



**UNIVERSIDAD UCINF**  
LABOR CONSTANTIAE TRIUMPHARE

**FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN**

**PEDAGOGÍA EN INGLÉS**

**SPANISH AS L1 EXPECTED TO SUPPORT THE  
ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS L2 IN APPLIED  
GRAMMAR**

**Students' Names:**

Acevedo, Nurys

*Tesis para optar al Grado de Licenciado en Educación*

**Teacher's Guide:**

Hamilton, Eric

**Santiago, Chile**

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**Calificación Tesina**  
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## Abstract

Learning a Second Language brings many different issues, as well as advantages, and one of the biggest issues is related to Bilingualism, involving the relationship between the acquired L1 and the target language, L2. This thesis is about the Interference that L1 can have when Learning L2, specifically when the content is related to Grammar structures that are similar in both languages. The main purpose of this research is to confirm whether L1 has a positive interference or negative in the acquisition of L2, and if it can be used as a tool for acquisition of L2. Based on that question, a research was made based on First Conditional, which is a grammatical construction that is exactly the same in both languages.

Key Words: *Grammar, First Language (L1), Second Language (L2), First Language interference, Interlanguage, Positive Language Transfer, First Conditional,.*

## Resumen

El aprender un Segundo idioma trae distintas complicaciones, al igual que ventajas, y uno de los problemas más grandes está relacionado con el Bilingüismo, incluyendo la relación entre el ya adquirido primer idioma y la lengua meta, o segundo idioma. Esta tesina habla acerca de la Interferencia que la primera lengua puede tener al aprender un segundo idioma, específicamente cuando el contenido está relacionado con estructuras gramaticales que son similares en ambos idiomas. El propósito principal de esta investigación es confirmar si el primer idioma tiene una interferencia positiva o negativa en la adquisición del segundo idioma, y si éste puede ser utilizado para la adquisición de la lengua meta. Basada en esta inquietud, se realizó una investigación enfocada en el Primer condicional, el cual es una estructura gramatical que es exactamente igual en ambos idiomas.

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## 1. Introduction

As a matter of importance for our field as Second Language teachers, the First Language has always influenced the Learning Process of an English Language Student, and this influence, at some point, can condition the student him/herself to whether learn a Second Language faster or slower. This is a fact that makes teachers reflect about the utility of the L1 inside the classroom, and the place it should have in our classes.

Nation (2003) exemplified in an article that L1 can be used as a meaningful tool for solving tasks that are interesting for learners, indeed, being asked to have a small discussion in L1, using key words from L2, and then solve the problem in L2 brought several different ideas amongst the groups, which was enriching for learning. As activities like this have brought controversy about the usage of L1 and L2 in the classroom, it helped me identify that this was an issue, and I wanted to clarify myself and found my posture, which is why I did this research.

I am going to support this utility of Spanish in the classroom with a guideline that teachers in Chile have been given by the Ministry of Education, which is called Marco Para la Buena Enseñanza. One of the areas that this guideline provides is referred to the environment that the classroom should have; a comfortable place for learning, and comfort zone for student's development. Teachers most of the time want the best for the students, what makes them feel more comfortable inside the classroom; and one of the most known comfort zones in Language Learning is the L1.

So how can this mother tongue be helpful inside the classroom? One of the elements of English that it can be easy to compare is Grammar, as it is clearly structured in both languages, I decided to try the experiment described in this thesis to study what the influence of Spanish over English is when learning.



## 1.1 Research Problem

For years, there has always been discordance about teaching a Second Language through the first Language, with questions and statements such as “how much L1 should be used in the classroom”, or “The perfect environment for a Second Language Learner should be fully L2” etcetera, especially when these languages share similar structures. Indeed, several points of view highlight this discordance evidently; for instance, the problem even enters the area of on-line forums where teachers debate the pros and cons of using the native language. There were quoted some ideas first, from a forum in a page called “Teaching English as a Second Foreign Language”, in order to express my appreciation later.

One of the premises that can exemplify this discordance in a clearer way, it is from an Italian teacher, called Ornella Spano. She expressed, based on her own experience, that it was hard for her to impart an entire class in English, especially because her students were Elementary Level adults. At the very beginning, Ornella was used to teach mainly in English; nevertheless, she had to adjust her methodology in this new school. To fulfill her students’ needs, she tried to explain with gesture, visual support and examples, making efforts to not to translate literally. She concluded with her own view:

The use of translation may not be necessary with advanced students but with beginners it is almost inevitable, at least if they are adult people. I believe that we should do a balanced use of L1 and L2. Extremes do not work!

Basically, her idea is to have an even or equal quantity of L1 and L2 in the classroom when teaching to a basic level of English; it can be confusing or something

worse for students if they do not understand what is taught a Second Language, which is why some portion of L1 is needed in the classroom. But not everyone is pleased with this statement. In contrast to this idea, Anthea Tillyer, an alumna from University of New York, firmly opposed to Ornella's posture. She firmly stated that teaching in any other language but the target one is "a case of comfort now, pay later." Tillyer highlighted this opposite posture, claiming the following:

The skilled teacher will use the L2 to make students feel comfortable, and not simply assume that the only way to reduce stress is to use L1... Sure, it's awful when you don't understand at first, and you feel miserable and stupid. But it doesn't last long... It is a disservice to students to imply to them that the only way they can feel comfortable is to speak L1.

Based on these controversial postures, my questions started, and I believe that there must be a point in the middle, satisfying Teaching L2 as much as Learning L2 comfortably, where we can consider L1 as a possible tool. Their declarations agree on one point, which is Exposure to L2 at some point. As this is still an important issue, I reflected about the relationship between English and Spanish, specifically focused in Grammar structures because of the similarities as well as differences they have in verb tenses and grammar structures, such as Present Perfect, the conditionals, SVO structure in sentences, and so on.

## 1.2 Research Questions

Contemplating this problematic posture, I reflected on three questions that will help me solve this conflict, as well as base my research on.

- What is the effect of Spanish in the acquisition of English as L2?
- Why does/not Spanish help L2 acquisition in certain contexts?
- What are the causes of this positive or negative interference of L1 to acquire L2?

## 1.3 Research Answers

Regarding to the first question, it is known that as English Teachers in a Spanish environment, one must acknowledge that the First Language has a strong influence when producing in the Second language, at least in schools. Teachers deal with this issue on a daily basis; as we have parents asking about teaching their pupils in Spanish because they “understand nothing”, and then they complain back, claiming that the “English level is way too basic”. As a possible answer to this question, I expect a positive influence in Grammar issues, as they can have a point of comparison about a grammar construction, using Spanish as a tool when necessary, but it is not necessary to impart the entire class in Spanish, as they need at least some exposure to the language.

Related to the second question, L1 does not always help in this country as a base for learning, because Chilean people are not aware of, not only written, but also spoken grammar structures they use on a daily basis. So they do not reason or think consciously about formulating sentences, grammatically speaking, when they communicate or relate to each other. That might be a reason why learners do not comprehend how easy English can be comparing to Spanish, so Awareness is an important component to reply this question.

According to several authors, there are some different phenomena that can be strictly related to this question, which will be explained widely in the Theoretical Framework. Two of these phenomena are named “Language transfer” and “Interlanguage”, so these may influence learners to either learn faster, or to confuse themselves more at the time they are acquiring a second Language. Second Language Learners can mingle languages, using structures or words proper from their First Language in the acquisition of the Second one, or the other way round, for example, when Spanglish is born.

#### 1.4 Thesis justification

This research has for its main purpose to improve ESL learner's comprehension in real applied grammar context, using the L1 grammatical constructions as a support. Considering L1 structures as a support is advantageous to the ESL field when considering Spanish Learners in a country that is not bilingual. I took the decision of working on this issue because of my own experience in different schools. I have seen that, in Chile, one of the most common problems related to the Learning English Process is production in general, specifically written. Learners are able to "understand" the contents most of the time, but are not always able to produce by themselves, or express their ideas accurately.

As Vivian Cook (2001) explained, when Polio and Duff stated years ago that Target Language should be used as much as possible, "L2 [started to be] seen as positive, L1 as Negative" (p 404). She continued explaining that this point of view has been present since 1880, but that a productive and helpful role for the L1 can be found in the second language classroom, as "The L1 plays an integral role in L2 learning as well as in L2 use" (p 408). It is crucial to prove that the students' native language can be put to use as a support mechanism for learning English. The L1 does not need to be completely excluded from the classroom, while at the same time; it should not have to take over the entire class, since we want the class to be an environment rich in Second Language input, in this case, English. However, Spanish can be used with precision as a support in the learning process, and this is a relevant point that should be demonstrated.

## 1.5 Thesis Objectives

As described in the Research Problem, it is demanding, as well as necessary, to find a solution that fulfills a point of view that satisfies everyone; there must be a golden mean. To accomplish that solution, to “find that golden mean”; that is why the first goal to achieve is to determine what the interference of L1 in the learning process of L2 is, especially when the content is centralized majorly on learning Grammar. Determining the interference of the L1 in the acquisition of L2 is crucial to this research; it will support or discard the solution that I propose, which is to find a point where teachers can use English and Spanish in the classroom, helping students and teachers in our teaching/learning process.

To study the interference of L1, analyzing the positive or negative influence when learning a grammatical structure, can help us reach the main objective. In order to fulfill this objective, I decided to use the grammatical construction “First conditional” since this structure is exactly the same in both languages, English and Spanish, and it is commonly used among Spanish speakers, even though we are not constantly conscious about its usage.

To show that the L1 can be used as a tool when presenting an L2 grammar structure is sure one of the objectives that this research have. As mentioned in the justification, L1 should not be deleted completely from a L2 classroom, as Cook (2001) suggested, so that it can be used as a powerful tool to teach, in this case, Spanish can be turned into a useful mechanism to learn another language.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

Before giving space to the methodology of the research, it is important to comprehend these concepts to interpret the results of this research, as well as understand the purpose of this research. These concepts give a clearer vision of my point of view, highlighting some important aspects from this research, as the focus on the structures, common mistakes, and how these problems are related to the interferences that I am going to describe below.

### 2.1. Grammar

The first concept that it is needed to be clarified is Grammar, which can be widely defined as the rules of language that can modify words to form sentences. Under this wide and simple definition, it is needed to specify that “the grammar of each language constitutes a system of its own, each element of which stands in a certain relation to, and is more or less dependent on, all the others” (p 1), according to the grammar book from Jespersen (2006).

Although grammar does help communication to function, in order to formulate accurate sentences, it is important to place importance on the fact that grammar is centralized on the structures, placing importance to a base, a skeleton or formula, to create sentences, which can be different or similar in any language. More than the focus on what we mean to say (semantics), I am going to focus on how it is written; if it considers the important rules or not. In this thesis, the structure that is going to be used as a point of comparison between both languages is First conditional, which has the same “skeleton” in Spanish and English.

## 2.2. First Conditional

As we were taught in our English classes, First Conditional is basically a grammatical construction that is compounded by a condition and result. The main difference with the other conditionals (that have the same construction) is that First Conditional is used to describe facts that are likely to happen, or certain to happen if the condition is met, specifically in Present and Future. It is constructed by the conditional conjunction “If” (When is also a possible conjunction), followed by a sentence in Present Simple tense, showing as an effect a sentence in Future Will. For example, “If I wake up earlier, I will arrive on time” is a sentence written in the First Conditional Structure, starting with a condition (“If I wake up earlier”), that if it is fulfilled, it will show a specific result, or effect (“I will arrive on time”).

In Spanish, this is called “Primer Condicional” and it is used for the same purpose; to explain a result that is likely to happen if the condition is fulfilled. The construction in Spanish contains a conditional conjunction that is called “si condicional”, which has the same usage that “If” in English. The example given in the chart can be useful to explain the Primer Condicional in the same way:

Table 1: *Relationship between First Conditional in English and Spanish*

### **Condition/Condición**

### **Result/Resultado**

<i>(Conditional + Present simple) (Future will) You will arrive on time</i> <i>If you wake up earlier</i>
--

<i>(“si” condicional + Presente Simple) (Futuro Simple) Llegarás a tiempo.</i> <i>Si tú despiertas más temprano</i>
--



### 2.3. First Language Interference

Skiba (1997) defined Language interference as the transference of elements of one language into the acquisition of another language. This transfer can contemplate diverse kinds of elements related to communication itself, such as phonetical, orthographical, grammatical, and even semantical. Ellis (1997) explicates that language transfer can be considered as the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of a L2. He stated that interference can be understood as “errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue”.

Inside the concept of Interference, we shall relate two main phenomena that influence the Second Language Learner, in any language, which are Language Transfer (positive or negative), and Interlanguage. Both concepts imply an important effect of the assimilation and accommodation of the language in their learning process, so they are crucial in this experiment, any presence of these can make a significant difference.

### 2.4. Positive/Negative Language Transfer

Gass and Selinker (1992) have described the phenomena of Positive transfer as a concordance between the L1 and L2, where in such a situation; acquisition of the L2 would take place with little or no difficulty when concordance is present making easier sort of comparison. On the other hand, L1 not necessarily has a positive effect on the acquisition of L2, and the concept of Negative Language Transfer can help us illustrate this effect notoriously. Negative transfer occurred where there is kind of dissonance between the L1 and L2, which can be related to any element of Language, as well as the positive transference of language. In this situation, acquisition of the L2 definitely would take longer because of the ‘newness’ (hence, difficulty) of the L2 structure.

Either positive or negative language transfer is relevant to this research, as a determinant factor. The results of the test (which is explained widely in the methodology section) will reflect if Spanish does have a positive influence or not in the process of learning English as a Second Language, as if it has a good effect, making students reply more questions correctly.

## 2.5. Interlanguage Phenomenon

Selinker (1972) defined Interlanguage as a linguistic system that is demonstrated when second-language learners, adults as well as children, aim to express meaning in a language they are in the process of learning. The author highlighted that this phenomenon not only encompasses phonology, morphology, or syntax, but also the lexical, pragmatic, and discourse levels. In other words, any fusion of L1 and L2 produced by the accommodation of new information it is considered Interlanguage.

When people are learning another language, and they are very enthusiastic about it, it is natural to start using some words from the new language in a L1 context, such as Spanglish, which is frequent in Bilingualism. The learners even confuse pronunciations because of the accommodation that the new content is having in their brains. It is a common example when a learner tends to state something in the second language, but using the structure from L1, or translated the exact words of his/her L1: For example, when a Spanish speaker, in his/her native language states that something makes sense, he/she will say “Eso tiene sentido”, but literally translated, that will sound something like “It has sense”, which in English is used in different context. That definitely would be strange to be heard from a Native English Speaker.

As it was explained before, this phenomenon is manifested when there is a difference between the languages and it is mixed, that is why this is a phenomenon that

should not be seen in the development of this experiment, as English and Spanish do have the same First Conditional construction; it is a goal not having a problem with Interlanguage.

## 2.6. Recognition and Production

Before defining these concepts, it is relevant to consider that Recognition and Production are strongly related to the area of Psycholinguistics, as Rebecca Treiman, Charles Clifton, Jr, Antje S. Meyer, and Lee H. Wurm (2003) stated. It was important to highlight this because, in the area that this research is done (Grammar) “the connections between psychology and linguistics were particularly close” (Treiman, et.al. 2003. p 3).

Recognition, defined in a psychology dictionary in simple words, is “a sense of familiarity when encountering people, events or objects that have previously been encountered. It also pertains to material learned in the past.” If we take this definition to Language learning, it is closely related to identify a word, or element that was heard/read/seen before.

As part of recognition of written words, it is relevant to mention that:

The English writing system... contains clues to the word's stress pattern and morphological structure. Consistent with the view that print serves as a map of linguistic structure, readers take advantage of these clues as well [in order to identify a word]” (Treiman, et.al. 2003. p 9).

So this can be important when analyzing if whether English/Spanish class had less advantage as English/English had, as that group had read and listened to the Target Language.

On the other hand, Production is a concept involved in the communication process, as in Linguistics. Production means the elaboration of spoken or written language. This process includes all of the stages between having a concept, and transforming that concept into “language form” (words).

The elements recognition and production are crucial for this project, as those are the abilities to be evaluated in the test. Even though recognition is a complex psychological process, it can be reflected on the way the participants create or produce sentences by themselves.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Description of the Experiment

To achieve the objectives described in the previous pages, it was structured a project, which was based on two short classes (45 minutes each) and a final test about First conditional. The grammatical structure First Conditional was chosen because it fulfills the characteristics that it was needed from a grammatical structure. I required a verb tense or grammatical structure that is constructed with the same elements in both, English and Spanish. First conditional also coincides in an important characteristic; it is simple to explain, to apply in real context, as it is commonly used day-to-day. The volunteers for these classes are 26 people, between High School students, two college students, and two adults over 30 years old.

To work with the volunteers in an orderly procedure, I divided these volunteers into two groups that were selected by their availability to participate, as well as their age.

As I divided them into two groups, one of the groups (Group 1 from now) was taught First Conditional in English and Spanish at the same time (For example, I say something in English and I translate it into Spanish almost immediately), to highlight the similarities this structure have, in an obvious and proper way, as well as using Spanish as an explanation tool for the better understanding of the First Conditional in English. Also, I will strongly emphasize that we use the First Conditional structure without noticing or thinking about it; we have this structure adhered to us. The learners can become aware of the language they use, and how important is to relate what we learn to what we already know. In case they did not know about First Conditional in

Spanish (conscientious about the grammatical structure), they will be taught with simple examples in Spanish, for them to understand better.

On the other hand, the second group will not have the same advantage of becoming aware of the structure. Its lessons will be imparted mainly in English, focusing on how First Conditional is constructed, what First Conditional means, and this explanation will be supported by understandable examples, based on people's routines. The few times that I will allow myself to use Spanish are to explain the activities properly, as giving instructions, but I did not use it to explain the content itself. I must stress that this group received no explanation of the first conditional in Spanish, and I will not translate the examples I give, even though are pretty similar to the ones I am using in the first group.

### 3.2 Instrument

To apply this experiment, in order to comprehend whether Spanish is a useful tool or not, I created two short lessons that I will apply in both groups as I described before. Both classes were structured in the same form for both groups; same explanations, same exercises, same examples. The main difference is based on the procedure (English and Spanish versus Mainly English) that I am going to use to impart the lessons.

I created a Power Point Presentation about First Conditional, which includes the use it has, a review of the two tenses that are relevant in this structure (Present Simple and Future Will), also how to create First Conditional sentences, its structure, its components, and to close the class, the students practiced what they were taught in Two simple exercises:

The first exercise is based on recognition; they were given four sentences that contain mistakes in grammar basically (for example: “She checks her appointment if she calls to the doctor’s office”, it has no Will Clause). Their task is to correct them, forming First Conditional sentences, keeping the meaning that the sentence have. The second task is harder than the first one, because this involves almost pure Production; the students have to create their own sentences in First conditional, following the structure “If/when + Present simple, Future Will” or “Future will + if/when + present simple”. To complete this task, I provided a list of 15 verbs that were commonly used; they can choose the verbs they wanted to use. I can help them with vocabulary if they have any questions, but no answer was given in Spanish.

After these two lessons, the students have to complete the Final Test. I divided the test in four items that shows the learning process, which includes Recognition, Practice, and finally Production. This order of activities also adheres to the presentation-practice-production paradigm, with the final activity (number four) being mere production as the students had to use the verbs in sentences that they wrote themselves. This test is written, and it is based on English Grammar:

#### 1. Identify the structure in a Dialogue

The test starts with a short dialogue, which contains 5 different sentences in First Conditional. The learners are supposed to underline each example they find in the conversation. The objective of this exercise is mainly to distinguish the First conditional structure immersed in a real context; the dialogue that appears on the test is about a person who wants to travel to Russia, and his friend is talking with him about how he will communicate if he does not know the language.

To evaluate this part of the test, as this part is based on recognition, I classified their diverse answers into categories, which are related to the elements that they had identified. I did not assign any points to their answers, as I am not grading them. The following acronyms are the categories which I classified their answers:

X/5: How many full First Conditional sentences they have identified, from the 5 that were on the test.

W: This letter represents how many Will clauses/sentences they have underlined in the text.

C: Any “If” or “When” clause was be considered as Condition in the test, so this is to count how many conditions they highlighted.

PS: In the dialogue, I included some sentences that were not part of any condition, but they could have been part of First conditional sentences, so, the student could have found Present Simple sentences, but without “if”.

(?): if the student did not identify full clauses, or they underlined any sentence or random word, their answer is not considered PS, C, or W.

## 2. Recognize which sentence was correct

This exercise is similar to the one the students solve in the second class. Each exercise of this item has two sentences, one is correct, the other one is wrong. The participants have to choose which of the sentences are correct, marking them with a circle, underline them, or putting them in brackets; the main idea is to highlight somehow the sentence that is correct. As the first exercise, this item is based on



recognition of the structure in a context; the difference is that in the Item 1 is given a real context, and one more complete.

As this is also based on recognition, but they had less options of what to underline or highlight, I classified their answers in the following categories:

X/4: as there were four exercises, I counted how many correct sentences they had highlighted.

MW: In the alternatives, two of the answers were missing the Will Clause, so if they highlighted the sentences that did not contain a Will Clause, they are classified as “Missing Will”, or MW.

MPS: One of the mistakes in the exercises was a sentence without Present Simple. These answers were classified as “Missing Present Simple”.

SwP: The other mistake in this item was a sentence that had the Verb tense position switched, for instance If + Future Will, Present simple as a result.

NA: Some students were not able to spot the difference between the sentences, so they left that answer blank, without highlighting anything. These answers are called “No Answer”.

### 3. Put the verb in the correct form

The students are given four sentences with two blanks each, where there should be a verb. With the sentence, next to the blanks is the verb that suits the place, but these verbs are in Base form, no conjugation, so they have to fill with the verb given in the blanks with whether present Simple or Future Will, depending on where is the verb placed.

These answers were also classified into categories. But, as this exercise can be considered production, this exercise includes more diverse classifications, in order to be more flexible with the variety of replies.

X/8: First of all, it is needed to spot how many correct answers the students wrote.

(?): When the students reply with the verb where correspond, but in a tense that was not correct, or not even a tense that exists, it goes to this category.

NgP: As they were given one verb with “not”, most people confuse themselves. So, this category is related to the Negative Problems, whether changed the position of the negative, or changed the position of it.

PsP: When the participants did not add the “-s” or “-es” at the end of the verbs when corresponding, or even if they added when does not correspond, it is called Present Simple Problems.

SwP: One of the most common problem students had was to confuse the order between the Present simple and the future Will, specifically, they switch their positions.

NVC: Even though I gave them the verbs it should be put in the blanks, some students did not even put a verb where it should be, filling with other words, such as pronouns. That is why this category is called “No Verb Concept”.

NA: As the previous exercise, I also had students who did not reply anything, so NA means “No Answer”.

#### 4. Create two sentences with the verb given

As I described before, the last activity is based on pure production, as they were only given four verbs; “rain, take” and “wear, look.” To complete the task, the students needed to create two sentences with the words given. The students were able to ask about words for vocabulary; if they needed to translate a word, they could ask me.

To this exercise, as the answers can be extremely flexible (as it is pure production), it is necessary to classify them into more groups, some of them are the previous classifications, and some needed to be added:

X/2: Sentences were qualified as correct when it is grammatically well written.

(?): Some participants created anything but a sentence. Those constructions that do not have a name go to this category.

NgP: As the volunteers were allowed to create any sentence they wanted, they were also allowed to create negative sentences. Although they could do negative sentences, some creations had problems with it anyways.

PsP: When the participants did not add the “-s” or “-es” at the end of the verbs when making their sentences if corresponded, I assigned the name Present Simple Problems.

SwP: One of the most common problem students had was to confuse the order between the Present simple and the future Will, specifically, when they use the Will in the If clause. So basically, they switched their positions.

NVC: The “No Verb Concept” problem also grew with their creations, as some students were not able to create a sentence, or even able to put a verb in the middle coherently.

NA: As the previous exercise, I also had students who did not reply anything, so NA means “No Answer”.

TWC: When the students wrote at least an “If” or “When”, they showed that there was a presence of at least a condition. So, if they tried to make a sentence with an If or When, I qualified that answer as “Tried with a Condition”

US: Some words were not translated, even though they maintained the structure, so this category is called “Used Spanish”

Under these classifications, I evaluated the tests in order to find the students strengths as well as most common mistakes they had, and relate if these mistakes are associated to any phenomenon described previously; these results can be influenced by a phenomenon, or the phenomenon can appear as a result. Also, one of the objectives this research had was to recognize what kind of effect Spanish has, and in order to achieve that objective, it is imperative to compare results with the Spanish/English class over the English/English class, see which results can be considered better than the other one, having more correct answers, and offer a solution if we can improve the unexpected results that were bad somehow.

### 3.3 Participants.

The volunteers asked to participate in this research were 26 random people; most of them were volunteers from the school where I performed my last Internship (Liceo Comercial Luis Correa Prieto). 19 of these participants were students from 1<sup>st</sup> grade of High School, from 14 to 15 years old. The other volunteers were people from different schools and ages, which had some notions about English, but are not bilingual; 7 participants were chosen by me, these were students from 15 to 20 years old, and two of

them were 30 year-old-people. Actually, most of them acknowledged “knowing nothing” about English, besides simple vocabulary such as few colors, numbers from 1 to 20, including some few common verbs.

The “not-knowledge” they had I found it advantageous for my research, since they have not related the Second Language with the First Language, so this can highlight in a better way the point I am trying to prove; whether Spanish can be considered a tool for learning, or if it confuses them more.

### 3.4 Scenario

The classes and tests for the students of my internship took place in the school, after class. The school is called Liceo Comercial Luis Correa Prieto, and it is located on Recoleta district. This school has a room called Audiovisual Room, where it is comfortable to perform classes using PowerPoint Presentations, videos, etc. As a former teacher, I had access to this room to develop the classes. The participants that I chose had the classes at home. I displayed my house in order to make them work as a group along the classes, so they can share answers while solving the exercises presented, as well as they can clearly see the PowerPoint I prepared for classes.

## 4. Data Analysis

### 4.1 Obtained Results

The presentation of these results will be done in the order of the Items the test had, I will present the results statistically; for better comprehension, Group 1 is the one that had the classes in English and Spanish as even as possible, Group 2 is the group that had a Full-English class, it is important to highlight that both classes had the same explanation, exercises and test, as mentioned before, the main difference is the awareness of the similarities that L1 and L2 had in the grammatical construction, mentioned and emphasized in the Group 1.

Item 1: Read and Underline the examples of First conditional found in the text

As this exercise was based on recognition of a structure in a written context, it was expected a positive influence of Spanish in the results, as helping the students spot the similarities and facilitate the search of First Conditional sentences when these were immersed in a written context. This item had 5 correct answers, as there were only 5 First Conditional sentences. There were sentences in Present Simple and Future Will as distractors.

Group 1: The results obtained from this group were not as the expected results. As an average, if we consider 5 as a maximum, the results of this group is 1.92 as correct answers (25 correct answers from 65 that was the total of the 13 tests taken); it is important to mention that 5 participants identified more than 3 entire sentences in First Conditional in the text. 4 students did not underline any sentences in First Conditional, but identified other elements as isolated.

As isolated elements, the most identified clause was the Will sentences/clauses, even though what makes conditional a “Condition” is the If clause, therefore, it should be a priority when identifying, logically, even though, it is relevant to mention that Will Clause is the main clause in a conditional sentence. 9 volunteers specifically identified 13 Will clauses as a total; on the other hand, just 3 people identified an If or When clause without the result. There was no Present Simple sentences identified alone as a mistake. The surprising result for me was the category I named (?), which was for elements that are not even related to First Conditional, such as verbs ending in –ING, or words alone. In this group, these was the category more “identified”, considering words, clauses, or even sentences that were not related to First Conditional, making a total of 22 answers qualified as (?), even though the entire test was explained 3 times in order to clarify questions, making easier the process of solving the test.

Group 2: The results of this group were better than expected, as this class had every class in English, and some of the acknowledged know no English, I was expecting worse results than the Group, but these were better, without making a huge or notorious difference. As a class average, considering 5 as a maximum, the correct answers from this group were 2.62 (34 correct answers from 65 counting the 13 tests). It is important to mention that there was no student with 0 correct answers, and 6 volunteers identified more than 3 correct sentences.

The future Will sentences/clauses were also the most identified as isolated element, having 12 elements underlined. This class underlined more conditions as isolated elements, having 10 if/when clauses between the 13 graded students. These participants highlighted 3 Present simple sentences, without any condition or will clause following it. No answer could be qualified as (?) in this group; every item underlined

can be related to First Conditional, such as Present Simple, Will clauses or sentences, or Conditions.

For a better contrast or comparison of the results described above, the results are displayed in this following Chart:

Table 2: *Comparative Table of results obtained in Item 1*

<b>Element of Contrast</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
<b>Correct Answers</b>	25/65 (1.92/5)	34/65 (2.62/5)
<b>Conditions</b>	3	10
<b>Will clauses/sentences</b>	13	12
<b>Present Simple</b>	0	3
<b>(?)</b>	22	0

#### Item 2: Choose the correct form in First Conditional

This item was also focused on recognition, or discrimination of information. In this item, as a difference, contrasting with the first Item, the margin of error is smaller, as the students were given the options, or the sentences, and they had to highlight which sentence was correct and which one was wrong. In this item, as I explained above, the students had 8 sentences in total, where 4 of them were correct, following the correct structures. The distractors that this item had were: 2 sentences without Will clauses, having Present Simple as a result, one sentence with the verb tense switched, having If



+ will clause, Present simple as a result, and the last distractor was a sentence without Present Simple in it.

Group 1: In this Item, the results were closer to my previous expectations of having promising results from this group. From 4 correct answers, the average of this group was 2.15 which is more than a half (28 correct answers from 52, counting the 13 tests). Considering the answers, only one student left the exercise blank, having 4 No Answers as a result, and 2 students had the full Item correct.

The participants in this group highlighted more sentences that did not have Will Clause, even though it was the majority of sentences/clauses identified in the Item 1; 9 answers of the total were missing the Will Clause. On the other hand, only 5 students marked the sentence that had the verb tense switched, although that was the first mistake they corrected in the exercises we had in classes. At the end, 7 students highlighted the sentence without Present Simple, leaving behind the Will clause.

Group 2: The results for this group were slightly lower than the Group 1, showing in the results less correct answers, and having more “No Answers” in the final results. The average of correct answers is 2 out of 4 correct answers in Group 2 (26 correct answers from 52, counting the 13 tests.) Only one student left the item blank, having 4 No Answers, and other participant had 4 wrong answers, leaving 3 blank and marked only one, but incorrect. In total, there were 10 No Answers in the average of the group.

This group, as I mentioned before, had similar results, and some of these similarities are included in the mistakes they made. 6 volunteers highlighted the sentence with the verb tenses switched, which is close to the Group 1. The main differences are in the quantity of sentences that are missing Will clauses; there were 5

“Missing Will” as a total, less than the first group. Only 3 students highlighted the sentence without Present Simple.

A comparative chart is presented to have an optimal contrast of the results obtained in this item.

Table 3: *Comparative Table of results obtained in Item 2*

<b>Element of Contrast</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
<b>Correct answers</b>	28/52 (2.15/4)	26/52 (2/4)
<b>Missing Will</b>	9	5
<b>Switched Positions</b>	5	6
<b>Missing Present Simple</b>	7	3
<b>No Answers</b>	4	10

Item 3: Put the verb into the correct form, making First Conditional Sentences.

In contrast to Item 1 and 2, this exercise was based on production, even though I technically gave them the structure. In the test, they were given 4 sentences and the corresponding verbs in brackets. The participants shall put the verb in the corresponding verb tense, so they have to decide if the verb is whether Present Simple or Future Will is. As there are 4 sentences, there are 8 verbs in total. As I explained previously, the challenge of an Item like this is that there are a large range of possible answers, even though there is only one correct. The categories were described in the Instrument.

Group 1: The quantity of correct answers in this group was lower, comparing with the Group 2. In total, the students had as an average 3.31 correct answers, considering 8 as the maximum score (43 correct answers, considering 104 as the maximum). An important data to highlight is that there was no student with 8 correct answers, 5 students had none of their answers correct, and 7 participants of 13 had 4 or more correct answers.

Speaking of the volunteers' mistakes, the majority of mistakes are in the category (?), which in this case indicates that students wrote the verb that appeared in the exercise, but they did not write in any of the tenses that First Conditional includes, for example, verbs in Past Participle, or ending in “-ing”. 26 answers were qualified as (?) as a total of the results, most of their answers were the verb left as base form, the other majority was “will” alone, and -ing verbs. 12 answers were left blank, classified as No Answer. 6 answers from two volunteers were classified as No Verb Concept, as they wrote pronouns instead of verb, although the verbs were literally given to them. One of the sentences required one of the verbs in Negative, and 3 participants had problems with this exercise. Two participants had two incorrect answers each just for switching the verb tenses, so there were 4 answers qualified as SwP (Switched Positions). Other two volunteers had problems with adding Will to all the verbs, so they missed 4 Present Simple answers, having 8 Missing Present Simple in the final results, and there were no students that missed a Will Clause isolated.

Group 2: The results were clearly better than the results on the Group 1, although in the final average on this item does not denote a huge difference. As an average, considering 8 as a total, the volunteers obtained 4.31 as correct answers (56 correct answers out of 104, considering the 13 tests). In this group, it is relevant to mention that two students had the item completely correct, and considering them, 8

participants had over 4 correct answers. On the other hand, only one student left the exercise blank, contributing to the 14 No Answers in total.

In the most common mistakes found in this Item, the problems with Present Simple and Missing Will were the highest number, 8 answers were qualified in each category. There was only one answer that can be qualified as “Switched Position”, which was a Will clause that should not have been in the If clause. 5 participants manifested problems with the answer in Negative form, not being able to use auxiliary verb in negative, and three answers were under the classification of (?) as a final score in this Item. Surprisingly, there was no mistake qualified as “No Verb Concept”, as in the Group 1. To highlight the differences in a proper way, it is necessary to display the results in the table.

Table 4: *Comparative Table of results obtained in Item 3*

<b>Element of Contrast</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
<b>Correct answers</b>	43/104 (3.31/8)	56/104 (4.31/8)
<b>Missing Will</b>	0	8
<b>Switched Positions</b>	4	1
<b>Missing Present Simple</b>	8	0
<b>No Answers</b>	12	14
<b>Negative Problem</b>	3	5
<b>Problem with Present Simple</b>	0	8
<b>(?) (Wrong tense)</b>	26	3
<b>No Verb Concept</b>	6	0

Item 4: Write two sentences in First Conditional.

The results obtained in this item, which I believe it was crucial for this research as it shows pure production from the participants, more than the Item 3, were different from my expectations. I described in the beginning that L1 does have a utility in the classroom, and that awareness should make a difference in this area, but according to the results, there was almost no difference. As a general reminder of the exercise, the students were asked to write two sentences grammatically correct, and in order to execute the activity easier, they were given four verbs: rain, take, wear, and look. As in

the previous activity, to evaluate this exercise, I mentioned the large range of categories in the section called Instrument.

Group 1: As there are only two answers in the maximum of correct answers, the final average for this group on this Item was 0.77, having 10 correct answers considering 26 as a total, counting the 13 tests. It is important to consider that only three students had the entire item correct (2/2), nevertheless, the negative numbers are more substantial than the positive. 7 participants had no correct answers in this item.

Three of the obtained results mentioned at least “If or When”, so the condition took a little more importance, nonetheless, only one participant wrote a simple Will clause, having no condition. The most present category was definitely the creations students’ made, that were not even sentences; having no logical order, or having no verb in the middle, so 8 answers went to the category (?) in total. There were not any “No Answers” in this Item. There was only one answer from a participant that used Spanish words in the middle of the sentence, even when I gave the student the chance of asking about vocabulary. Also, two replies from the tests were “Conditionals” without the presence of a Present Simple sentence/clause, and three of the students’ answers were qualified as “Tried with a Condition”, as there as at least a try from them, having written an “if” or “when”.

Group 2: As I specified previously in this section, the difference with the previous answers were not as immense as expected, but these results were higher than the Group 1; in fact, the average that this section had in this activity was 1 out of 2 correct answers, so technically, the half of the expected answers were fulfilled successfully (13 correct answers of 26 considering the 13 tests). Comparing to the first

group, 5 participants in this group answered this full item correctly, which is slightly higher, and the same amount of volunteers did not have any correct answer.

From the participants' creations, one of the facts that called my attention is that most of their answers, actually 6, were merely Present Simple sentences, with no condition and no consequence in Future Will. The quantity of mistakes of this group is minor than the mistakes of Group 1; only one reply belong into the categories "Tried with a Condition", "Negative Problems", "No answer", and one person wrote a sentence without any Present Simple clause. Even though the creations were in their majority well done, two of them were qualified as (?), as well as only two of the creations were only a Will Sentence/clause.

In this item, even though the differences between the group 1 and 2, were not as noticeable as expected, for a better comprehension of the obtained information I will express the results in a chart, for a better comparison.

Table 5: *Comparative Table of obtained results in Item 4*

<b>Element of Contrast</b>	<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
<b>Correct answers</b>	10/26 (0.77/2)	13/26 (1/2)
<b>Switched Positions</b>	1	0
<b>Missing Present Simple</b>	2	1
<b>No Answers</b>	0	1
<b>Negative Problem</b>	0	1
<b>(?)</b>	8	2
<b>Used Spanish</b>	1	0
<b>Will sentence only</b>	1	2
<b>Present Simple sentence only</b>	0	6
<b>Tried with Condition</b>	3	1



## 4.2 Analysis per Item

Item 1: Read and Underline the examples of First conditional found in the text

This exercise was based on recognition of a grammatical construction, present in a written context. More than being an exercise based on discriminating information, what the participant must highlight, in this case underlines, is a complete First Conditional Structure. Even though 5 volunteers succeeded in the first group, the majority of mistakes were basically underlining anything but a sentence in First Conditional. This can reflect that students tried to identify elements that they believed they were important, or randomly solve the activity.

Despite the randomness of the mistakes this group had as majority, it is relevant to mention that the element that was most identified as isolated item, was Will clause/sentence. Will clauses/sentences are an important element in the First Conditional grammatical structure, as they are considered the main clause in the sentence; therefore, it seems to be logical to have Will clauses identified mostly in this exercise. In group 2, Will clauses were also the most identified as isolated element, but in contrast to the Group 1, this group had also a high amount of Conditions identified as an element apart likewise. Condition clause, as mentioned in the explanation of First Conditional, it is what turns a normal sentence into the Conditional; so, it is inferential that Group 2 identified the most quantity of isolated elements that were crucial to create a First Conditional sentence, and the significant results that the volunteers had is reflected in the quantity of students that identified the 5 expected sentences in the test, which were 6 students. The difference was not as considerable as predicted, as Group 1 had 5 students that had the 5 sentences underlined.

As a premise that can be inferred by this results is that Spanish/English classes makes almost no difference speaking of correct answers if we compare them with a class that was performed in entire English, students in both groups were nearly equal, but what marked the steep difference was the isolated elements that volunteers highlighted, as Group 2 had identified elements that were key to form First Conditional Sentences.

#### Item 2: Choose the correct form in First Conditional

This exercise, as the first activity, is related to recognition, as the students had to discriminate between one correct sentence and a wrong sentence. The results of this exercise can change the previous premise since the results were nearer to the expectations that were propounded. In this Item, the correct answers reflected that Group 1 had not major problems differentiating between correct and incorrect sentences, having the preponderance of correct answers, although, again, there was not an abyssal difference, as the statistics were quite similar. If we compare the amount of volunteers that marked the sentence that had switched positions of verb tenses, the difference is one student. 5 and 6 respectively were the final sum of SwP.

The only big difference between Group 1 and Group 2 statistically speaking was the “No Answers” section, having in the first Group only one student that left the full exercise blank, and the second Group that had 10 blank answers, from 5 people that tried answering some of the questions, except for one student as well, that had 4 “No Answers”. So, it is presumable that Group 2 had more problems discerning between two sentences that had the important elements to form First Conditional sentences, but they do not place them in the right position as they should be.

Observing the results of the first Item, as the ability to be compared is the same, the incorrect answers that students marked on Item 2 can be related, as a common factor, to the answers they underlined on the first item; for instance, Group 1 had more answers that were qualified as “Missing Will” comparing to Group 2, meanwhile Group 2 had underlined more Will clauses in the text. Likewise happened with Group 1 that had not underlined any Present Simple as isolated item, they have as common mistake in Item 2 the “Missing Present Simple” sentence. It can be inferred that participants in Group 2 place more importance on Will Clause as well as the Present Simple element from the First Conditional; both elements are relevant as components, therefore, this group shall not have big problems in the Production section; knowing the elements of the First Conditional Sentences, they should be able to create their own sentences in the final activity.

Item 3: Put the verb into the correct form, making First Conditional Sentences.

Changing the scenario a little, Item 3 as forenamed, it is focused on a different ability; production. Considering the amount of participants and the results, the difference statistically can be called “considerable”, as the total of correct answers were 104, and the closest group was Group 2 with 56 correct answers; more than a half of the group had relatively a good performance on this exercise. Nevertheless the performance of this group fulfilled the expectations; the quantity of No Answers is surprisingly high, which can be confusing, if we consider that only one student had left the entire exercise blank. Group 2 also took more risks when writing the sentences, as they had problems adding the final -s in the verbs when it did not correspond, so they had more answers qualified as “Present Simple Problems”, and had no answer qualified as “Missing Present Simple”. Consequently, it can be presumed that Group 2 “preferred” to make mistakes adding the Present Simple than deleting it from the structure, as Group 1 did.

Considering the “risks” taken from the students in Group 1, these participants tried instead of adding –s or –es (trying with Present Simple), they intended to fill the blanks with tenses such as –ing, having 26 answers of 104 in the category (?), in contrast to this, Group 2 only had 3 answers belonging to that category.

As mentioned, Group 1 that used to have problems with Will Clause had problems majorly with Present Simple, as 8 answers were missing Present Simple; that means that in the answers, the participants filled the blanks only with verbs written in Future Will; speaking of Will clauses, this time this group has no problems. Same happened with the only answer in Negative; only 3 participants had problems with it, two participants less than Group 2.

From these results, it can be interpreted that English class (group 2) are more able than Group 1 to conjugate verbs properly, in the place it should be. Even when their conjugations are wrong, as the case of the PSP, these volunteers acknowledged somehow that Present Simple should be there, and they took the risk of writing it wrong, but considered it part of the First Conditional structure, in contrast to the Group 1 that majorly filled the blanks with Will Clauses even where it does not correspond.

#### Item 4: Write two sentences in First Conditional

This item, more than item 3, is crucial for this research, as mere Production can be considered in every class like Evaluation because Production in the Presentation-Practice- Production (PPP) model is the part where the student tests what he/she learnt in classes; taking risks and creating by his/her own. This is why I decided to leave this item as the final Activity in the Evaluation instrument; here, even though that the participants demonstrate what they had acquired in class along the test, producing by themselves proves and denotes in a clearer way whether the classes in Spanish/English

had a positive impact in the Acquisition of this new structure or it helped more English classes produce accurate sentences easily.

In the results as statistics, Group 2 fulfilled the expectations better than Group 1, having half of the answers correct, and the major quantity of volunteers having the entire item correct (exactly 5 students had the item correct), and the presence of Present Simple sentences reigned as isolated element written in this item. Comparing, Group 1 had major problems creating their own sentences accurately, having 8 answers in the (?) category, where Group 2 had only 2 answers in that category.

Group 1 presented more difficulties when producing by their own, having 7 students with none correct answer, and specifically one student that made a coherent sentence, but included words in Spanish. A couple of answers were similar to the phenomenon mentioned in Item 3, having sentences that were missing a Present Simple clause, creating conditionals merely in Future Will tense. At least three answers from these participants wrote “if” or “when”, considering that the sentences they were about to create, or tried to create, needed a condition.

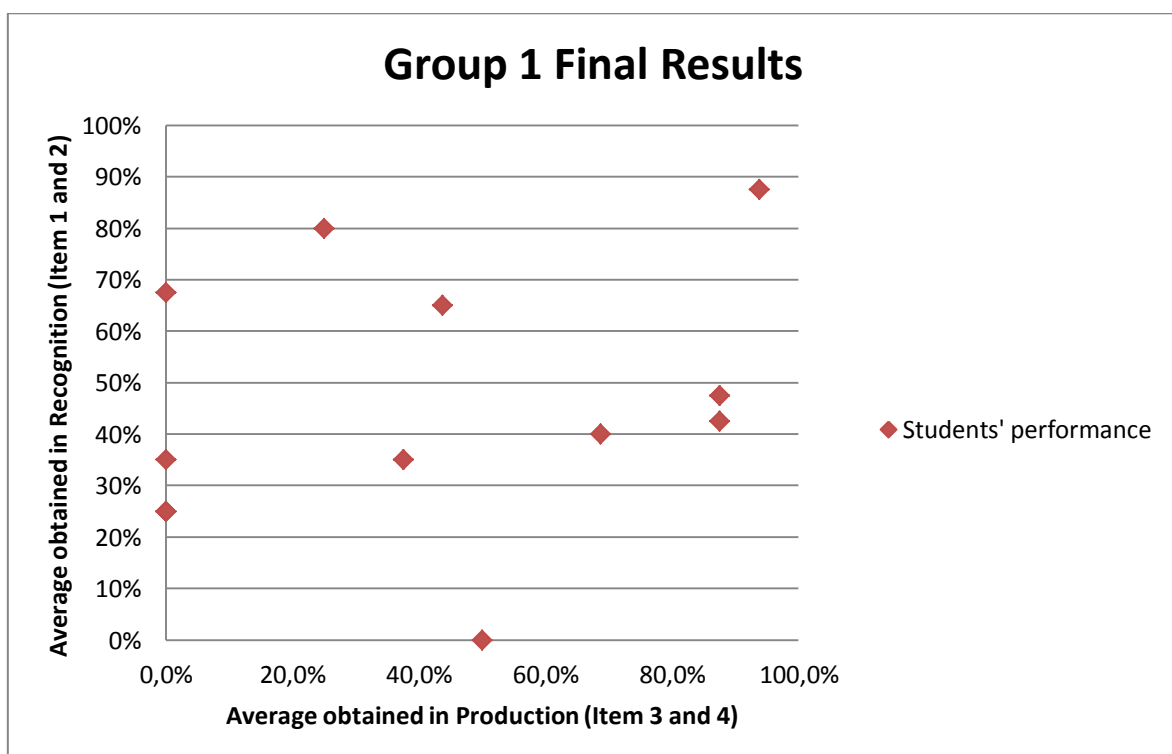
After viewing these results, it seems to be that Spanish classes do not have a positive effect on helping students produce sentences independently, as the English classes do. Participants in Group 2 had not only better results, but less incoherent mistakes than Group 1 in this item.

### 4.3 Overall Analysis

Moving on with this experiment, it is time to interpret the results comparing with the phenomena mentioned in the Theoretical Framework. As was stated in the explanation of Recognition, there must be a relationship between the process of recognition and the process of Production, although Recognition includes an internal and complex than Production, as Production implies the final result of the internal process.

Made the relationship between Recognition and Production, it is crucial now to prove if there is a positive correlation between the averages obtained from the exercises that involved Recognition compared to the averages obtained from the exercises that implied Production. In the graphs 6 and 7 it will be represented the correct answers that volunteers had.

#### Group 1: Recognition vs Production



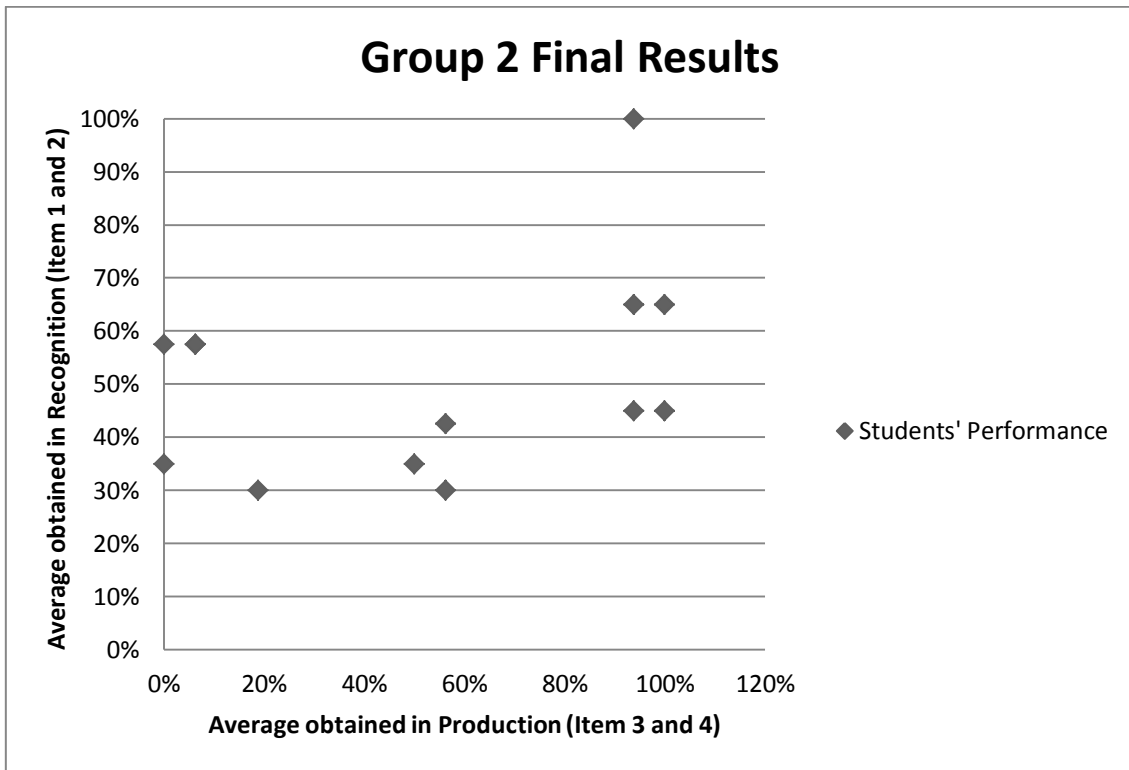
## Description of the Graph

1. Average presented on percentage of the correct answers obtained in Item 3 and 4 that are based on Production (Axis X).
2. Average presented on percentage of the correct answers obtained in Item 1 and 2 that are based on Recognition (Axis Y).

The final results, considering the incorrect answers from this group, could have denoted an enormous difference comparing to the excellent results that Group 2 had in almost every exercise. Nonetheless, viewing only the correct answers in the average, it does present a clear positive correlation between Recognition and Production, even though the results were not the best in the items that involved production. The results were closer to the expectations in the area of Recognition for this Spanish/English class group, as the Structure in Spanish could have been a support, but even when it was a support, it is necessary to see the results in the second group. This relationship between the abilities forenamed proves that Recognition plays an important role to develop the Production process.

The graph shows 11 spots instead of 13 because two students had the same results than other 2, and the system put them as only one figure.

Group 2: Recognition vs Production.



Description of the Graph

1. Average presented on percentage of the correct answers obtained in Item 3 and 4 that are based on Production (Axis X).
2. Average presented on percentage of the correct answers obtained in Item 1 and 2 that are based on Recognition (Axis Y).

The graph shows 12 spots instead of 13 because one student had the same results than other one, and the system put them together as only one spot.

As expressed in the results per Item, the results in Group 2 on Production were clearly higher than the average they had in the Recognition stage, which represents also a clear positive correlation between Recognition and Production. Important to highlight is that Treiman et al. (2003) stated that having listening support helps the Learner



identify words, as well as write words easily, as the stress in the words supports the “recognition” of it. And Group 2, obtaining higher results in most of the exercises in this test, certainly upholds the statement declared previously.

Despite expecting better results in Group 1 because of the similarities the languages had grammatically speaking, it is relevant to affirm that English in the classroom as a major percentage can be considered as a better option, even when the learner does not feel secure or comfortable at the very beginning, having classes with 50% Spanish and 50% English does not guarantee a good student’s performance. It is not necessary to eliminate it completely, as Cook (2001) explains in the book, specifically because L1 can be useful for clarifications, and to use it in some discussions.

## 5. Discussions and Conclusions

### 5.1 Discussions

Through the process of this research, there are some controversies between the expectations and the development, which it is important to discuss and explain clearer.

It is relevant to discuss this big issue in order to remark the objectives of this research and the importance of this research in the ESL area, highlighting the pros and cons of the development in the research.

#### 5.1.1 The obtained results and its utility

In most of the descriptions about the obtained results, it is mentioned that the results were not fulfilled as it was expected, especially because they are not in concordance to the declared objectives. As this discoordination occurs, it is relevant to state this question: Does this make the declared point of view invalid? The answer to that question is No, and I will explain why.

To clarify my answer, I compared my research with another similar research, which was focused on Interlanguage. The research performed by Isti Nurhayati (2015), presented in the Journal for English Language Teaching, showed the mistakes students of an L2 often make, expecting to find the element of Interlanguage that I did not want to see in the test applied to the volunteers. Nurhayati (2015) commented that this phenomenon can be present normally in exercises related to these three types of task:

- Task of Grammar
- Task of Vocabulary
- Task of Constructing Sentences (p 3.)

The explanation about these types of task are closely related to the second Research Question stated, finding a proper answer about the main reasons of why L1 does not help or support L2, and, as the point of view declared was not backed up with the results, it is necessary to find an answer to the question why it did not work as expected. I highlighted two of these three tasks because the first one (Task of Grammar) is referred to the differences that grammar constructions may have in both languages, which is not the case of this research. Students were asked to recognize and produce a similar grammar construction, where the main difference between L1 and L2 is the way verbs are conjugated, which could have influenced the answers in the productive part of the test (Item 3 and 4).

The second task that is likely to be challenging to L2 learners, according to Nurhayati (2015) is the Task of Vocabulary. Here, it is important to mention that students in both groups had issues about vocabulary, asking several times in the classes, and even though I wrote some translations on the board (the ones I was asked to write), they had problems of this kind in the test. The task of Vocabulary was related to know the words the students should use to construct a sentence; it is not necessary to be a problem about vocabulary related to a specific topic. She commented that “most of the subjects [had difficulties] in finding the words that they wanted to use in their text while they did not know those words in English” (Nurhayati, 2015, p. 3), then she mentioned that the students normally do not have the culture of asking to a teacher or a friend for help to find a solution. Gladly, this “non-culture” problem was not present in the classes; most of my students asked about the meaning or translations of words; with Group 1 (Spanish and English) I translated the words they asked. On the other hand, with Group 2 I tried to explain the meaning of the word, instead of translating literally. In the case the student did not understand, the word was translated.

Not knowing the words was not the only issue with vocabulary. “The lack of knowledge relating to the English vocabularies which caused by lacking of reading habits made students came back to use [First language] words even when they had to produce English sentences” (Nurhayati, 2015, p 3.) This issue was present by only one student who did not translate two words when he was elaborating the sentence in the Item 4. This was the clearest signal of Interlanguage in the results, as it was clear Spanglish, even though the words were written on the board, fortunately this was the only case of using L1 words to create a sentence.

Now, the following issue is clearly related to the Item 4 on the test, and it was clearly present in the student’s mistakes, which was the task of Constructing Sentences. The author described this type of errors claiming that the most common mistakes were confusing grammatical structures, such as phrases, to create sentences or phrases with the L1 constructions, instead of producing an L2 sentence that was expected. Isti (2015) explained that “When such kind of situation happened, the interlanguage process happened to the students.” (p. 4). Most of these mistakes occur because of the students’ nervous reaction in front of a test, or when the students do not have the clear structure of the required L2 construction (p. 4). Although the test was explained to the students, clarifying that this test had no grade for them, some participants felt “mind blocked” in the middle of the test, especially when they had to create sentences. Group 1 was the one who felt more insecure, and the ones who ask ore about vocabulary. Some students also felt in the same way that the Group 1, despite the fact that they had the right answer written and they were not sure about their creations (most of them).

The presence of Interlanguage in the classroom or test is not a proof of failure of a certain method, class, or results on a test, even though that was my first belief, described in the theoretical framework. And as teachers, we are often told that our

student's mistakes can be a great opportunity to learn, and having an issue as Interlanguage can be used as an object of Learning. It does sound strange this posture after mentioning that Interlanguage made students fail in their answers, but Vivian Cook (2001) explained it clearer. In her book, she stated that the interaction between L1 and L2 is a support to coordinate Bilingualism; for the student's learning process, to understand a new language is a challenge that can be "less challenging" if he/she has the L1 back up as a point of comparison to acquire vocabulary, grammatical structures, sounds, etc. There is a quote that I would like to highlight, "The L2 meanings do not exist separately from the L1 meanings in the learner's mind, regardless of whether they are part of the same vocabulary store or parts of different stores mediated by a single conceptual system" (Cook, 2001, p 407). This means that it is not necessary to teach English as a totally different language, which would make a student already state in their minds that learning is a challenging task to do.

## 5.2 Conclusions

To conclude this research, it is fundamental to move back, to the stated Objectives that were described previously. This research had for main purpose to determine which influence Spanish had when teaching Grammar, especially if the grammar structure was similar, and the way it was proven was having the same content taught with the same lesson, but changing the modality of the lecture itself. The product or result of those classes was reflected on the correct and incorrect answers collected from a test.

This objective expected to reply the first Research question, which was referred to the Influence that Spanish can have in the Second Language Acquisition process. The expected answer was related to the support L1 can offer when the grammatical structures are similar, however, in the very beginning; we can think that the Interlanguage in this case, as Spanglish, can offer a non-secure-stage for learning process, even when the constructions are similar. Learners do not tend to compare the grammatical structures to have a support, and there is the confusion, or the mix of English/Spanish grammatical constructions; this phenomenon is not helpful in cases, such as literal translation, but it can be majorly helpful if teachers tend to coordinate the use of L1 as similar to L2, instead of taking them separately.

The second objective was stated as “to study the interference of L1, analyzing the positive or negative influence when learning a grammatical structure”. First Language interference, as it was defined, is the combination of phonetical, grammatical, etc., element from one language to the acquisition of the second Language. This transference did manifest, related to the Positive/Negative Language Transfer. It is possible that for Production, the influence of Spanish creates a “comfort zone” for

learners; that is a possible reason why the students in Group 1 had more incorrect answers that were not related to the elements of production asked than Group 2 had. On the other hand, the influence that Spanish had in the reflected results is that the Positive Language Transfer can be useful as a tool for Recognition process, as the results showed in the graph.

The last objective proposed in this research, is to show that the L1 can be used as a tool when presenting an L2 grammar structure. The final results from the experiment applied to the group can be interpreted like this; that teaching a grammatical structure that is similar in both languages, as a final result, does not state an abyssal difference comparing the results of a class performed in English merely. In fact, the results that marked the difference were the mistakes, more than the correct answers these volunteers replied, so, it is important to state as a conclusion that L1 can be used as an effective engine in the classes but as final results, makes no variation with classes immersed in L2.

As a further conclusion, teaching a Second Language through the First Language is a possible tool to use in the classroom, if the teacher has the skill to play wisely with the combination of both Languages. Here, Cook (2001) suggested in the book some usages that L1 can have in a classroom that was immersed in complete L2, to not ban the L1 completely:

“To carry out learning tasks through collaborative dialogue with fellow students” (p 408) is a possible option to use L1 on a task in a L2 classroom; having discussions and interaction between students to give some ideas, to finally work in L2 can have reliable results, as the students are comfortable to share some ideas in workgroups such as debates. In case of having students that are more comfortable with

L2, these learners can work with students that are not comfortable with the language as encouragement for them.

“L2 films with L1 subtitles” is definitely a solid option to apply in a L2 classroom. L1 written as L2 is spoken can help the student create a relationship of certain vocabulary and create a “bridge” between both languages, or “to build up interlinked L1 and L2 knowledge in the students’ minds” (p 408), besides films and videos can be flexibly related to students’ likes and interests, so it can be also entertaining for learners, at any level.

There are many other ways in that L1 can be supportive in a L2 classroom, the activities can vary as much as the teacher wants and needs, and these activities can work at any learners’ level, which is advantageous for teachers and students. To contemplate the idea that “The L2 meanings do not exist separately from the L1 meanings in the learner’s mind” (Cook, 2001, p 407) is key to success with the mix of two languages in a classroom, without thinking about the student’s learner.



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## Appendix

## **FIRST CONDITIONAL TEST**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: 1º \_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Read the text and Underline the sentences in First Conditional

Dave is 18 and lives in Bath, England. He has decided to go to Moscow for a week. This will be his first time abroad. He has also decided to travel alone. This is the conversation he has with his friend Pete.

Pete - How will you communicate with the Russians when you don't even speak the language?

Dave - I've been practising and I'm taking this phrase book with me. If I can't remember a word, I'll look it up.

Pete - But you can't read Russian. How will you know how to get around? If you see a sign, you won't be able to read it.

Dave - Like I said, I've been practising. Besides, I can always show someone in the street where I want to go.

Pete - But you won't be able to understand them. You can't speak Russian.

Dave - I'm not worried. I'll be OK.

Pete - I admire your optimism.

Dave - Don't worry about me. Do you want anything from Moscow?

Pete - Yes, a furry Russian hat.

Dave - No problem. If I find one, I'll buy it for you.

Pete - Great and when you come back, you'll tell me all about it.

### 2. Choose the correct form in First Conditional

- a) I'll come to the musical if I can find a ticket. / I come to the musical if I can find a ticket.
- b) If you take the train, you will arrive more quickly. / If you will take the train, you arrive more quickly.
- c) He joins us if he has free time. / He will join us if he has free time.
- d) When I will see John, I'll give him the good news. / When I see John, I'll give him the good news.

3. Put the verb into the correct form, making First Conditional Sentences.

- a) If I \_\_\_\_\_ (go) out tonight, I \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to the cinema.
- b) If you \_\_\_\_\_ (get) back late, I \_\_\_\_\_ (be) angry.
- c) If we \_\_\_\_\_ (not / see) each other tomorrow, we \_\_\_\_\_ (see) each other next week.
- d) If we \_\_\_\_\_ (wait) here, we \_\_\_\_\_ (get) there late.

4. Write two sentences using the first conditional with the verbs given.

a) Wear, look:

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b) Rain, take:

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**GOOD LUCK!**