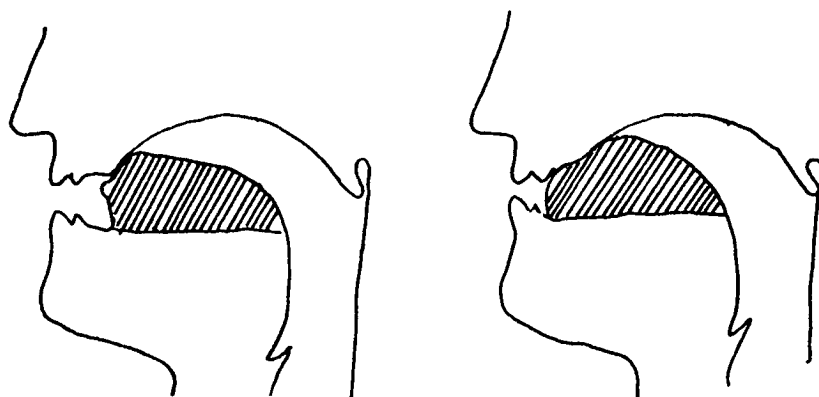
Even when this sound does not have counterpart in Spanish, there is no major problem because learners assimilate it easily and since the articulation of /ʒ/ is similar to the sound that corresponds to Spanish /ch/, the only difference is in voicing. English /ʒ/ is voiced.

Through our analysis we have observed that students understand easily that /ʒ/ corresponds to the morpheme *g* and also to the morpheme *g* before /e/ or /i/ as in gem, giant, angel.

judge	[dʒʊdʒ]
genitive	[dʒenətɪv]
jewelry	[dʒuəlɪrɪ]
gerund	[dʒerənd]

ENGLISH /dʒ/

SPANISH /tʃ/

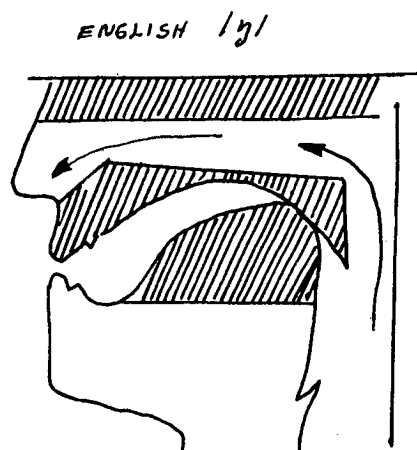


Consonant: /ŋ/

In English and in Spanish velar /ŋ/ is similar, the only difference is that in English /ŋ/ is articulated backer than Spanish one.

The mistake which the Spanish learner is likely to make is to pronounce his native /n/ instead of English /ŋ/, that corresponds to the two spelled letter ng; specially when they occur at the end of words like long, pink.

WORDS	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION	MISPRONUNCIATION
sing	[sɪŋ]	[sɪn]
proceeding	[prəsiːdɪŋ]	[prɒsɪdɪn]
studying	[stʌdɪŋ]	[stɑdɪn]
strong	[strɔŋ]	[stɹɒn]
song	[sɒŋ]	[sɒn]
pink	[pɪŋk]	[pɪnk]
link	[lɪŋk]	[lɪnk]
bank	[bæŋk]	[bɒnk]
hang	[hæŋ]	[hɒn]



If there is one certain thing about English pronunciation it is that there is almost nothing certain about it, the multiple sounds as well as the multiplicity of rules and the great number of exceptions make English pronunciation unpredictable and so difficult. Moreover, English as any other language has a variety of dialectical variations from the Standard form to the one

spoken by less educated people to whom it is almost impossible to understand for that reason we will deal only with the pronunciation of Standard English.

As we have noticed through this analysis, the learning of English vowels and consonants -which do not exist in Spanish- is troublesome for Spanish students; this may be because the tongue is in wrong position, either too close or far away from the roof of the mouth. Many learners will be able to produce new sounds simply by imitating what they hear, but if students seem to be unable to imitate, then the teacher can help them by giving directions. The teacher does not need to be an expert phonetician to do this. If teachers have some basic knowledge and a sensitivity to feel what is happening when they pronounce a particular sound, then they can give guidance and hints to learners, which may help to achieve the sound. In order to produce a particular sound, the vocal organs must assume quite a complex set of postures and carry out a set of precisely ordered movements.

The learning process can be facilitated if the task is structured in some way and if the learner is aware exactly what he is involved in, but for this, learners need the help of teachers, because they do not do the job by themselves.



Here we propose some suggestions in order to help students to get a good pronunciation:

- Firstly, something which is important is to help students to be aware that the phonological systems of English and Spanish differ in that the combinations of features which make up the phonemes and allophones of the one language are systematically different from the combinations of features which make up the phonemes and allophones of the other; consequently, their pronunciation is going to be also different and students should concentrate their attention in perceiving the features which make different the sounds in the target language in order to achieve them properly.
  
- Learning to speak a new language, implies the learning of new habits of pronunciation. To reach a good pronunciation, it is important to form correct habits from the very beginning since to learn incorrect habits, then correct them later, is inefficient for the teacher and frustrating for the student.
  
- When correcting bad habits build up in the students' mind it is important to take into account that to make corrections varies from student to student, from class to class and

from time to time, therefore, teachers should be aware of those differences in order to benefit from correction

- In general, immediate corrections should be made during the pronunciation drill phase of the lesson and during the pattern practice activities. However, it is necessary sometimes to allow some errors unless they impede understanding. It is very important, specially when the student is expressing an idea or letting his imagination hold away. When he has completed his thought, the teacher could add something complementary and then make the correction in a low voice. It could help in some way to avoid mistakes because students will not feel fear of expressing their ideas, consequently, they will trust themselves and will feel freedom to express their thought without doubting.

- Spanish students as native speakers are familiarized with their native sounds and psychologically prepared to hear his own sounds; to overcome this predisposition it could be profitable to provide a wide explanation of the sound patterns of the target language in order to set him at the beginning of the way of learning the new language. Also it could be helpful to do much practice with drills to prevent

pronunciation problems and help specially older students to acquire acceptable production of the English sounds.

- Being aware of the difficulty that some students face for talking and also that too much practice is necessary to achieve a good pronunciation we think that it could be good to give students plenty opportunities to hear and practice all the members of the new system in order to let them to perceive and internalize those new sounds.
- The differences between the sounds of the new system should be learned, it could be done by letting students to hear the new sounds together so that students have the opportunity to hear those differences perceive them and consequently learn them.
- Commonly, sounds are heard into words, only for studying purposes they are heard isolated, so students should learn to distinguish and understand them in the way sounds are presented; for that reason, it could be necessary that sounds be presented in different combinations, in different positions and in different sequences.
- It is necessary to emphasize the sounds which result unfamiliar for the students to reach a complete achievement

of them, inclusive students could hear and imitate them with minimal pair drills; in this way, students are permitted to hear sounds substituted for each other in the same surroundings.

**STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF THE HYPOTHESIS # 2****HYPOTHESIS # 2**

"The English words which contain sounds that do not exist in Spanish are more difficult to assimilate for Spanish native speakers".

**DEPENDENT VARIABLE:**

Correct pronunciation of English words which contain sounds that do not exist in Spanish.

In order to verify the hypothesis # 2 we have utilized the following indicator:

Percentage of students who pronounce correctly words which contain sounds that do not exist in Spanish.

C H A R T    N o .    2

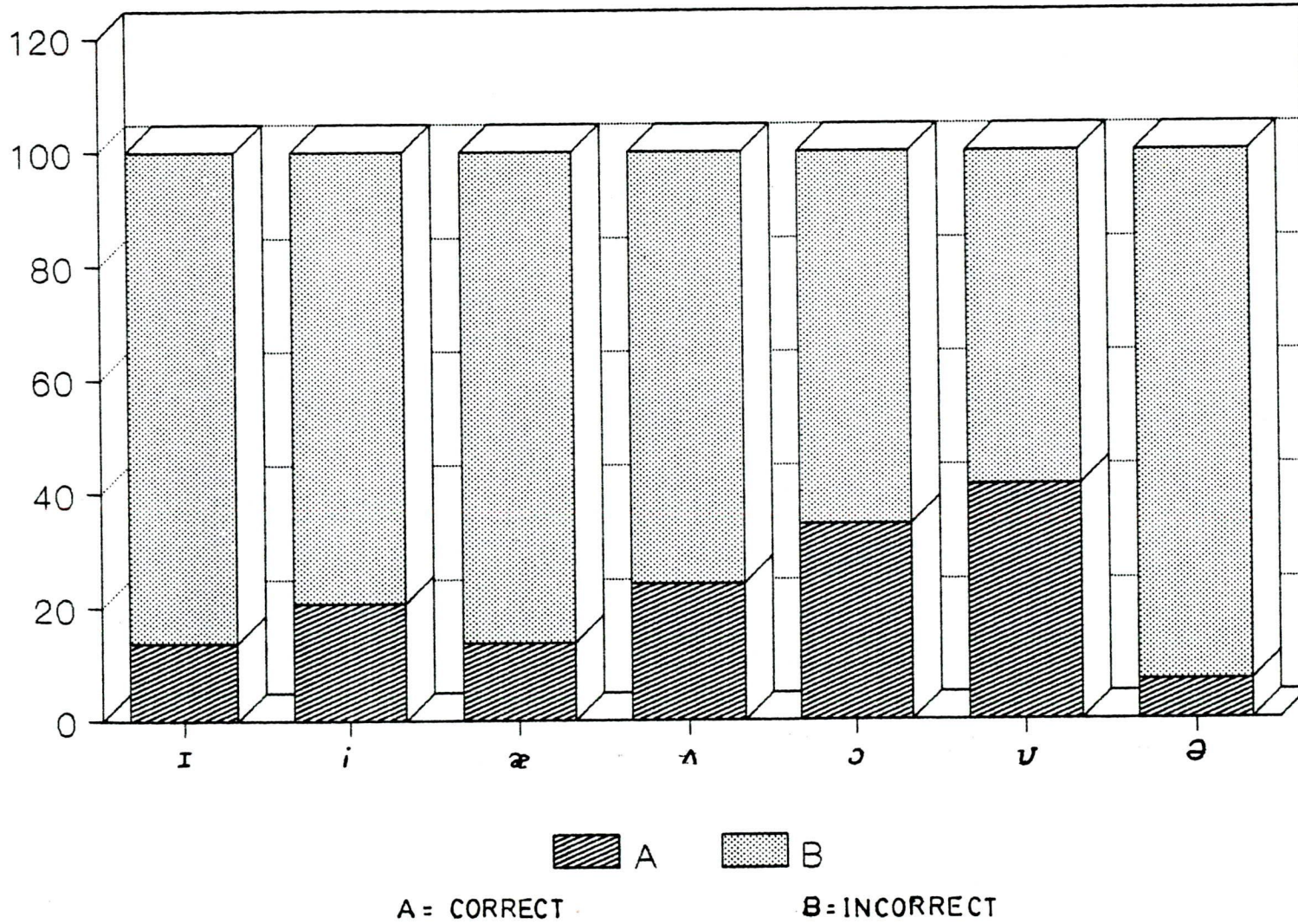
CORRECT PRONUNCIATION OF VOWELS WHICH DO NOT EXIST IN SPANISH

SOUNDS	STUDENTS WHO PRONUNCE WELL	%	STUDENTS WHO PRONUNCE BADLY	%
[ɪ]	4	13,79	25	86,21
[i]	6	20,69	23	79,31
[æ]	4	13,79	25	86,21
[ʌ]	7	24,13	22	75,86
[ɔ]	10	34,48	19	65,51
[ʊ]	12	41,37	17	58,62
[ə]	2	6,89	27	93,10
		25,86		90,80

[ɪ] It	[i] Bees	[æ] man	[ʌ] but	[ɔ] bought	[ʊ] pull	[ə] according
this	meal	back	duck	boy	bull	dramatic

**SOURCE:** Students from 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cycles of the Language Faculty

# GRAPHIC # 2



Analyzing the chart and graphic # 2 we have the following data:

The two vowels /I/ and /i/ are difficult for Spanish speakers to master. The students do not realize the difference in lengthening between the two sounds and these with the Spanish /i/, so they pronounce both sounds /I/ and /i/ as Spanish /i/. From the 29 students only 4 pronounce the vowel /I/ correctly, while 25 students, that is 86,21% pronounce it as if it were the Spanish /i/. All this seems to be because in Spanish we have only one sound for each one of the vowels of our phonetic system.

Referring to /æ/ a great problem is seen also, only 4 students representing the 13,79% pronounce it well while a percentage of 86,21% have problems of native language interference, they tend to pronounce /æ/ as Spanish /a/ but, the English sound is higher and backer than the Spanish /a/

In the same way /^/ that is a variety of /a/ in English reach only a percentage of 24,13% that is only 7 students pronounce it in a correct way. All the rest articulate it as their Spanish vowel /a/ but in English it is articulated lower, backer and more centralized.



On the other hand, though the percentage of students who show a good pronunciation of the English vowel / ɔ / is somehow higher than the previous ones only reaches the 34,48% represented by 10 students from the 29 students that constitutes the object population of this research work. The interference here is because students are accustomed to pronounce this vowel in their native language shorter and articulate it in the front part of the mouth.

The vowel with the higher percentage of all the chart is / u / however it does not reach neither 50% since only 12 students have a right pronunciation while 17 students representing the 58,62% do not get a satisfactory pronunciation even though they pronounce it somehow similar.

Finally, the most problematic vowel is / ə /. As we can appreciate in the chart and graphic # 2 it is the one with the lowest percentage since only 2 students representing 11,38% have gotten an acceptable pronunciation, while, the majority of the students have problem with this vowel. The problem arises here from the fact that this vowel is problematic inclusive in English, due to its pronunciation varies according to the neighboring sounds and also because it doesn't have similarity with any Spanish vowel.

C H A R T    N o .    3

STUDENTS WHO PRONOUNCE WELL ENGLISH CONSONANTS

WHICH DO NOT EXIST IN SPANISH

CONSONANTAL SOUNDS	STUDENTS WHO PRONUNCE WELL	%	STUDENTS WHO PRONUNCE BADLY	%
/v/	3	10,34	26	89,66
/θ/	18	62,06	11	37,93
/ð/	10	68,97	9	65,51
/z/	4	13,79	24	82,76
/ʒ/	6	20,68	22	79,31
/ŋ/	19	65,52	10	34,48

*/v/*  
vase

vest

*/θ/*  
think

thing

*/ð/*  
father

they

*/z/*  
his

was

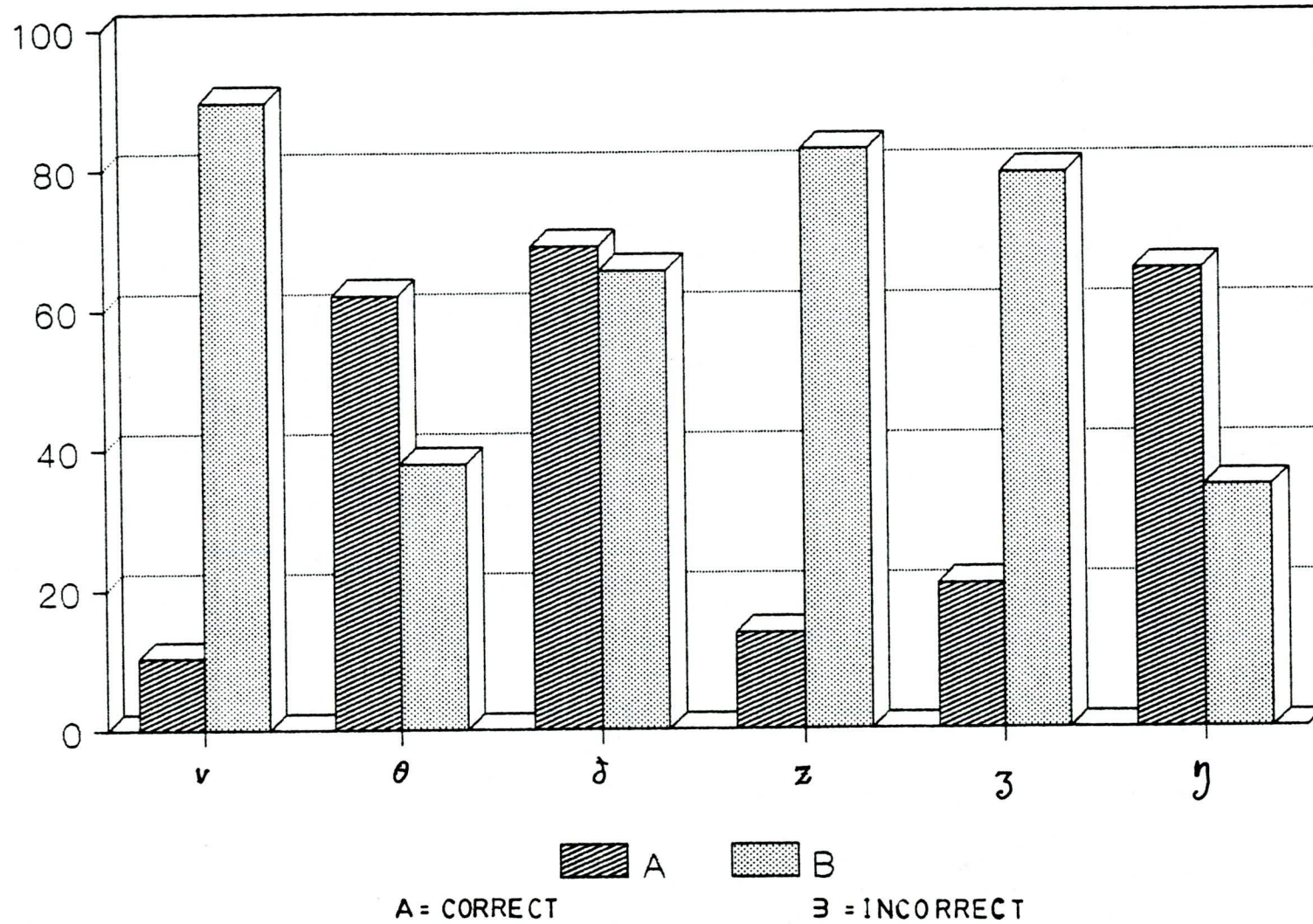
*/ʒ/*  
pleasure

*/ŋ/*  
sing

**SOURCE:**

Students from 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cycles of the Language Faculty of the U.T.F.L.

# GRAPHIC # 3



The chart and graphic # 3 contain six consonants we consider the most problematic ones. So we have the following data:

The consonant /v/ which also exists in Spanish is not pronounced in the same way. English /v/ is a voiced dental fricative consonant different from /b/. Spanish speakers have problems with this consonant because in Spanish /b/ and /v/ are pronounced the same that is why only 3 students, that is 10,34% pronounce /v/ correctly, the majority of the students articulate wrongly as if it were a voiceless bilabial stop.

Referring to /θ/ we can observe that eventhough, it is a sound which does not exist in Spanish (except in some dialects) a great percentage of students who pronounce it correctly is seen, 18 students representing 62,06%. However the rest of the students have problems of interference since they do not articulate /θ/ correctly, instead they pronounce a sound like /t/ or /s/ causing misunderstanding.

Another consonant which results difficult for the students is /ʃ/. As it is noticed in the chart only 10 students representing 34,48% pronounce it without problem, while the remainder students do not pronounce it correctly because they

articulate it as the spanish /d/ due to its similarity; English / ð / is not the same.

/z/ is another consonant with a very low percentage, 4 students representing 13,79% have got a good pronunciation of this consonant, this show us that this is a difficult sound to master. Here the problem is not because we do not have this sound in spanish; the problem is because in Spanish we do not distinguish /z/ from /s/ in pronunciation so spanish learners tend to do the same when pronouncing both sounds in English causing misunderstanding.

Continuing the analysis we have that / ʒ / reaches a percentage of 20,68% represented by six students who pronounce it properly, while the rest of the students have problems because this consonantal sound is spelled g that is why they get confused and pronounce it as an /s/ instead of the voiced consonant /ʒ/

Finally, we can see in the chart only 19 students that is 65,52% pronounce / ɲ / in a correct way, eventhough we have a similar sound as in tango; the English sound / ɲ / backer which result difficult for spanish speaker get a complete mastery of it.

As we can observe through this analysis, all these consonants result difficult for the Spanish students because they articulate them placing the tongue in the wrong position that is in the same way they pronounce their native sounds which are similar to English ones.

All the explanation above given, as well as the different examples and comments given through all this chart, let us conclude that sounds which do not exist in Spanish are more difficult to assimilate by Spanish speakers learning English. The majority of the percentages analyzed show low levels of domain of such English sounds, being the vowels the ones which show worrying percentages that go from 11,38 corresponding to /ə/ and reach only the 41,38% corresponding to /u/, which reveals that concerning to vowels -there is a great deficiency because of the native language interference; actually the native habits are more internalized than the ones of the target language. Comparing vowels with consonants we can notice that consonants are easier than the vowels, their percentages of mastery are somehow higher than the ones of the vowels, are not satisfactory enough, they go from 10,34% that corresponds to /v/ and reaches only the 68,97% that corresponds to /ð/. Consequently we can affirm that the hypothesis #2 is true; that is, the words which contain sounds that do not exist in Spanish are more difficult to assimilate by the Spanish native speakers.

C H A P T E R     I V

## VOCABULARY

It is commonly assumed by monolinguals that the primary difference between languages consists of the words which are used in each one and that to learn a new language is essentially to learn a new vocabulary which consists of translations equivalents to the lexical items of the active language. Since monolinguals are aware only about the system of their language, they assume that it represents the "natural" concatenation of lexical items and they before attempt to impose it upon the items of the foreign lexicon they are learning.

Vocabulary is the area of language which has not received considerable attention as grammar and phonology, maybe because it is easy to acquire due to the large number of cognates and borrowings. But is necessary to point out that there are some incoungruitis of those items in the two languages which lead to problems of interference.

When a Spanish speaker learns another Indo-European language, he is usually struck by a number of resemblances between the foreign language and his own. Those resemblances may arise from some fundamental characteristics of human nature or



of natural phenomena independent of language, or by the explanation of the few echoic words in any language.

Comparing Spanish and English, we find that they have some features in common because they are descended from the same ancestor and have both preserved some of its characteristics, this confirmation may be obtained by going back to the father, tracing the history of these languages.

But the main reason applied specially to resemblances of vocabulary is borrowing from one language to another. There is also an ilimited number of cognate words between English and Spanish that evidence the mentioned resemblances of vocabulary.

#### COGNATE WORDS

Words that are similar in form and in meanings are called COGNATES. English and Spanish have thousands of words that are reasonably similar in form and meaning, for example hotel, hospital, calendar. Some of these were kept in Spanish as it evolved from latin and were borrowed into English from Latin or French. Some go back to earlier forms presumably found in Indo-European, the common ancestor of English and Spanish in what is known as the Indo-European family of languages. Whatever the cause of similarity, these words usually constitute the lowest

difficulty group. In fact, if they are similar enough, even students who are never studied English at all will recognize them, it is the case of words much as complete, tourist and action which are similar to Spanish words completo, turista and acción.

As we can see in the examples, the meaning and spelling is similar in both languages. However, the English pronunciation is always different from the Spanish pronunciation, particularly as to the location of stress. Moreover an English word is always used in a partially different group of situations from the Spanish word.

Here are some examples:

ENGLISH		SPANISH	
Labor	[lə'bɔ]	Labor	[labór]
Congress	[kɔŋgrəs]	Congreso	[kongrésɔ]
Subject	[sɪbʤɪkt]	Sujeto	[suxéto]
Animal	[ænəml]	Animal	[animál]

Some common correspondences between Spanish and English words are as following:

SPANISH		ENGLISH	
Evolución	cion	Evolution	tion
Educación		Education	
Variedad	dad	Variety	ty
Comunidad		Community	
Vocabulario	io	Vocabulary	y
Necesario		Necessary	
Operar	ar	Operate	ate
Circular		Circulate	
Economía	ía	Economy	y
Energía		Energy	
Inteligente	e	Intelligent	(consonant)
Producto	o	Product	(consonant)
Optimismo		Optimism	(consonant)
Famoso	oso	Famous	ous
Generoso		Generous	
Terrible	ible	Terrible	ible
Responsble	able	Responsible	ible
Inestimable	able	Inestimable	able
Urgente	ente	Urgent	ent
Frecuente		Frequent	
Conveniente	iente	Convenient	ient
Correspondiente		Correspondent	ent
Vanidad	idad	Vanity	ity

Realizar	izar	Realize	ize
Alfabetizar		Alphabetize	
Básico	ico,ica	Basic	ic
Simbólico		Symbolic	
Médico		Medical	al
Típico		Typical	

The number of English words whose spelling is similar to that of their cognates in Spanish is almost infinite. Here we have some examples:

SPANISH	ENGLISH	SPANISH	ENGLISH
Agencia	Agency	Brillante	Brilliant
Americano	American	Margen	Margin
Crisis	Crisis	Grado	Grade
Respeto	Respect	Debate	Debate
Banco	Bank	Gloria	Glory
Colección	Collection	Refugio	Refuge
Justo	Just	Menor	Minor
Acto	Act	Talento	Talent
Paralelo	Parallel	Plato	Plate
Pausa	Pause	Precaución	Precaution
Restaurante	Restaurant	Abuso	Abuse
Atribuir	Atribbut	Ocupar	Occupy
Acento	Accent	Excusar	Excuse

Evacuar	Evacuate	Unico	Unique
Ocasión	Occasion	Social	Social
Esencial	Essential	Confidencial	Confidential
Paciente	Patient	Ambicioso	Ambitious
Cuarto	Quarter	Frecuente	Frequent
Adecuado	Adequate	Protección	Protection
Reacción	Reaction	Severo	Severe
Veredicto	Veredict	Extremo	Extreme
Furia	Fury	Futuro	Future
Foto	Photo	Ofensa	Offense
Tráfico	Traffic	Profeta	Prophet
Exhalar	Exhale	Inherente	Inherent
Piloto	Pilot	Vital	Vital
Crimen	Crime	Nitrato	Nitrate
Cliente	Client	Sistema	System
Objeto	Object	Justicia	Justice
Ilusión	Illusion	Valle	Valley
Escultor	Sculptor	Interrumpir	Interrupt
Comercial	Commercial	Continuar	Continue
Orden	Order	Comentar	Comment
Positivo	Positive	Sólido	Solid
Lógica	Logic	Aplicar	Apply
Quieto	Quiet	Rango	Range
Virtud	Virtue	Mucho	Much
Proyecto	Project		

In English as in Spanish prefixes and suffixes let people to form new words, in the case of prefixes changing the meaning and in the case of suffixes changing the function of the word as for example REwrite has the prefix RE, which means "again" so, the meaning of the word is "to write again". And the word kindLY has the suffix LY which is used to form adverbs, so the adjective kind is transformed in an adverb.

Here we have a list of the most common prefixes and suffixes with their corresponding meaning

Prefixes referring to amount and number:

PREFIX	MEANING	EXAMPLE
bi	two	bilingual
equi	equal	equimolecular
micro	small	microphone
mono	one	monolingual
multi	many	multitude

Prefixes meaning "not" (negative)

a	not	asymmetrical
anti	against	antibacterial

contra	against, opposite	contraposition
dis	apart, away, not	disloyal
in, il, ir, in "not"		illegal
men	not	nonaggression
un	not	unable
pseudo	false	pseudocarp

Prefixes given direction, location, or placement:

circum	around	circumference
com, col, cor	with, together	command
de	away, from	debase
ex/extra	from, out of, former	extraordinary
hyper	over, excessive	hyperactive
inter	between	interact
intro, intra	within, into, in	intralingual
post	after	postpositive
pre	before	premarital
re	back, again	replace
retro	backward	retrogress
sub	under, below	subaltern
super	above, extra	supernatural
tele	far	television
trans	across, over	transposition

## SUFFIXES

## EXAMPLE

Suffixes that refer to a state, condition or quality

able	understandable
ance	resistance
ation	celebration
ence	influence
ible	incredible
ion	retrospection
ity	responsability
ive	charitative
ment	development
ness	fullness
ous	famous
ty	sixty
y	kitty

Suffixes than mean "one who"

ee	employee
eer	engineer
er	speaker
ist	activist
or	professor



Suffixes that mean pertaining to or referring to:

al	residual
ship	kingship
hood	childhood
ward	backward

However, some mistakes of false analogy arise because students tend to attach any suffix or prefix to any word or stem without realizing that each prefix or suffix is used in a limited number of words.

As we can see, knowledge of cognate words is of great value, because it provides the students with an extensive vocabulary with little effort. but students should be careful about assuming knowledge of such words. Since on the one side this constitutes a boon for the language learner, on the other side it is also a major source of transfer errors specially in pronunciation and spelling.

Errors in pronunciation occur when Spanish speakers pronounce English words as they are written, it is because they are transferring the relationship between written and spoken forms used in their native language.

There are also errors in Spelling on such words that sound alike or partially alike because they may have different spelling in the two languages. So a Sound-to-Spelling transfer error may arise here. This explains the cause of such common spelling errors in English words where a double consonant letter is used for a single sound contrary to Spanish, where a single letter is used, for example:

ENGLISH	SPANISH	ERROR IN ENGLISH
Possible	Posible	Fossible
Professor	Profesor	Profesor
Common	Común	Comon
Intellectual	Intelectual	Intelectual
Inmediately	Inmediatamente	Inmediately

It is necessary to point out that cognates do not occur only between two languages but also within each language; but we will deal only with the first ones.

#### FALSE COGNATES

In the course of language History, some words which have a similar ortography form in Spanish and English have developed

radically different meanings. These words constitutes the set of words known as FALSE COGNATES<sup>9</sup>

The relatively large number of cognate words which English and Spanish share will help the students. But at the same time the students will find a lot of words whose spelling and pronunciation is similar in both languages which will mislead students into thinking resemble also in meaning.

English words such as Lecture, sanity and Actually woul be underestood by spanish speakers learning English as lectura, sanidad y actualmente, but the right meaning is completely different from the one suggested at the first sight; that is: reading, health interprete and use such words known as false cognates.

Some examples of false cognates are the following:

ENGLISH	SPANISH	SPANISH EXPECTED EQUIVALENT
Actual	Real	Actualmente
Library	Biblioteca	Librería

---

<sup>9</sup> *HERNANDEZ G and Castillo O, Communicating and Reading in English, Overall course for students science and Technology, Book 1, pag. 48*

Large	Grande	Largo
Lecture	Conferencia	Lectura
Realize	Darse cuenta	Realizar
	de algo	

False analogy can occur also in the formation of words from previously learned morphological derivations in English. For example: A Spanish learner has been taught that from speak he can form speaker or from write, writer, some students tend to apply this rule for all verbs, resulting errors as \*hitter, \*velator, \*facilitator.

Students may use also words like ampliation, actualization, ebullition, predication, to match Spanish words aplicación, actualización, ebullición, when the English words for such words are enlargement, up-to-date, boiling, preaching.

#### BORROWINGS

The most striking evidence for resemblance in Vocabulary between two languages is borrowing. The borrowing may take place in either direction, or it may

be that the two languages have borrowed a word from a third language. It can take place only if there is some sort of contact between the speakers of two languages, or, if the sound changes which a word has undergone show that it must have existed in a language from very early time.

Borrowing let a language add new vocabulary without so such problem. If a speaker of any language does not have a readily available word for something and a speaker of the other has, he borrows the word he needs.

English is one of the great borrowing tongues, it has derived at least half of its common words from Non-Anglo-Saxon stock; but there are other languages even more enthusiastic in adopting foreign terms.

Actually, English has borrowed words from other languages, specially from European Languages due to factors such as commercial, political, Economic, religious, invention, etc.

English has borrowed words from French: For matters of government, like crown, country, duke, court, and prince, for matters of law like: judge, jury, crime,

accuse, marry and prove; for matters of war, like: battle, arms, soldier, siege, danger and march; and for matters of religion like: angel, saint, pray, save, blame, virtue and vice. And also words having to do with clothing, cosmetics and luxury.

English has pairs of words such as cow and beef, wheep and nutton, calf and veal, and pig and pork in which the first item, the name of the animal is from Germanic origin and the second item, the meat of the animal is borrowed from French.

English has borrowed words from Danish such as: egg, sky, gate, skin, skirt, skill, skull, scrape, scatter, sister, law, weark, give, take, call and hit, as well as the pronouns they, them and their.

English has borrowed words associated with food from German like sauerkraut, delicatessen, wiener, hamburger and lager and also the untranslatable words Weltanschauung, Gestit, Gesundheit and Gemullichkeit.

From Italian musical words have been borrowed by English, words, like: piano, opera, solo, sonata, soprano, trombone and serenade.

Borrowings came from various Indian languages also, for example bangle, sari, bandana

Many interesting words have come from Arabic; alcohol, alchemy, almanac, and algebra.

The richest resource for borrowings are undoubtedly Greek and Latin, large number of words have been borrowed from both languages, specially polysyllabic words.

LATIN	ENGLISH
securus	secure
Magister	Magistrate
Camera	Camera

English has borrowed words from Spanish such as patio, mesa

The same as English, Spanish has borrowed many words from many languages:

Spanish has borrowed words from Arabic like: For matters of conquer: Almena, adalid, ronda, arebatar, alcanzar; for matters of social and juridic institutions:

Alcalde, almojarife, alguacil, albacea; for matters of trade: almacén, albóndiga, almoneda; for matters of measurement: Quilate arroba, quintal; for matters of art and office like alfarero, albardero; other words like almohada, alfange, alforja, etc.

The same as English, Spanish has borrowed a lot of words from Greek specially those concerning to Science like Fonética, Fonología, Citología, Etica, Geografía, Arqueología; and a lot of prefixes and suffixes like: hemo-logos, hidro-grafía, tele-orto, orto-edro, fonometría, etc.

Spanish has borrowed words from French like: cofre, afiche, amateur, élite, silueta, buró, ficha, chance, charretera, etc.

Spanish has borrowed words from Italian for matters of conquer like escopeta, alerta, centinela, for matters of music like tercero, quarteto, piano, barcarola; for matters of transportation like carroza, piloto, fragata; and general words like estropear, banca, charlar, medalla.



Spanish has borrowed words from German like: guarnecer, ganar, guiar, espía, brinda galardón, freco, rico, arpa, espuela, tregua, agasajo, and proper names like Alfonso, Luis Enrique, Ramiro.

Spanish has borrowed words from English for matters of games and sports like fútbol, esquí, corner, tennis, póker, ring, goal, for matters of transportation like bus, jet, ticket, wagon, jatch, taxi; for matters of movie like close up, sexy, sex appeal, for matters of cloths like: sweter, blue jean, smoking, peter pan, customs words like mitin, gansters, hobby, cow boy, self service; and others like Rock and roll slow, strip-tease, John, Mercy, Fanny, standard, flash, shock, lider, etc.

This analysis have shown clearly the amount of borrowings into English and Spanish and the languages where they were borrowed; we can see also that both of them have borrowing from almost the same sources.

Borrowings have been adapted to the patterns of each language and treated according to native sound patterns if they occur frequent, that is why borrowings are almost unrecognizable.

**STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF THE HYPHOTESIS 3****HYPOTHESIS # 3**

"The Spanish set of words which are phonetically and semantically analogous to the English ones, influence on the learning of the English vocabulary"

**DEPENDENT VARIABLE:**

Vocabulary Acquisition

In Order to verify the hypothesis # 3 we will use the following indicator:

Percentage of students who deduce words by analogy in a correct way.

To verify the hypothesis # 3 we propose the students two types of questions: The one in which students should identify the meaning of a list of cognates and the other in which they could recognize them in context. So we have the following data.

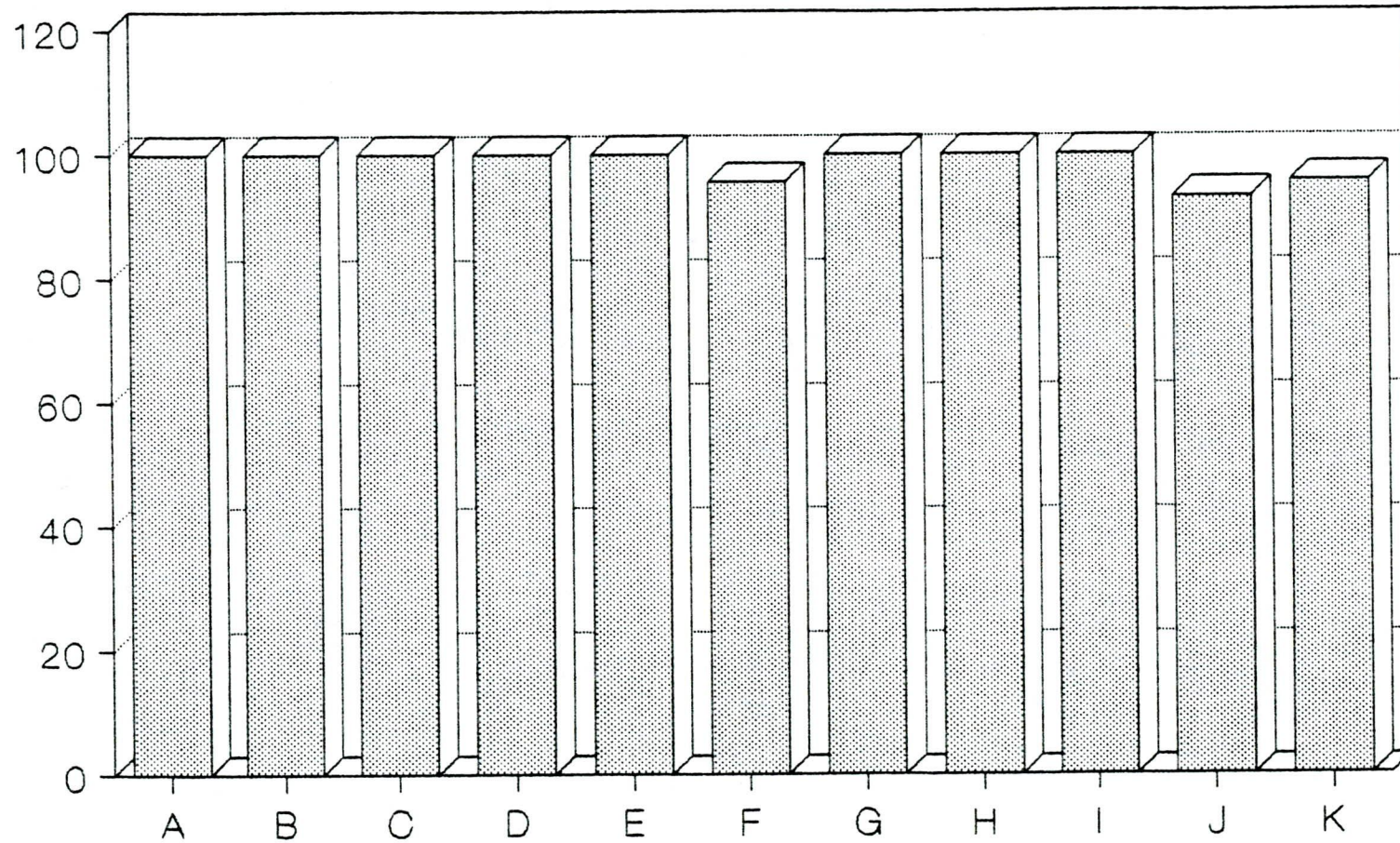
C H A R T    N o .   4

STUDENTS WHO DEDUCE CORRECTLY COGNATES

COGNATES	STUDENTS	%
Refuge	29	100
Prophet	29	100
Apply	29	100
Intellectual	29	100
Minor	29	100
Interrupt	28	95,55
System	29	100
Extreme	29	100
Veredict	29	100
Project	27	93,10
Fury	28	95,55

**SOURCE:** Students from 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cycles of the Language Faculty

# GRAPHIC # 4



A= REFUGE      C= APPLY      E= MINOR      G= SYSTEM      I= VEREDICT  
B= PROPHET    D= INTELLECTUAL    F= INTERRUPT    H= EXTREME    J= PROYECT  
K= FURY

**C H A R T    N o .    5**

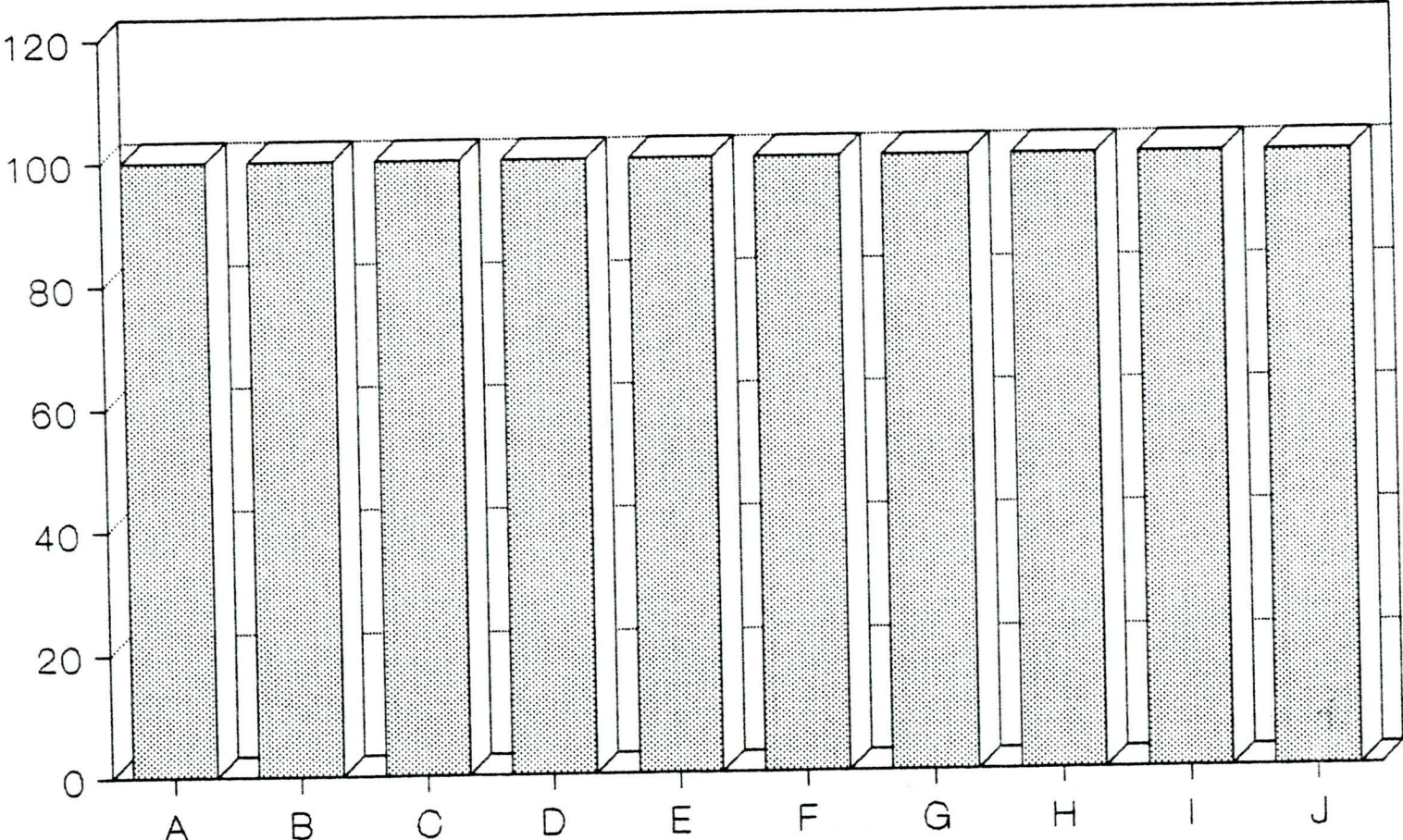
**STUDENTS WHO IDENTIFY CORRECTLY COGNATES IN CONTEXT**

COGNATES	STUDENTS	%
Enter	29	100
Architecture	29	100
Urban	29	100
Studies	29	100
Intensive	29	100
Regularly	29	100
Planning	29	100
Topic	29	100
Conference	29	100
Interesting	29	100
		100

**SOURCE:** Students from 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cycles of the Language Faculty



# GRAPHIC # 5



A = ENTER      C = URBAN      E = INTENSIVE      G = PLANNING      I = CONFERENCE  
B = ARCHITECTURE      D = STUDIES      F = REGULARLY      H = TOPIC      J = INTERESTING

The charts and graphics # 4 and 5 show us that most of the students do not have problem in deducing cognates in both English and Spanish.

The chart # 4 contains the results of the questions in which students were given a list of words in which they should match each one of them with their corresponding meaning. The obtained results were excellent since, we have observed that most of the given words reach a percentage of 100% and only three: 95,55%; 93,10% and 95,55% respectively.

In the same way, chart # 5 shows the data obtained from the question in which students should recognize cognates in context. As we can notice, the chart does not show any percentage inferior to 100%, this indicates that all the students handle well cognates in context.

Therefore, the analysis made through the chapter and the statistical information showed above allow us to affirm again the veracity of the hypothesis # 3. That is to say: "The spanish set of words which are phonetically and semantically analogous to the English ones, influence on the learning of the English vocabulary".

C H A P T E R      V



## CONCLUSIONS

After a careful analysis of the transfer errors made by Spanish students learning English, we have drawn the following conclusions:

- Students have a passive knowledge of the English Grammatical and phonological systems
- The lack of fluency in student's speech is because they first work out the ideas in Spanish, then they translate them into English and finally they express them.
- The lack of awareness and concentration when expressing ideas lead students to transfer errors.
- The mastery of Spanish grammatical structures interferes in the mastery of the English grammatical structures.
- There is a strong tendency of the Spanish students learning English to structure English sentences in the same way as they do in their native language because students continue thinking in Spanish rather than in English.

- The most difficult part of speech to be mastered by Spanish students is the definite article : "THE" and the easiest ones are adjectives.
- English sounds which do not exist in Spanish are more difficult of being mastered for students.
- Most of the students do not realize that the phonological systems of English and Spanish differ in that the combination of features which make up the phonemes and allophones of the one language are systematically different from the combinations of features which make up the phonemes and allophones of the other.
- The reason for an accent or non-native flavour in students' speech is that they have not completely replaced his native speech habits with those of the target language.
- The low percentages in phonology show that students have not acquired an acceptable pronunciation.
- English words which resemble in form and meaning are easy acquired by students, letting them to increase their stock of vocabulary.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- To prepare students for the learning of English, firstly by explaining that English is a new language and that it has its own rules which function differently from their native language
- To motivate students by explaining them the importance and the necessity we have of learning English in our modern world.
- Teaching should be done in the target language
- Translation should be rarely used and recognized as a special skill
- The language taught should be up-to-date and of real interest, also it should give the students a knowledge of the culture of both languages, the one which is taught and the native one.
- Oral pattern drills should be used to build up speech habits
- Grammar should be taught by oral drills

- To give the students the rule and let them practice it by means of different activities.
- Writing should be practiced and corrected by dictation exercises.
- Compositions could permit to observe and correct grammatical structure.
- To evaluate constantly to find the problems, students have to reinforce with other different activities
- Provide the students with situations in which they can use the learned structures not only the moment the rule is given but during all the course
- Both, explanation of the sound patterns and practice with drills are necessary to overcome pronunciation problems and help older students to acquire acceptable production of the English sounds.
- To give students plenty of opportunities to hear all the members of the new system in order to let them perceive the sounds of the target language.

- Two new sounds should be heard together so that the difference between them will be learned
- The sounds should be heard in different combinations in different sequences and positions (for example: after a particular vowel, or preceding it, at the end of words and at the beginning of words) and not only in isolation because this is not the way we normally hear sounds.
- We can help students to hear the sounds and try to imitate them with minimal pair drills, so the students have the opportunity to hear sounds substituted for each other in the same surroundings.
- Unfamiliar sounds should be emphasized. If students have still difficulty we can use articulatory descriptions, inclusive we can provide them with a mirror to make them aware of how the sound is produced.
- A good help for detecting errors could be by asking students to record a passage or reading containing the sounds which were taught. This will serve the teacher to detect where reinforcement is needed and

for the students to hear the errors and try to detect them.

- The preceding strategy could help the teacher to detect the students with more difficulties and help them with additional tasks
  
- To help students to overcome difficulties in vowels we suggest them to begin with a vowel with a closer tongue position and then to produce the proper vowel.

**GLOSSARY**

- **Analagous words:** *Words which are similar in meaning and pronunciation*
- **Analogy:** *The ability to form a word or pattern on the basis of knowledge of similar words or patterns*
- **Articulation:** *The smooth, continous development from one level of language learning to the next. The production of distinct sounds by the vocal organs.*
- **Bilingualism:** *The state of being able to use two languages with almost equal facility.*
- **Cognate:** *A word in one language which looks similar to and has a meaning equivalent to a word in another language; e.g. ( S p a n i s h / E n g l i s h ) nacional/national*

- **Conflict**                    *Interference or problem in learning a second or foreign language caused by the ingrained habit of saying something in a certain way in one's native tongue*
  
- **Context:**                    *The forms or words within any connected stretch of speech which surround other words and thus help to give them their particular meaning.*
  
- **Culture:**                    *The language, customs, values, beliefs, art forms, and achievements of a society*
  
- **Dialect:**                    *A variety of the national language used by members of a speech community living in a given geographical area*
  
- **Equivalent:**                *A word, expression, utterance, or sentence in one language which is not a word for word*



translation of a word, in another language but which conveys the same meaning.

- **Interference:** A difficulty or problem in the learning of one habit because of the existence in the learner of a conflicting one; e.g., the difficulty of learning to produce a sound in the target language because it does not exist or exist in another position in the learner's native tongue.

- **Language**

**Interference:** Those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language.

- **Learning:** The process which leads to the acquisition of any form of behaviour

- **Master:** *To learn thoroughly*
  
- **Minimal pair:** *Two words that sound alike except for one phonemic difference; eg., bag/backp; ship/sheep.*
  
- **Morpheme:** *The smallest meaningful unit of language. It may be "free" (A word such as girl which can stand alone; or "bound" (the s of girls which indicates plurality but which can not stand alone).*
  
- **Phonetics:** *The study of speech sounds, their production and combination, and their representation by written symbols*
  
- **Semantics:** *The branch of linguistics concerned with the nature, the structure and the development*

*and changes of the meanings of the speech forms.*

- **Speech:** *The oral expression of verbal behaviour*
  
- **Target language:** *The foreign language that is being learned*
  
- **Tense:** *The formal categories of verb inflections; e.g., in English we speak of the simple present and past tenses only: walks, walked*
  
- **Transfer:** *The ability to use knowledge about a feature of one's native language or of the target language in learning another related feature. (Negative transfer implies the making of false analogies)*

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# ANEXOS

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UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

Dear Student:

The object of the following test is to know how Spanish as a native language interferes in the learning of English as a foreign language. It has two parts, the first one related to Spanish and the second one related to English.

Please answer the questions sincerely; this is not a test to be graded, it is just a help in our research.

I PART

QUESTIONS ABOUT SPANISH

1. Write the letter that matches the corresponding definition

a) NOMINALIZATION ( ) It is a characteristic of nouns indicating whether a utterance refers to one or more than one entity

b) NUMBER ( ) It is the grammatical form by which nouns are distinguished according to sex

c) INFLECTION ( ) It is the process by which adjectives, verbs and particles become nouns

d) GENDER ( ) It is the change of form by which some words indicate certain grammatical relationships, as number, case, gender, tense, etc.

e) PERSON

2. Write an X indicating the parts of the nominal phrase

Number ( ) nouns ( ) Prepositions ( )

Verb ( ) article( ) Adjective ( )

3. Underline the nominalized word in the following sentences

- El primero está aquí
- El dormir con ventanas abiertas es saludable
- La otra está en el escritorio
- La nueva es de mejor calidad
- El sí del gobierno constitucional de la República

4. Write the correct article (definite or indefinite) in the following sentences

- a) ---- manzana sobre la mesa es mía
- b) ---- monumento del parque central está destruido
- c) Hay ----- niña en el aula
- d) Hubo ---- herido en el accidente
- e) ---- máquina es importada
- f) Raúl y ---- María viajaron al exterior

5. Write M for masculine and F for feminine in the following list of nouns

Masc.	Fem.	Masc.	Fem.
mano ( )	( )	hombre ( )	( )
aves ( )	( )	diploma ( )	( )
mar ( )	( )	institución )	( )
agua ( )	( )	crisis ( )	( )
lluvia ( )	( )	estación ( )	( )

6. Do Spanish adjectives have inflection for gender and number?

YES ( ) NO ( ) IN SOME CASES ( )

7. Change to plural the following nouns:

télex	.....	escuela	.....
alhelí	.....	vacación	.....
niño	.....	caries	.....
libro	.....	café	.....
rodapie	.....	casa	.....
francés	.....	aeropuerto	.....

8. Match the following sentences with the corresponding personal pronoun

- Fuimos a entrevistar al Señor Presidente	1. YO
- No creyó lo que le dijimos hasta que él mismo lo vió	2. TU
- Le dimos el último adiós en el Puerto	3. EL
- Salieron a dar un paseo por el campo	4. NOS
- Traigo flores frescas para tí	5. VOS
- Estuviste a tiempo en la reunión	6. ELLOS

9. Recognize the tense in the following sentences

- El había llorado por su amada
- La niña cantaba alegremente a la luz de la luna
- Ellos han asistido a la última reunión
- Nosotros celebraremos nuestro aniversario el próximo mes
- Parece increíble que él haya aparecido de nuevo
- Me temo que tendré que viajar pronto
- Hemos sido compañeras durante mucho tiempo
- María compra flores para su madre

II PART

NOUNS

1. Change to plural the following sentences

- The chair I bought was beautiful  
.....
- The sheep is mine. I bought it  
.....
- The women was clapped  
.....
- He is her son-in-law  
.....
- This furniture is very expensive  
.....



- The shop assistant was kind

.....

## ADJECTIVES

2. Do English adjectives have inflection for gender and number?

YES ( ) NOT ( ) IN SOME CASES ( )

3. Write C if the sentence is correct I if the sentence is incorrect

- The riches are learned people ( )

- The big ones wre more than the  
small one ( )

- The deafs are intelligent ( )

- The girls were happy dancing  
in the party ( )

- The little boy is his son ( )

- This is the more nice girl I  
have seen ( )

- The biggest building is famous ( )

- This boy looks happier than  
the other ( )

- The deaf are intelligent ( )

- I knew the more intelligent boy ( )

**NOUN PHRASE (The use of the definite and indefinite articles)**

4. Identify the correct sentence in each pair of sentences

- She loves the soccer ( )

- She loves soccer ( )

- Did he eat the dinner with his family? ( )

- Did he eat dinner with his family? ( )

- The laziness is the mother of all vices ( )

- Laziness is the mother of all vices ( )

- Captain Smith was killed yesterday ( )

- The Captain Smith was killed yesterday ( )

- Alice visited her parents in the summer ( )

- Alice visited her parents in summer ( )

- He has a history books in his library ( )

- He has History books in his library ( )
- Peter's father is a mechanic ( )
- Peter's father is mechanic ( )
- Martha got an apple from the refrigerator ( )
- Martha got a apple from the refrigerator ( )

#### NOMINALIZATION

5. Choose the sentence with a mistake in the nominalization process

- Visit new countries is wonderful ( )
- To study is important ( )
- The nice I bought was the most beautiful ( )
- Find the solution seemed almost impossible ( )
- Camping alone would be dangerous ( )
- There were two boys, the poor one was kindly ( )
- Be punctual requires organizatio ( )
- Swimming is healthy ( )

- The blue I have was the last ( )
- Analyze the data is difficult ( )

## PRONOUNS

6. In the following list of sentences, underline the ones you consider right

- It is important to be on time ( )
- Martha said "but in Spanish is obligatory ( )
- The gift is for you. Peter bought it for you ( )
- I think is the only solution ( )
- They called us early ( )
- I saw him going away ( )
- The little boy cut with a knife ( )
- I wash myself ( )
- Give me a pencil, I need for writing ( )
- Do you think it is the only solution? ( )

VERBS

7. The sentence you consider right

- Alice met a man in the desert ( )
- Maria wanted her husband too  
much ( )
- May I go to dance with Mary? ( )
- Helen does not come today ( )
- Where do you find it? ( )
- Susan not worked yesterday ( )
- May I go to swim? ( )
- English does not take "the"  
before days ( )
- Where you go last summer? ( )
- You didn't study English well ( )

8. Read the following sentences, then choose the ones  
that are well constructed

- The girl understands the lesson  
very well ( )
- The dog like to play with the  
ball ( )

- She loves to dance too much ( )
- The teacher explains the class well ( )
- Mary always travel to New York ( )
- The boy plays soccer every weekend ( )
- Mrs. Martinez teach English ( )
- Peter buys luxurious things for his wife ( )
- He sells clothes in the next store ( )
- The dog barks all the day ( )

**COGNATES**

9. Match the correct meaning of the following cognates

English	Spanish	English	Spanish
refuge	intelectual	system	furia
prophet	refugio	extreme	proyecto
apply	profeta	verdict	sistema
Intellectual	interrumpir	Fury	extremo
Interrupt	aplicar	project	veredicto

10. Underline cognate words in the following paragraph

Karl Elliot entered the school of architecture in 1983. He obtained a degree of "Urban studies and Planning". He attended conferences on Urban and Planning regularly. He found it very interesting He read almost all the books on this topic. He obtained his B. Arch. degree in 1988.

T H A N K S