Assessing the Impact of Cross-Linguistic Influence on the Writing of Spanish Secondary School EFL Students

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Abstract

The present study has been designed to investigate the impact of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) on the writing of Spanish secondary school EFL students. The sample consisted of forty-three (43) Catalan-Spanish bilingual third year ESO EFL students studying in a semi-private Catalonian secondary school located in the province of Tarragona, Spain. Data collection tools included two instruments. A pre-questionnaire was conducted before the treatment with the aim of gathering information regarding participants' native languages, language preferences, motivation, and positive attitude towards English. The treatment included a writing task in which participants were asked to translate eleven (11) sentences from Spanish into English and answer three (3) open-ended short answer questions. The data were analyzed via a Paired Samples T-Test and a One-Way ANOVA in the statistics platform JASP. The results of a Paired Samples T-Test shows that there was no statistically significant difference between participants' general errors and errors due to their L1, although the total number of L1 errors surpassed the total number of general errors in the writing test. Furthermore, a One-Way ANOVA shows that learner motivation and positive attitude towards English language had a statistically significant impact on the overall number of L1 errors and general errors. This study demonstrates that cross-linguistic influence (CLI) is an important aspect in second language acquisition and suggests that it should not be ignored by language practitioners.

Keywords: *Cross-linguistic influence (CLI), L1 interference, negative transfer, positive transfer, behaviorism, Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), Error Analysis, Interlanguage, fossilization, motivation.*

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction

"The fact is that if you have not developed language, you simply don't have access to most of human experience, and if you don't have access to experience, then you're not going to be able to think properly."

Noam Chomsky, in his book *Language and Problems of Knowledge* (1987)

1.1 Background Information

Since the beginning of human history, people of all ages have been actively engaged in the process of language learning, and even language creation, one way or another. Indeed, it is hard to believe that an achievement as intricate as the human language might have emerged as an all-or-none event, just like "big bang", at a later stage in the evolution of our species (Corballis, 1999). Although not favored widely among linguists or anthropologists due to lack of parsimony and direct evidence, as Étienne Condillac, a French philosopher, suggested in the 17th century and Gordon W. Hewes, an American anthropologist, later revived in the 1970s that "language emerged not from vocalization, but from manual gestures, and switched to a vocal mode relatively recently in hominid evaluation, perhaps with the emergence of *H. Sapiens* (Corballis, 1999, p. 139)." Even grater apes, which were the earliest stage in the evolutionary lineage, resorted to the use of simple gestures, developing their own languages in a sense (Corballis, 1999). So, where did this need for language come from not only for humans but even also for animals?

Language, which first emerged in a non-verbal form in the first primates, later became a verbal form among human species and unquestionably played a leading role in the establishment of human civilization. First, the first living beings developed a language in their specific communities to primarily communicate among themselves to meet their basic needs, to avoid danger, and to live in harmony in a specific community. This simply might be

what Chomsky meant by “human experience” in his quote above at the beginning of this thesis. Afterwards, however, as the population of living species expanded and they also evolved, it became increasingly inadequate to being able to communicate only among themselves, that is, in their own specific communities to which each one of them pertained. This situation led to the necessity for living beings to learn the languages of other communities. As they began to learn other languages, living beings now were able to communicate effectively not only within their own communities but also with other people, leading to the emergence of the concept “cultural exchange”, which undoubtedly has been the key for the divergence between human civilizations throughout the world. In Anna Makepeace’s documentary “*We Still Live Here: Âs Nutayuneân*” (2010), Noam Chomsky summarizes both the creative and unifying power of language in the following words:

> “A language is not just words. It's a culture, a tradition, a unification of a community, a whole history that creates what a community is. It's all embodied in a language.”

Since the ancient times, the development of languages and human civilizations have progressed in parallel. Language differences between different communities led to the formation of different human civilizations over time. While some of these civilizations disappeared with their languages over time, some of them continued to exist for years and have taken the form of modern civilizations and languages. According to the University of Maryland’s *Langscape Project*, there are approximately 7,000 languages spoken around the world (*Langscape*, n.d.), and this number is increasing each day as new parts of the world are discovered. Although the exact dates of the emergence of existing languages are still unknown, scientists have been studying languages for centuries and trying to place them in a specific framework. In the field of linguistics, two approaches have been adopted in the

classification of languages: genealogical, according to the common origin of languages, and typological, according to the similarities between the grammatical structures (Zakirov, 2024), although the former classification has been considered more appropriate in terms of practicability and extensity.

As Ludmila Kryshtop mentioned in her paper, the idea of linguistic affinity dates to the Renaissance period, when Italian traveler Philip Sassetti mentioned the affinity between Sanskrit and European languages with examples (Kryshtop, 2019). This idea was later supported by the works of British philologist William Jones and Austrian researcher Paulinus of St. Bartholomew respectively in 1786 and 1798 (Kryshtop, 2019). However, it was Friedrich Schlegel who first classified the world languages into two groups as inflectional, which included Latin, German, Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, and Persian languages, and affixial, to which Arabic and Hebrew belonged, introducing the very idea of "Indo-European" language family (Kryshtop, 2019).

The "Indo-European" language family consists of eleven major subgroups, which namely are "Italic, Hellenic (=Greek), Indo-Iranian, Celtic, Germanic, Baltic, Slavic, Armenian, Anatolian, Albanian, and Tocharian (Baldi, 1983, p. 12)." English and Spanish, the languages that are the subject of the present research study, belong to this same language family, although differing in their subgroups. We see English under the *Germanic* languages while Spanish is classified under the *Italic* languages. Even the languages belonging to same sub-family (i.e., English and German) have several differences between them. Therefore, it is no surprise to observe outstanding differences between Spanish and English regarding morphology, syntax, vocabulary, pragmatics, and phonology. There are countless studies which have found that when people learn a new language, they tend to transfer some characteristics of their native language (L1) to the language they are acquiring (L2). This is

known as ‘cross-linguistic influence (CLI)’ or ‘L1 interference’ (Komilova, 2023). This interference does not have to be always negative as the term ‘interference’ suggests. For example, Spanish and English share lots of same words which they can positively transfer when learning English such as ‘*hospital’*, ‘*invisible’*, and ‘*natural’*. In this case, this will be called ‘positive transfer’. On the other hand, for instance, in Spanish language, the adjectives usually come after the words whereas in English, they come before the words. Therefore, Spanish learners of English might negatively transfer this characteristic and end up saying ‘**conditions economic’* instead of ‘*economic conditions*.’ The main idea behind the present study is to investigate the concept of negative transfer in the writing of Spanish secondary school EFL learners, particularly 3 ESO students, by employing a pre-questionnaire and a writing task. Furthermore, through several questions regarding students’ motivation and attitude towards English language, the influence of motivation on the prevention of errors due to L1 will also be discussed.

1.2 Theoretical Background

This chapter will begin with a chronological introduction of the relevant theories which argue for and discuss the extent of the influence of learners' mother tongue (L1) in the language learning process, to give a clearer understanding of the idea underlying this thesis. The theories to be introduced will start with behaviorism, continue with the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, and end with the presentation of Error Analysis and Interlanguage Theory.

1.2.1 Behaviorist Theory of First Language (L1) and Second Language (L2) Acquisition

There have been countless studies on how people acquire their first and second languages, of which many theories have been put forward based on the results and insights. Being one of these theories, behaviorism, developed by American psychologist J.B Watson in

the early 1900s and essentially emerging as a theory of psychology, is actually serves as a theory of native language (L1) acquisition, later partly promoted as a reaction to conventional/traditional grammar by placing a strong emphasis on the significance of verbal behavior and consequently gaining a considerable respect in the context of 1950s educational world (Demirezen, 1988). Behaviorist theory equates acquiring a language to verbal behavior, thus claiming that language learning can also be observed just like any other behavior and that it is not necessary to attempt to explain the mental processes underlying these types of behaviors (Nor & Ab Rashid, 2018). As Demirezen (1988) also mentions, the analyses of human behavior in observable stimulus-response interactions and the association between them forms the foundation of behaviorist theory and the first behaviorist to investigate the idea that learning is the establishment of associations between particular behavioral process and its consequence was the American psychologist Edward L. Thorndike in the early 1900s. Essentially, "the behaviorist theory of stimulus-response learning, particularly as developed in the operant conditioning model of Skinner, considers all learning to be the establishment of habits as a result of reinforcement and reward" (Wilga Rivers, 1968, 73; as cited in Demirezen, 1988, p. 136), which is actually quite similar to what Pavlov did in his experiment which shows that response and stimulus cooperate.

Behaviorist theory puts forward the idea that “children are born with a blank state of mind or *tabula rasa*. Children acquire L1 through stimuli given to them and the responses of children are conditioned through reinforcement. A positive response will be conditioned through positive reinforcement like reward or praise and vice versa for a negative response which is conditioned with punishment” (Nor & Ab Rashid, 2018, p. 162). Likewise, Demirezen (1988) explains this idea of behaviorist theory in the following words:

> "According to this category, the babies obtain native language habits via varied babblings which resemble the appropriate words repeated by a person or object near him. Since for his babblings and mutterings he is rewarded, this very reward reinforces further articulations of the same sort into grouping of syllables and words in a similar situation (p. 136)."

In this sense, when babies first start talking, it is proper to argue that the people they interact with play a vital role in their performance through reinforcements. When a baby utters a word in a correct way, he/she is probably approved, praised, and rewarded by others via positive feedback such as "Great!", "Good job!", "Excellent!", "Wonderful!", etc. The baby can even get a treat for the positive response, which will make him/her repeat the behavior in the future since it is positively reinforced. However, babies grow up combining sentences via analogy and generalizations such as *goed for went, which, in some complex situations, causes the baby to articulate in acceptable speech structures, conditioning him to commit errors (Demirezen, 1988). In this respect, when a baby utters a word in a wrong way, he/she is generally disapproved and punished by others via negative feedback such as "No, that is not correct.", "Noo, when are you going to learn to say this?", etc. In fact, almost all babies are forced by their parents to repeat the word until he/she utters it in a correct way. Wilga M. Rivers (1968, p. 73) summarizes how babies and children acquire their first language according to the behaviorist theory in the following words:

> "Through a trial-and-error process, in which acceptable utterances are reinforced by comprehension and approval, and unacceptable utterances are inhibited by the lack of reward, he gradually learns to make finer and finer discriminations until his utterances approximate more and more closely the

speech of the community in which he is growing up (as cited in Demirezen, 1988, p. 136)."

This trial-and-error process described by Rivers is an indispensable part of the process of habit formation. According to behaviorism, "human behavior is the sum of its smallest parts and components, and therefore that language learning could be described as the acquisition of all of these discrete units (Tajareh, 2015, p. 1107)." To put it in other words, language acquisition may be realized by being broken into small and discrete language "habits". However, not all babies will perform these habits correctly. As Hubbard et al. (1983) states, these habits "are formed correct or incorrect responses, are rewarded or punished, respectively (p. 326)."

Likewise, behaviorist theory explains the process of second language (L2) acquisition "as the acquisition of a set of structures through the process of habit formation (Powell, Honey, & Symbaluk, 2016; as cited in Nor & Ab Rashid, 2018, p. 163)", arguing that second language acquisition occurs in the same way as first language acquisition. As Nor and Rashid (2018) also indicate, second language acquisition involves developing automatic linguistic habits because behaviorists claim that learning is an observable behavior that is naturally learned through stimulus and response via automated repetition.

1.2.1.1 Fundamental Tenets of Behaviorist Theory of Language Acquisition

In his article "*Behaviorist Theory and Language Learning*", Mehmet Demirezen (1988) highlights the following five fundamental tenets of behaviorist theory on language learning:

1. Behaviorist theory puts emphasis on spoken language as the essential medium of communication. It equates language to speech since speaking is learned way before

reading and writing. Furthermore, there are a great deal of languages which does not have writing systems. Therefore, "language is primarily what is spoken and secondarily what is written (p. 137)."

2. Behaviorist theory explains language learning as the process of habit formation. In this regard, language learning is an automated process that causes habit formation on the part of the learners and whose essential component is the conditioned response. Taking this into consideration, one can definitely deduce that the consequences of any behavior control the language.
3. Behaviorist theory purely relies on the stimulus-response chain (S → R), emphasizing "conditioning and building from the simplest conditioned responses to more and more complex behaviors" (Palermo, 1978, pg. 19-20; as cited in Demirezen, 1988, p. 137). In this regard, behaviorist theory sees the learning of clauses and sentences as continuous longer stimulus-response chains, formed as $S_1 \rightarrow S_2 \rightarrow S_3 \ldots$ in a left-to-right sequence of order. Therefore, every stimulus initiates a response and, similarly, every response turns into the initiator of a stimulus.
4. Learning process is described as the formation of habits through reinforcement and reward. In behaviorist theory, positive reinforcement means reward whereas negative reinforcement is punishment. When a child says a correct utterance, this response is regarded as positive and thus rewarded. In this way, "the association between the stimulus and response is itself reinforced and thus the response will very likely be manipulated by every appearance of stimulus" (p. 137). Habit formation is established this way as responses to different stimuli are consistently reinforced.
5. Learning has a socially conditioned nature and thus can be equal for every individual if the circumstances where acquisition occurs are the same for everyone.

1.2.1.2 The Criticism of Behaviorist Theory of Language Learning

In the literature, several counterarguments against the aforementioned tenets of behaviorist theory of language acquisition have been put forward by several researchers due to various reasons (Demirezen, 1988). To begin with, according to behaviorism, imitation, reinforcement, and rewarding are the primary principles of language acquisition. Nevertheless, several studies have shown that children tend to imitate language structures that they have already known rather than imitate new ones. Furthermore, children "vary considerably in the amount that they imitate" (Bloom, Hood & Lightbown, 1974; as cited in Demirezen, 1988, p. 138). Therefore, it is also quite normal for each child to have different learning rates. Regarding reinforcement, Clark & Clark (1977) have stated that "unfortunately, this view of learning receives little support from the available evidence (p. 336; as cited in Demirezen, 2010, p. 138)" since only sample structures are corrected by parents or people surrounding children whereas more complex ones are rarely corrected.

Another important counterargument claims that habit formation might not inherently encourage language learning that is intrinsically motivated since it generally makes learners form utterances that are based on previously established set of rules and drill exercises, which will also undoubtedly have negative impacts on the student's creative way of learning, delaying the time needed for an intrinsic master of a language (Demirezen, 1988).

Behaviorist theory of language learning was also severely criticized due to the fact that it has fallen short in explaining the influence of social environment on language acquisition, which, according to Vygotsky, cannot be separated from each other. Moreover, it would not be realistic to expect that each learner could learn equally in the same conditions. Even if all the conditions are equal, the background experience and innate capacities of each learner makes them undergo the language learning process differently (Demirezen, 1988).

Finally, the basic principles of behaviorist theory have been claimed to be applied only to some extent in the early stages of first language (L1) acquisition in infancy or in early childhood eras. Learning a language is a complex process that cannot be simplified. In fact, when it comes to the acquisition of second languages, things get much more complicated. Intervening variables that cannot be monitored between stimulus and response can get involved in the process. According to Demirezen (1988), this is the main reason why language learning cannot occur via habit formation.

Even though the behaviorist theory on language learning has its drawbacks, the field of linguistics was largely dominated by behaviorism until the late 1960s and it was able to start a revolution in the field of second language acquisition by addressing and trying to explain why students commit errors when learning languages. According to the habit formation principle of behaviorist theory of language learning, "if old habits get in the way of learning new habits, then errors occur" (Tajareh, 2015, p. 1107). In this respect, we can claim that what is meant by "old habits" is the native language(s) of the learners whereas "learning new habits" refers to the acquisition of second language (s). To sum up in one sentence, behaviorist theory of language learning sees the interference of the mother tongue as the main reason for occurrence of language errors when learning a second language (Tajareh, 2015).

1.2.2 A More Systematic Approach in Explaining the Reasons of Errors: Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)

Initially molded by and pedagogically associated with behaviorism and structuralism, Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) was first developed in North America and widely practiced there and in Europe as well in the 1950s and 1960s. Emerging as a sub-branch of comparative linguistics, CAH is basically concerned with the comparative analysis of the linguistic system of two or more languages with the aim of identifying their structural

similarities and/or differences that might influence the process of second language acquisition (Tajareh, 2015).

When learning a new language, learners from all ages face certain difficulties. Some learners may have difficulty learning the vocabulary of the new language, while others may find it very difficult to learn its grammar. Sometimes, on the contrary, some people can learn some features of the new language much more easily than others. Interested researchers of 1950s and 1960s who wanted to explain the reason why particular characteristics of a second language were more challenging to acquire than others based the answer to this question on a hypothesis grounded in the habit formation principle of behaviorism and suggested that "the difficulty in mastering certain structures in a second language depended on the difference between the learners' mother language (L1) and the language they were trying to learn (L2)" (Rustipa, 2011, p. 17) since when people try to learn a new language, they also simultaneously go out of their habits, which have been together with them since the first day they were exposed to their L1s and, thus, they tend to transfer, either consciously or unconsciously, their habits regarding their native languages into the languages that they are acquiring.

The main idea underlying Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis pioneered by Fries in 1945 and later developed by Robert Lado in 1957 in his book *Linguistics Across Cultures* is that the greater the structural differences between the two language systems, the greater the likelihood that learners will make errors in the new language. Regarded as an efficient predictor of errors committed in the L2 learning process by learners, CAH maintained its popularity until the appearance of the theory of Error Analysis and was extensively used by language practitioners and integrated into foreign language teaching curriculum around the world to predict the learner errors.

In 1945, Charles Carpenter Fries emphasized the following in his book *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*, which made him be considered as the offset of CAH as an indispensable element of second/foreign language teaching methodology:

> "The most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to learn, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner." (Fries, 1945, p. 9; as cited in Bayraktaroğlu, 1978, p. 56)

Thanks to this strong declaration of him, even though the impact of learners' native languages (L1) on their acquisition of a second language (L2) was already noticed by several linguists and pioneers in the field of SLA such as Harold Palmer, Otto Jespersen, and Henry Sweet, C. C. Fries became the first linguist to realize the pedagogical implications of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis in the literature (Seah, 1981).

12 years later, in 1957, the American linguist Robert Lado wrote a book entitled *Linguistics Across Cultures* in which he detailed the fundamental principles of CAH based on the aforementioned assumption by Fries, and which then turned into a manual for practical contrastive studies in the field of both SLA and linguistics (Fauziati, 2014). In the preface of the third printing of the book, also accompanied by a foreword from Fries, Lado clearly states the main idea behind his work with following words:

> "The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student." (Lado, 1960, p. VII)

With this classic work of Lado, research regarding the influence of learner's native language (L1) on his acquisition of a second language (L2) gained popularity among the researchers and linguists of the era and the influence of L1 started to be regarded as the main cause of eases and/or difficulties in learning a second language. Lado's work was also quite successful in providing a framework for language teachers and serving as a guide in the preparation of teaching materials for the learners. For instance, in 1966, it was still possible to see the effects of Lado's comparative work in Valdman's *Trends in Language Teaching* in the following quotes:

> "...the change that has to take place in the language behavior of a foreign language student can be equated with the differences between the structure of the student's native language and culture." (Banathy et al., 1966, p. 37; as cited in Bayraktaroğlu, 1978)

> "…what the student has to learn equals the sum of the differences established by the contrastive analysis (Valdman, 1966, p. 31; as cited in Bayraktaroğlu, 1978)."

1.2.2.1 The 'Strong' Version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

In the literature, the following three types of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis have been stated: the strong version, the weak version, and the moderate version. The classification of CAH as 'strong' and 'weak' versions was first stated by Ronald Wardaugh in his paper titled "The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis" in 1970. According to Wardaugh (1970), the strong version of CAH serves as the "predictor" of difficulties through Contrastive Analysis of the two systems of language and thus as a guide in preparing teaching materials for learners accordingly. The following assumptions highlighted by W. R. Lee (1968) in his article

"Thoughts on Contrastive Linguistics in the Context of Language Teaching" can be regarded as the main characteristics of the strong version of the CAH:

1- That the prime cause, or even the sole cause of difficulty and error in foreign language learning is interference coming from the learners' native language.
2- That the difficulties are chiefly, or wholly, due to the differences between the languages.
3- That the greater these differences are the more acute the learning difficulties will be.
4- That the results of a comparison between the two languages are needed to predict the difficulties and errors which will occur in learning the foreign language.
5- That what there is to teach can best be found by comparing the two languages and then subtracting what is common to them. (p. 186)

1.2.2.2 The 'Weak' Version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

Wardaugh (1970) describes the weak version as "requiring of the linguist only that he use the best linguistic knowledge available to him in order to account for observed difficulties in second language learning" (p. 126). Unlike the strong version in which the predictive use of Contrastive Analysis is emphasized, in the weak version, "the emphasis shifts from the predictive power of the relative difficulty to the explanatory power of observable errors" (Yang, 1992, p. 136). As Brown (2006) also indicates, such observational use of Contrastive Analysis does not only recognize *a priori* prediction of difficulties, but also *a posteriori* – after the fact – explanation of reasons of errors in learning a second language. The weak version of CAH carries a particular significance in the context of the study, since this version has maintained its importance by remaining today under the label of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) (Brown, 2006), which sees the influence of learner's L1 as prior knowledge and

experience in learning a second language (Mahmoodzadeh, 2014) and is the concept under investigation in this study.

1.2.2.3 The 'Moderate' Version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

The 'moderate' version of CAH was proposed by Oller and Ziahosseiny in 1970 as a result of their study in which they investigated the English spelling errors on the dictation section of the UCLA placement test of 158 students with native languages using a Roman spelling system and 198 students with native languages using non-Roman spelling systems, 356 participants in total. According to them, the viewpoints of both the strong and the weak versions of CAH were incorrect since they were inconsistent with the present data from the study. Therefore, they came up with a third version of CAH which they based on the nature of human learning and defined as follows: "The categorization of abstract and concrete patterns (including time sequenced events) according to their perceived similarities and differences is the basis for learning; therefore, wherever patterns are minimally distinct in form or meaning in one or more systems, confusion may result. Conversely, where patterns are functionally or perceptually equivalent in a system or systems correct generalization may occur." (Oller & Ziahosseiny, 1970, p. 186).

1.2.2.4. The Criticism of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

The main ideas of CAH, especially its strong and weak versions, was severely criticized by many researchers and linguists of that time. The first major criticism came from Chomsky in 1959 when behaviorism lost its popularity after the prominence of Chomsky's innateness theory in 1960s (Al-rickaby, 2023). He criticized CAH due to its strong association with behavioristic psychology since according to Chomsky, "children do not learn their mother tongue as a set of habits, but rather as mental rules" (Ellis, 1994, p. 44).

Similarly, Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991) also indicated that the association of CAH with behaviorism "gave it its academic legitimacy but ultimately led to its downfall" (p. 55).

Another major criticism of CAH comes from Wilkins (1968) who posed the following question: "Yet is it true that by listing areas of differences between languages we are listing all the linguistic differences that will occur? This is surely an oversimplified view" (p.101). With this interrogative statement, Wilkins actually suggests that errors cannot be solely attributed to the native language of the learner, which was also supported by Lee (1968). Rather, "there is interference both from that and, at every stage, from what has already been taught and absorbed" (p. 187). Lee also recognizes the influence of other factors and claims that "whether in particular instances it is the prime cause depends on a number of factors, among them how far the learner has got with the new language and how well or badly he has been taught" (p. 187). Likewise, Stephan Pit Corder (1967) criticizes the practicability of CAH and reports that "many of the errors with which they [language teachers] were familiar were not predicted by the linguist anyway" (p. 162).

Last but not least, Wardaugh (1970) believes that the strong version of CAH is "quite unrealistic and impracticable" (p. 124) and "this version can work only for one who is prepared to be quite naïve in linguistic matters" whereas "the weak version does have certain possibilities for usefulness" (p. 129). However, as Al-Sobhi (2019) also acknowledges, in spite of the bitter criticisms against CAH, "many language teachers around the world still find it quite useful when dealing with the language learner's difficulties which could be due to the linguistic differences between the L1 and the target language" (p. 52). In addition, Djiguimkoudre (2020) argues that "if CA is still used today by language teachers to predict and address learning difficulties, therefore, there is something relevant and valid about it that we should not ignore" (as cited in Djiguimkoudre, 2020, p. 86).

1.2.3 As an Alternative to Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH): Error Analysis (EA)

Second language researchers who were faced with the ineffectiveness of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) in explaining the reasons of learner's errors started searching for an alternative approach to examine language learner's errors which would be theoretically well-founded and pedagogically sound and feasible (Keshavars, 2003). The results of numerous empirical studies by several researchers and linguists of the period gave birth to a new method called "Error Analysis", which was considered as a reform movement in the field of applied linguistics (Al-Sobhi, 2019).

Error Analysis can be said to emerge as a result of CAH – probably, as a result of the harsh criticism against CAH. Nevertheless, it is also a method arising from the theoretical tenets of CAH (Mahmood & Murad, 2018). In fact, one might have difficulty distinguishing Error Analysis and the 'weak' version of CAH since "they both attempt to account for observed errors, and make their departure from the same point: the SL as the student speaks it. The difference, however, is in the approach of accounting for the observed errors." (Bayraktaroğlu, 1978, p. 62). Error Analysis considers all errors whereas the 'weak' version of CAH deals with only L1 interference errors. Therefore, it can be concluded that the "weak" version, rather than contradicting, complements Error Analysis (Bayraktaroğlu, 1978).

British applied linguist Stephan Pit Corder is regarded as the pioneer of Error Analysis. In his seminal paper "The Significance of Learner's Errors", Corder (1967) highlights the importance of positive cognitive contribution of learners to the process of learning (Lennon, 2008). In the same paper, Corder (1967) provides a solid explanation of the importance of analyzing learner's errors as follows:

> "They are significant in three different ways. First to the teacher, in that they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner, is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly (and in a sense this is their most important aspect) they are indispensable to the learner himself because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning. The making of errors then is a strategy employed both by children acquiring their mother tongue and by those learning a second language." (p. 167)

With the emergence of Error Analysis, the interest in the field of applied linguistics shifted from prediction of second language errors to assessment of those errors (Mahmood & Murad, 2018). Moreover, unlike Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, Error Analysis regards errors not only as inevitable, but also as a necessary component of language learning, without which progress is impossible (Lennon, 2008) since making errors consists of the backbone of hypothesis testing process by language learners.

At this point, it is crucial to mention that Corder (1967) does not claim that first language acquisition (L1) and second language (L2) acquisition are the same processes for everyone. Rather, what he suggests is that "some at least of the *strategies* adopted by the learner of a second language are substantially the same as those by which a first language is acquired (pp. 164-165)" since language develops in a more or less fixed pattern (Lennon, 2008). Nonetheless, Corder (1967) also acknowledges that "such a proposal does not imply

that the course or *sequence* of learning is the same in both cases" (p. 165). With this declaration, Corder clearly recognizes the existence of other important factors in second language acquisition such as maturational development, motivation for learning, and the circumstances of learning (Corder, 1967; Bayraktaroğlu, 1978).

1.2.3.1 The Difference Between "Errors" and "Mistakes"

Pit Corder (1967) resorts to Chomsky's (1965) distinction between "performance" and "competence" and makes a distinction between "those errors which are the product of such [slips of tongue or pen] chance circumstances and those which reveal his underlying knowledge of the language to date, or, as we may call it, his *transitional competence*" (Corder, 1967, p. 166; Lennon, 2008). According to Corder (1967), the former are unsystematic and called "errors of performance" whereas the latter are systematic and called "errors of competence". Having made this distinction, Corder (1967) prefers to use the term "error" to refer to failure in competence while referring to failure in performance as "mistakes".

According to Corder (1967), "mistakes are of no significance to the process of language learning (p. 167)" since they can happen to any language learner even in their own native languages due to several reasons such as memory lapses, physical state, and psychological conditions. So, they will not reflect a defect in the *transitional competence* of the learner, and they can be (self)corrected. Errors, on the other hand, are quite systematic since "a learner's errors… provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using (i. e. has learned) at a particular point in the course" (Corder, 1967, p. 167). Likewise, Ellis (1997) makes a similar distinction between errors and mistakes as follows: "[errors] reflect gaps in a learner's knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. [Mistakes] reflect occasional lapses in performance; they occur because, in a particular

instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows" (as cited in Mahmood & Murad, 2018, p. 98). However, both Corder (1967) and Ellis (1997) accept that making a clear distinction between an error and a mistake might not be always possible.

1.2.3.2 A Brief Explanation of the Procedure of Error Analysis

Corder (1974) elaborates the procedure for error analysis as consisting of five stages (as cited in Lennon, 2008). The first stage includes collecting sample data from the learners, either written or spoken. In the second stage, errors observed in the collected data are identified. At this stage, being able to distinguish between learners' errors and learners' mistakes is crucial (Al-Sobhi, 2019). One identification technique proposed by Ellis (1997) includes checking the consistency of the learner's performance in the collected data and labelling those which learners can self-correct as "mistakes" and those which he cannot as "errors" (as cited in Al-Sobhi, 2019, p. 54). The third stage includes the classification of the identified errors based on certain categories such as phonological, grammatical, syntactical, etc. In the fourth stage, the causes of errors are explained (i.e., whether they are caused by learner's L1 or other factors such as overgeneralization). In the fifth and last stage, the errors are evaluated and treated accordingly by the language teacher.

1.2.3.3 The Criticism and Limitations of Error Analysis

Emerging in the field of applied linguistics as a more useful and feasible technique compared to Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, Error Analysis was also severely criticized by several researchers of the time due to various reasons. Schachter (1974) criticizes EA due to its considerable reliance on errors and its exclusion of other information, arguing that "it needs to take into consideration both errors and non-errors in order to get a comprehensive picture of the learner's linguistic development (as cited in Al-Sobhi, 2019, p. 57)". Another criticism of EA argues that it does not consider the "avoidance phenomena" (Schachter,

1974). To put it in other words, a learner might simply avoid committing errors by avoiding using certain L2 structures when he is sure that he is going to commit an error (Khansir, 2012). According to Dulay et al. (1982), one drawback of EA is that the definition of error categories is not precise enough since "most studies conducted on EA could not precisely explain the causes of learners' errors and their findings were imprecise and considerably confusing to the reader (as cited in Al-Sobhi, 2019, p. 57)." Likewise, Ellis (2008) also mentions that "EA has weaknesses in methodological procedures, theoretical problems, and limitations in scope (as cited in Khansir, 2012)." Finally, Lennon (2008) states the existence of identification problems in EA due to two reasons. The first reason is that "error is difficult to define and can by no means always be unambiguously identified in production (Hughes & Lascaratou 1982; as cited in Lennon, 2008, p. 54)." Furthermore, "the distinction between "errors" and "mistakes" is highly problematic since in performance correct and incorrect forms of a single target often occur side by side (Lennon, 2008, pp. 54-55)."

Despite all the criticism and drawbacks mentioned, Error Analysis has preserved its existence in the field of SLA until today. As Crystal (2010) also mentions, "research into errors continues to provide a fruitful way of investigating the processes underlying FL acquisition (p. 377)."

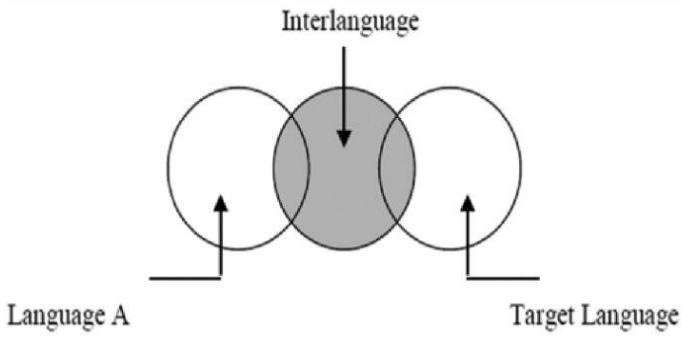
1.2.4 Interlanguage and Fossilization

The weaknesses of Error Analysis, which was developed to be more useful and practical than CAH, led several researchers of the time to develop a new approach which would be theoretically more well-founded and practically more feasible than EA in explaining learner difficulties in second language acquisition process. Being one of these researchers, the American linguist Larry Selinker, after his work with Corder and other scholars at Edinburgh University, developed the construct of "*interlanguage (IL)*" "to flesh out the view of learner

language as an autonomous linguistic system, and not just a collection of errors (Tarone, 2018, p. 2).” Building on Corder’s (1967) Error Analysis, the construct was developed as a reaction to the fundamental tenets of CAH which sees the interference from native language of second language learners as the main and only source of difficulties in the second language (Tarone, 2018). Although the term “*interlanguage*” was first introduced by Selinker (1969) and then formulated first for adult learners in his seminal article “Interlanguage” (1972) and later for child learners (Selinker et al., 1975; as cited in Lennon, 2008), the idea of the existence of an autonomous learner language system was already mentioned by several researchers of the time as “*transitional competence*” by Corder (1981) and “*approximative system*” by Nemser (1971). Currently, researchers usually use the term “*language learner language*” to refer to the concept of interlanguage (Lennon, 2008).

Selinker (1972) defines interlanguage as “a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a [adult] learner’s attempted production of a TL norm (p. 214).” Similarly, Ellis (1985) offers the following definition: “the systematic knowledge of a second language which is independent of both learner’s first language and the target language (p. 299).” As highlighted in the definitions, this concept regards language as a separate intermediate linguistic system (Al-Sobhi, 2019). The relationship between native language (NL; T1), target language (TL; L2), and interlanguage (IL) is summarized by Corder (1981, p. 17) in the form of a diagram (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1 *Corder’s diagram of interlanguage (1981, p. 17)*



1.2.4.1 The Characteristics of Interlanguage

According to Selinker (1972), there is a "*latent psychological structure*" in the brain that is activated "whenever they [learners] attempt to produce a sentence in the second language, that is whenever they attempt to express meanings, which they may already have, in a language which they are in the process of learning (p. 212)." When individuals attempt to construct sentences of a target language, they produce *utterances*. This realized set of utterances by most L2 learners, however, is identical neither "to the hypothesized corresponding utterances which would have been produced by a native speaker of the TL had he attempted to express the same meaning as the learner (p. 214)" "nor to the sentences having the same meaning in the learner's language (Bayraktaroğlu, 1978, p. 64)." Therefore, Selinker (1972) suggests the existence of a third and separate linguistic system, which is "interlanguage", to explain the utterances by second language learners.

According to Saville-Troike (2012), IL has four main characteristics. First, it is systematic since the rules that make up the learner's internal grammar govern the IL at any stage in their development. These rules can be discovered by "analyzing the language that is used by the learner at that time – what he or she can produce and interpret correctly as well as errors that are made (p. 43)." Second, it is dynamic since frequent changes are observed in the learners' system of rules. According to Selinker (1992), this change can be labelled as discontinuous progress "from stable plateau to stable plateau (p. 226)" rather than a continuous progress along a continuum. Third, it is variable since contextual differences might lead to diverse patterns of language use by the learners. Fourth and finally, it is a reduced system in terms of both form and function. Reduced form addresses to "the less complex grammatical structures that typically occur in an IL compared to the target language

(Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 44)" whereas what is meant by reduced function is "the smaller range of communicative needs typically served by an IL (p. 44)."

1.2.4.2. Fossilization

The essential question of why some L2 learners become more competent than others has always been a popular topic of debate in the field of SLA (Saville-Troike, 2012). As Ellis puts it (1994), the reason for this is that their 'final state' grammar does not conform to the norms of the TL grammar. Therefore, particular rules and items might 'fossilize'. Selinker (1972) regards the concept of *fossilization* as "a mechanism which is assumed also to exist in the latent psychological structure (p. 215)" and further offers the following definition:

> "Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular NL will tend to keep in their IL relative to a particular TL, no matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation and instruction he receives in the TL." (p. 215)

Moreover, Selinker argues that "the fossilization mechanism accounts for the phenomenon of the regular reappearance in IL productive performance of linguistic material which was thought to be eradicated (p. 230)", a phenomenon known as "*backsliding"* (Ellis, 1994). In addition to Selinker's (1972) definition, Ellis (1994) also defines fossilization as "the process by which non-target forms become fixed in interlanguage (p. 353)." From this point of view, it is possible to define "relative success" as "the level of IL development reached before learning stops (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 44)

1.2.4.3 Cognitive Processes of Interlanguage

In his article "Interlanguage", Selinker (2012) describes five central cognitive processes underlying L2 acquisition. *Language transfer* occurs when "fossilizable items,

rules, and subsystems which occur in IL performance are a result of NL (p. 216). *Transfer of training* takes place when "these fossilizable items, rules, and subsystems are a result of identifiable items in training procedures (p. 216)." *Strategies of second language learning* occurs when "they are a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to the material to be learned (p. 216)." *Strategies of second language communication* takes place when "they are as a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to communication with native speakers of the TL (p. 217)." Finally, *overgeneralization of TL linguistic material* occurs when "they are a result of a clear overgeneralization of TL rules and semantic features (p. 217)." Selinker also highlights that "combinations of these processes produce what we might term entirely fossilized IL competences (p. 217)."

1.2.4.4 The General Criticism of Interlanguage

Several fundamental tenets of Interlanguage Theory were subjected to some criticism in the field of SLA, although to a lesser extent than criticisms directed against CAH and EA. To begin with, Ellis (1994) criticizes the categorization of cognitive processes by Selinker (1972), arguing that the reason why *language transfer* and *overgeneralization* are classified separately from *learning strategies* since "they would both appear to be examples of these (Ellis, 1994, p. 351)." However, he also appreciates the value of this categorization as "it constituted one of the first attempts to specify mental processes responsible for L2 acquisition, and also served to introduce a number of key distinctions, such as that between 'learning' and 'communication strategies (p. 351)." Furthermore, Ellis states that "the term *interlanguage* is now used by theorists of very different persuasions and has become almost theory-neutral (p. 354)." Likewise, it might not be always easy to determine which of the five central processes of IL is responsible for the observed data (Yuksel, 2007; Jordan, 2004; as cited in Al-Khresheh, 2015). In line with this criticism, Richards (1974) asks: "Can we always

unambiguously identify which of these processes our observable data is to be attributable to? (p. 42). According to him, the answer to this question is “most probably not (p. 42).”

Another criticism again comes from Richards (1974), who argues that it is a challenging task to predict which linguistic items can be fossilized in which interlingual contexts. Moreover, Saville-Troike (2012) argues that identifying fossilization is a controversial issue not mainly due to linguistic reasons but due to political and social reasons. For instance, “should individuals be considered "fossilized" in L2 development because they retain a foreign accent, for instance, in spite of productive fluency in other aspects of the target language? (p. 45).” Saville-Troike also touches upon another weakness of interlanguage, stating that the boundaries between NL, TL, and IL is not entirely clear and it is completely difficult to identify the endpoint of IL as “additional time and different circumstances might always trigger some resumption in learning (p. 45).”

Lastly, what the concept of TL requires as the objective of SLA is another issue in the theory of interlanguage (Saville-Troike, 2012) since, in terms of IL continuum, “the majority of L2 learners do not reach the end of this continuum (Al-Khresheh, 2015, p. 129).” Therefore, setting native-like production as the ultimate goal for each L2 learner might be regarded as “somewhat imperialistic (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 45).” Nevertheless, despite all the controversies, IL is largely “taken for granted now (p. 45).”

After the criticisms, interlanguage theory has been revised and some of the psycholinguistic processes shaping it has been further developed, becoming the subject of extensive research (Oxford, 2017; as cited in Tarone, 2018). In addition, the study of transfer has broadened and is now referred to as “*cross-linguistic influence*”. Finally, recent studies on interlanguage have expanded to include the investigation of the effect of social context (see Kasper & Rose, 2003; Taguchi & Roever, 2017; Tarone, 2018).

1.2.5 The Impact of Learner Motivation and Positive Attitude in the Prevention of Errors

Motivation is a concept that is present in every aspect of our lives. Broadly speaking, we can argue that there is a motivation behind every achievement and every motivation has different underlying reasons. It is also a commonly accepted fact that if you are highly motivated towards a task, you are highly likely to achieve expected results. On the contrary, if you are not motivated enough, your chances of failure increase. Similarly, attitude is a concept that is highly intertwined with motivation. Positive attitudes towards a task can be argued to result in high motivation level whereas negative attitudes are likely to lead to reduced motivation.

The concepts of motivation and positive attitude have been a popular research area in the field of SLA. In this context, Keller (1983) defines motivation as "the *choices* people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and *the degree of effort* they will exert in that respect (p. 389)." In this regard, in second language acquisition, one might easily hypothesize that learners with higher motivation and positive attitudes will be successful. As Brown (1994) argues, this claim is not erroneous since "countless studies and experiments in human learning have shown that motivation is a key to learning (see Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; as cited in Brown, 1994, p. 152)." In fact, while studies cannot conclusively demonstrate that motivation and positive attitudes definitely result in success in learning, "there is ample evidence that positive motivation is associated with a willingness to keep learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 63)."

As a result of their extensive and systematic studies in which the impact of motivation and attitudes on second language acquisition was investigated, Gardner & Lambert (1972) define motivation as "a construct made up of certain [different types of] attitudes (as cited in

Brown, 1994, p. 168)", claiming that there exist two types of motivation based on two different groups of attitudes: instrumental motivation, extrinsic in nature, means learning the language for more immediate and practical objectives, in which learners learn the L2 because they feel they "have to", whereas integrative motivation, intrinsic in nature, means learning the language for personal growth and cultural enrichment (since learners possess positive attitudes toward the language community and culture), in which learners prefer learning the L2 because they "aspire to" (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, as cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2006; as cited in Atach, 2023). Spolsky's study (1969) and most of Lambert's studies (1972) discovered that integrative motivation largely brought on higher scores on foreign language proficiency tests, leading to the conclusion that "integrative motivation may indeed be an important requirement for successful language learning (Brown, 1994)". On the other hand, studies conducted by Lukmani (1972) and Kachru (1977, 1992) found out that learners with higher instrumental motivation had higher scores on English proficiency tests (as cited in Brown, 1994). In the light of the findings from these studies, Brown concludes that "the foreign language learner who is either intrinsically or extrinsically meeting needs in learning the language will be positively motivated to learn (p. 153)" and further sees it intuitively clear that "second language learners benefit from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and in all likelihood, because of decreased input and interaction, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency (p. 169)."

1.3 Literature review

In the literature of SLA, a lot of research has been conducted to investigate the impact of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) on the acquisition of a second language. This subsection summarizes several recent studies conducted by different researchers for better understanding of the theoretical background detailed above on part of the audience of this paper.

A study conducted by Odiléa Rocha Erkaya (2012) investigated the impact of L1 interference on the essays of Turkish EFL students. The sample consisted of seventeen (17) freshman Turkish students with intermediate level of English who enrolled for English writing course in the Department of Electrical/Electronic Engineering at Eskişehir Osmangazi University located in Turkey. The data were collected via a 4-paragraph compare and contrast essay. All 17 essays were analyzed using Corder's (1974) error analysis guide as following: sample collection, error identification, error description, error explanation, and error evaluation (p. 4). As a result of the analysis, Erkaya found out that most common errors committed by the participants were related to the use of definite and indefinite articles, prepositions, and singular/plural noun agreement, which "were apparently caused by L1 interference" (p. 7). Erkaya concludes the article by claiming that if the participants had been made aware of the differences between Turkish and English, or the reasons why their L1 can lead to interference, their local errors could have been prevented (Erkaya, 2012).

Another study was conducted by Pairote Bennui (2016) to assess L1 interference on the writing of Thai EFL students. The sample consisted of twenty-eight (28) third-year university students who enrolled in the Basic Writing Course at Thaksin University in Thailand. The data was collected from students' answers to the paragraph-writing questions in the final exam and then analyzed in three levels of L1 interference: words, sentences, and discourse. As a result of the analysis, the researcher found out significant L1 interference in all levels: Characteristics of L1 lexical interference were observed in the literal translation of Thai words into English whereas characteristics of L1 syntactic interference were noted in structural borrowing from Thai language such as noun determiners, word order, and subject verb agreement. Furthermore, features of L1 discourse interference were present in language style and cultural knowledge of participants' written English responses (Bennui, 2016).

In a recent study, Khoshsima & Banaruee (2017) investigated L1 interfering and L2 developmental errors on the writing of Persian EFL learners. The sample included eighty (80) Iranian students with intermediate levels of English attending to a language institute in Iran. The data collection tool was a writing test in which participants were asked to write a narrative essay. In terms of data analysis, both L1 interfering and developmental errors were identified based on the following four rubrics: grammar, punctuations, sentence styles, and mechanics (p. 5). Following the identification, all participant errors were classified according to their lexico-semantic and syntacto-morphological characteristics. The results showed that "English grammar and vocabulary were the linguistic areas that suffered the highest level of L1 interference" (p. 1) whereas the most common developmental error observed in the writings of Persian EFL learners was spelling.

Another recent study conducted by Cristian TUGUES RODRÍGUEZ (2018) aimed to investigate the impact of native language (L1 Spanish) on the acquisition of a second language (L2 English). The data were collected from eighteen (18) participants aged between thirteen (13) and fifteen (15) studying in a secondary school in Spain via a questionnaire. Data analysis included the analysis of lexico-morphological and grammatical errors existent in the responses of the participants to the questionnaire. As a result of the data analysis, RODRÍGUEZ found out that participants' English writing suffered from both negative and positive transfer. As an important pedagogical implication of the study, researcher concludes by highlighting the importance of teachers' being aware of how to deal with the transfer errors so that they do not fossilize over time.

In a pretty recent research study, Al-Saggaf et al. (2022) aimed to examine the impact of L1 interference on the writing of Malay EFL learners. The sample consisted of seventy-three (73) Malay university BTESL (Bachelor's in Teaching English as a Second Language)

students in Malaysia. Regarding data collection, two instruments were used: a questionnaire to gather the perceptions of participants regarding the concept of L1 interference on their L2 writings and a writing task in which participants were asked to translate a short passage from Bahasa Malaysia (L1) into English (L2). As for data analysis, participants' errors were categorized into six groups as grammar, word choice, spelling, punctuation, content, and capitalization. The results of data analysis showed that L1 interference was observed to a great extent in grammar, spelling, content, word choice, and punctuation groups whereas there was no evidence of L1 interference in capitalization. Based on these findings, Al-Saggaf et al. concludes that negative L1 interference was likely observed "because of the non-existence of a certain rule or concept in the L1 of the participants" (p. 20). Moreover, participants' responses to the questionnaire revealed that they were not "aware of the inadequate knowledge of English language that may have led them to do these kinds of errors" (p. 20).

1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Taking into consideration the aforementioned theories and research studies in literature until today, the following research questions were formed and are addressed in the study:

1) How and to what extent does learner's native language (L1 Spanish) influence their acquisition of English as a second/foreign language (L2 English)?
2) What are the differences between Spanish and English language that might interfere with language learning?
3) What are the most common types of errors made by Spanish 3rd ESO learners of English?

4) Do students' positive attitudes and motivation towards English prevent them from making errors due to their L1?

On the basis of these research questions, the conjectured alternative and null hypotheses are stated as follows:

Hα 1: There is a statistically significant impact of cross-linguistic influence on the writing of Spanish 3rd ESO EFL students.

Ho 1: There is no statistically significant impact of cross-linguistic influence on the writing of Spanish 3rd ESO EFL students.

Hα 2: Learner motivation and positive attitude towards English have a statistically significant impact on the overall number of L1 errors and general errors.

Ho 2: Learner motivation and positive attitude towards English have little to no impact on the overall number of both L1 errors and general errors.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The present research study investigated to explore the possible negative impact of learners' native language (Spanish) on their acquisition of a second language (English). In this section of this paper, the general framework of the study and the methodology to assess the impact of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) on the writing of Spanish 3rd ESO students will be outlined. The objectives of the present study are stated as follows:

1) To explore the manner and the amount of impact of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) on the process of second language acquisition.
2) To realize the structural differences between learner's L1 and L2 which might negatively influence the acquisition of L2.
3) To explore the possible extent to which learner motivation and positive attitude towards L2 prevents them from making errors.

2.2 Research Design

The present study has been designed as a quasi-experimental research study with no pretest, posttest, and control group but with a populous experimental group consisting of students from two 3 ESO classrooms, a prequestionnaire, and a writing task consisting of two parts. Unlike most of the traditional experimental research designs, the participants were not randomized to certain groups (control or experimental) to investigate causality between variables. Instead, the sample was selected based on their native language(s) and estimated CEFR levels to understand questions and provide enough feasible data in both the prequestionnaire and the writing task to make it possible to investigate the correlation between their native language and their acquisition of English as a foreign language. The

experiment was followed by a mini discussion session on the experimental groups to discuss the anticipated errors of the students and the reason behind these errors, making them explicitly aware of the cross-linguistic influence (CLI) of their native language on their learning of English. Table 1 (see below) summarizes the research design followed in the present study.

Table 1

Quasi-experimental research design

Experimental Group (The Sample)	Before the treatment	Treatment	After the treatment
Forty-three (43) 3 ESO students from a school in Tarragona, Spain	A prequestionnaire distributed to all participants in the form of Microsoft Forms	A writing task consisting of the translation of eleven (11) sentences from Spanish to English and three open-ended short answer questions	A mini discussion session based on the answers of participants in the translation section of the writing task

This study was conducted in compliance with the research standards of the European Union and in accordance with the relevant Board of Ethics of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili, namely the Ethics Committee for Research in People, Society, and the Environment (CEIPSA) with the reference number CEIPSA-2024-TFM-0002.

2.3 Sample

The sample consists of forty-three (43) secondary school students from a semi-private Catalonian secondary school located in the province of Tarragona, Spain. Among 43 participants, nineteen (19) are male whereas twenty-four (24) are female. All of the

participants except for one female are above the age of fourteen (14). Their age range is from fourteen (14) to fifteen (15). They are in the third year of their secondary education (3 ESO). They have three 1-hour English classes each week as part of the school curriculum. The amount of exposure of the participants to English language outside of the classroom environment will be provided in the following paragraphs of this sub-section. The CEFR levels of the participants are estimated to be between B1.1 and B1.2 according to the English level of the coursebook that they are utilizing in all 3 ESO classrooms.

As indicated in the previous paragraph, there are 43 students in total participating in the study who do not study in the same classroom. They come from two different 3 ESO groups, namely 3 ESO A and 3 ESO B, studying in the same Catalonian school. However, they all have the same English teacher, who was also my internship tutor in the school, and the same coursebook. Moreover, due to the cordiality of the student-teacher relationship and the fact that my tutor is also the teacher of "*tutoría*" of group B, she helped me considerably in determining the sample of my study and preparing the materials. Before the implementation of my study, she and I held a brief information session in which I explained to her the main goal of the study and the requirements that I needed in the participants, which were holding the same English level as their peers and speaking, at least, Spanish as their first languages. Regarding the linguistic background and the English level of the participants, she gave me the following information: In both classes, there were nine (9) students in total who do not speak Spanish as their first languages and/or do not hold the same CEFR levels as their peers either do to developmental difficulties or cultural reasons. Therefore, these students had to be excluded from the study since they would not provide reliable data. Apart from these nine students, all other students were reported, both by themselves and by their teacher, to be Catalan-Spanish simultaneous bilinguals. In fact, the question regarding the mother tongue of the participants was also included in the pre-questionnaire. However,

although some of the students answered this question correctly aloud and admitted that they also speak Spanish in their daily lives both with their families and outside the house environment, they refused to provide the written information that they are Catalan-Spanish bilinguals in the pre-questionnaire. Thus, this study is firstly based on the first-hand oral information provided by both the students themselves and their teachers that they are Catalan-Spanish simultaneous bilinguals.

Regarding languages spoken in the family, participants shared the following information as an answer to the relevant questions included in the pre-questionnaire: The mothers of nine (9) participants speak Catalan and Spanish as their first languages (L1s). The mothers of eighteen (18) participants speak Catalan as their L1. The mothers of thirteen (13) participants speak Spanish as their L1. The mother of one (1) participant speaks Spanish and Dutch as her first languages. The mother of one (1) participant speaks Spanish and Romanian as her first languages. Lastly, the mother of one (1) participant speaks Portuguese as her first language. When asked which language they use to communicate with their mothers, twenty-one (21) participants answered Catalan whereas twenty-two (22) answered Spanish. Likewise, the fathers of nine (9) participants speak Spanish and Catalan as their first languages. The fathers of fourteen (14) participants speak Catalan as their L1. The fathers of seventeen (17) participants speak Spanish as their L1. The father of one (1) participant speaks Romanian as his first language. The father of one (1) participant speaks Portuguese as his L1. Finally, the father of one (1) participant is Spanish, Catalan, and English trilingual. When asked which language they use to communicate with their fathers, twenty-two (22) answered Catalan while twenty (20) answered Spanish. When asked which language they prefer to communicate with their family members at home when they are altogether, twenty-one (21) participants answered Catalan whereas twenty (20) answered Spanish. One (1) of the remaining two (2) participants answered Spanish and Romanian to this question. The

remaining participant answered in detail and indicated the following: "*With my mother's family I speak in Catalan but with my father's family I speak in Spanish because they are from Andalusia*". Table 2 summarizes all the information included in the last two paragraphs.

Table 2

Linguistic background of the participants

Total number of participants = 43	**Native languages of the participants** Spanish & Catalan 43
	Native languages of the mothers Spanish & Catalan: 9 · Spanish: 13 · Catalan: 18 · Spanish & Dutch: 1 Spanish & Romanian: 1 · Portuguese: 1 **The preferred language to communicate with the mothers** Spanish: 22 · Catalan: 21
	Native languages of the fathers Spanish & Catalan: 9 · Spanish: 17 · Catalan: 14 · Romanian: 1 · Portuguese: 1 Spanish & Catalan & English: 1 **Preferred language to communicate with the fathers** Spanish: 20 · Catalan: 22
	The preferred language to communicate with family members at home when they are all together Spanish: 20 · Catalan: 21

Regarding language preferences of the participants outside the school and house environment, participants shared the following information as an answer to the relevant questions included in the pre-questionnaire: When asked which language they prefer to communicate with their friends (outside the school environment), twenty-four (24) answered Spanish whereas nineteen (19) answered Catalan. When asked which language they usually

prefer to communicate outside the house (i.e., in a shop or restaurant), twenty-five (25) answered Spanish while eighteen (18) answered Catalan. Last but not least, when asked about their preferred language in general, twenty-two (22) participants answered Catalan and twenty (20) answered Spanish. One participant gave the answer "English" to this question. Table 3 summarized the information provided in this paragraph.

Table 3

Language preferences of the participants outside the school and home environment

Total number of participants = 43	**Preferred language to communicate with their friends (outside the school setting)**		
	Spanish	Catalan	
	24	19	
	Preferred language to communicate outside the house (i.e., in a shop, restaurant, etc.)		
	Spanish	Catalan	
	25	18	
	Preferred language to use in general		
	Spanish	Catalan	English
	21	20	1

As we can understand from the answers of the participants in the pre-questionnaire, bilingualism, a very popular concept in recent times, has come to dominate not only the lives of young participants but also the lives of their parents. Of course, it is significant to keep in mind that this is due to the fact that the study was conducted in a school in the Catalonian region, a region famous for the high prevalence of bilingualism.

Regarding the amount of exposure of the participants to English language outside of the classroom environment, participants shared the following information as an answer to the relevant questions included in the pre-questionnaire: When asked when they started to learn English, twenty-four participants answered 3-4 years old whereas fifteen answered 5-6 years old. Among the participants, there is no one who began to learn English later than 7 years

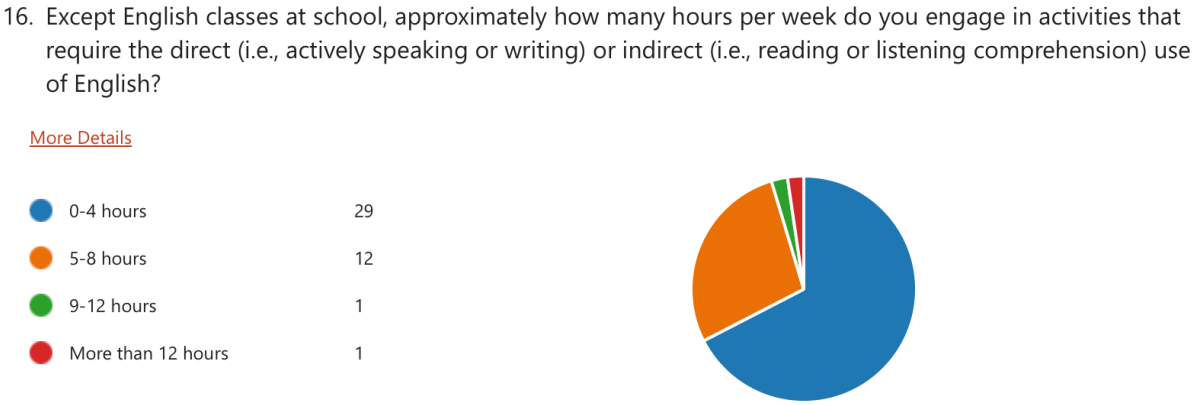
old. When asked how they started to learn English, twenty-six participants answered school classes whereas ten answered language academy. The following two figures (Figure 1 and Figure 2) are taken from the pre-questionnaire of the study in the form of Microsoft Forms to further illustrate the answers of students given to the questions "Outside of school classes, do you take private lessons or go to a language academy to improve your English?" and "Except English classes at school, approximately how many hours per week do you engage in activities that require the direct (i.e., actively speaking or writing) or indirect (i.e., reading or listening comprehension) use of English?"

Figure 2

The illustration of participants' answers to the 15th question in the pre-questionnaire

Figure 3

The illustration of participants' answers to the 16th question in the pre-questionnaire



The rest of the pre-questionnaire consists of eighteen questions in the form of a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The main aim of these questions is to gather relevant participant information regarding their habits in English language and their general motivation & attitude towards English. The participants' responses to all these Likert-scale questions were analyzed anonymously on a participant-by-participant basis by me and further used to categorize the participants' levels of motivation and positive attitude towards the English language as low, medium, and high. These categories were then compared with the total score of the participants in the writing task to investigate the impact of having high levels of motivation and positive attitude towards English on the prevention of learners' both L1 errors and general errors (See *2.6 Data Analysis* subsection of this chapter for further information about the calculation and analysis). Table 4 summarizes the collective answers of the all participants to the five-point Likert-scale questions of the pre-questionnaire (see Appendix A below for the questions).

Table 4

The collective answers of the participants to the questions from 17 to 34 in the pre-questionnaire

Likert Scale	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Q30	Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34
Strongly Agree	4	1	17	7	7	6	2	15	2	3	6	6	4	2	0	2	5	4
Agree	10	10	14	7	10	11	2	11	7	7	22	11	13	10	13	8	29	11
Neither agree nor disagree	15	10	9	8	9	12	17	5	7	4	11	12	13	16	12	21	8	5
Disagree	11	18	3	13	13	11	17	8	18	15	1	10	11	11	16	11	1	15
Strongly Disagree	3	4	0	8	4	3	5	4	9	15	3	4	2	4	2	1	0	8

2.4 Materials

All the materials employed during the study are listed as follows in the order used in the study: The Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form, the Participant Pre-

questionnaire, and the Writing Task. The Participant Pre-questionnaire included 34 in total and was designed from scratch by me with the aim of eliciting participant information regarding the following issues: The gender, native language(s) of the participant, native languages of the participants' parents, preferred languages of participants' to use to communicate with their parents, language preferences of the participants (outside the school and home environment; with their friends, in a shop, restaurant, etc.), the amount of exposure of the participants to English language outside the classroom environment, participants' habits in English language, and lastly, their motivation & positive attitude towards English. The responses of the participants to the pre-questionnaire have been analyzed in depth in the previous subsection of this chapter. The last 18 questions of the pre-questionnaire were used to categorize participants' levels of motivation and positive attitudes towards English as high, medium, and low, and these categories will be further discussed in detail in the Results and Discussion chapters of this paper.

The Writing Task included eleven sentences to translate from Spanish to English and three open-ended short answer questions. The aim of this writing task was to collect sufficient written English data from participant and then to analyze the data to identify both the general errors and the errors due to L1 made by the participants.

2.5 Procedure

All of the students participating in the study except for one student are above the age of 14. Therefore, in accordance with the Guidelines for the Protection of Personal Data in Master's Theses at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili provided by the Ethics Committee for Research in People, Society, and the Environment (CEIPSA) of Universitat Rovira i Virgili, participants were able to give consents on their own except for one participant. However, the parents of all the participants were informed about the study, its general description, and its

benefits and risks by their English teachers via e-mail one week before the study. Furthermore, they were assured that no personal data of their children would be shared, and the names of the participants would be known only by me and no one else. For those students who are above 14 and thus can give consent by themselves, the Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form were prepared on digital platform and distributed to each participant in the form of Microsoft Forms (See Appendix B for the copy of the Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form). For the student who is below 14, the consent was asked from her English teacher, who also is the teacher of "*tutoría*" of the group that the participant belongs to. In addition, since the language level of the participants is sufficient for them to understand informative texts, as also indicated by their English teacher, the forms were prepared and provided in English for the participants.

The study was conducted in two 1-hour sessions for each group, separated by a week. In the first session, the participants were provided with the Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form and asked to fill it after reading thoroughly. After they filled in the consent form, the participants proceeded with answering the questions in the Pre-questionnaire. The links to both documents were shared with the students by their teacher through the digital platform Google Classroom before the session. While the participants were completing the forms, as the researcher and responsible for the study, I circulated around the classroom, answering participants' questions about what they did not fully understand in these two documents so that I could obtain reliable data to use in the study.

In the second session, the Writing Task (see Appendix C below) was administered to the participants in hardcopy and asked to complete in one hour. Before the treatment, no teaching unit was implemented on the students since it was beyond the purpose of this study. After the second session, the answers to the Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form

and the Pre-questionnaire were stored in the personal Microsoft account of the researcher. Likewise, after the participants completed the Writing Task, the papers were collected and retained by the researcher to be analyzed later. In the next class following the study, at the suggestion and request of their English teacher, a brief classroom Q&A discussion session was conducted with each group to discuss the answers of the participants to the translation part of the Writing Task and to investigate the sources of the main errors in their answers with the objective of raising the awareness of the possible influence of learner's native languages on their acquisition of English.

2.6 Data Analysis

The writing task consisted of a total of 11 simple Spanish sentences to translate into English and 3 open-ended short answer questions. The responses of 43 participants were compiled and stored in hardcopy since the treatment was implemented in hardcopy in the classroom setting. Afterwards, the participants' answers to the questions were meticulously analyzed and their writing errors in their responses were identified and categorized into two groups as general errors and L1-based errors with the purpose of converting the responses into ordinal numerical quantitative data. The data were then exported to Microsoft Excel in the CSV UTF-8 (Comma delimited) format and later introduced into the JASP platform for analysis to test the first alternative hypothesis.

To test the second alternative hypothesis, the responses of the participants to the Likert-scale questions included in the participant pre-questionnaire were analyzed anonymously on a participant-to-participant basis and used to categorize the participants' levels of motivation and positive attitude towards English as low, medium, and high. Then, a total test score was calculated for each participant. The calculation was realized as follows: Two points were deducted from the participants for each error they made, assuming that a

zero-error test would have a score of 100. Afterwards, the data regarding the motivation groups and the overall test scores were entered in a Microsoft Excel file and converted into CSV UTF-8 (Comma delimited) format and later introduced into the JASP platform for analysis.

2.7 Statistical Analysis

For the statistical analysis of this study, two different types of inferential statistics were conducted via JASP platform. First, a Paired Samples T-Test was conducted to compare two sets of errors and then determine if there is a statistical difference between the number of general errors and the number of L1 errors made by the participants in the writing task. The results of this analysis were used to see if there is a significant impact of cross-linguistic influence on the writing of Spanish 3rd ESO EFL students, which is the main alternative hypothesis of the study. Later, a One Way ANOVA was conducted to see whether the levels of motivation of the participants influenced their overall errors and then determine if learner motivation and positive attitude towards English have a significant impact on the overall number of L1 errors and general errors, which is the second alternative hypothesis of this study.

Chapter 3: Results

This chapter introduces the statistical analysis of the results which were analyzed using two different types of inferential statistics via the statistics platform JASP. The first section describes the results of the Paired Samples T-Test which was conducted to see if the difference between the number of general errors and the number of L1 errors committed by the students in their responses to the Writing Task are statistically significant or not. The second section reports the results of the One-Way ANOVA which was conducted to find out if the motivation levels of the participants have a significant impact on the prevention of both general and L1 errors.

3.1 The Results of The Paired Samples T-Test

Table 5 and Table 6 below show the results of the Paired Samples T-Test which was conducted to determine whether the difference between the number of general errors and the number of errors due to L1 influence is statistically significant. In Table 5, Measure 1 represents the number of general errors, whereas Measure 2 stands for the number of errors due to L1 influence.

Table 5

Paired Samples T-Test

Measure 1	Measure 2	*t*	*df*	*p*	Cohen's d	SE Cohen's d
General Errors	L1-based Errors	-1.166	42	0.250	-0.178	0.094

Note. Student's t-test.

Table 6

Descriptives

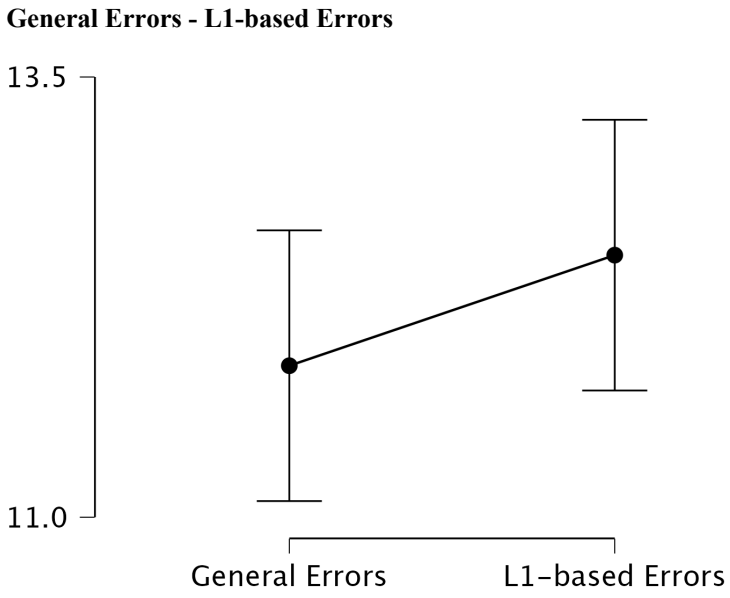
	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
General Errors	43	11.860	5.557	0.847	0.469
L1-based Errors	43	12.488	5.970	0.910	0.478

As seen in Table 5 and Table 6 above, the results of the statistical analysis of the number of general errors (M = 11.860, SD = 5.557) and the number of errors due to L1 influence (M = 12.488, SD = 5.970) indicates that there was not a statistical difference between the number of general errors and the number of L1 errors prevalent on the writing of the participants in the Writing Task: $t(42) = -1.166$, $p = 0.250$ with a low Cohen's d effect.

The negative *t* value means that the total number of general errors (Measure 1) were fewer than the total number of L1-based errors (Measure 2) in the writing of the participants. The negative and low Cohen's d effect reveals that the total number in Measure 1 were fewer than the total number in Measure 2 with a quite small difference between the means of the two sets of errors being compared. Therefore, we reject the alternative hypothesis 1 (Hα 1) in favor of the null hypothesis 1 (Ho 1), although there was a small difference between the mean of the number of general errors (M = 11.860) and of the number of errors due to L1 influence (M = 12.488), the total number of the latter being slightly higher than that of the former. This small difference can be observed in the descriptive plot chart below (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Descriptives Plots



3.2 The Results of the One Way ANOVA

Table 7 and Table 8 below demonstrates the results of a One-Way ANOVA which was performed to compare the effect of motivation and positive attitude level on the total scores of the students in the Writing Task.

Table 7

ANOVA - Total Score

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	η^2
Motivation and Positive Attitude Level	12528.832	2	6264.416	34.109	< .001	0.630
Residuals	7346.331	40	183.658			

Note. Type III Sum of Squares

Table 8

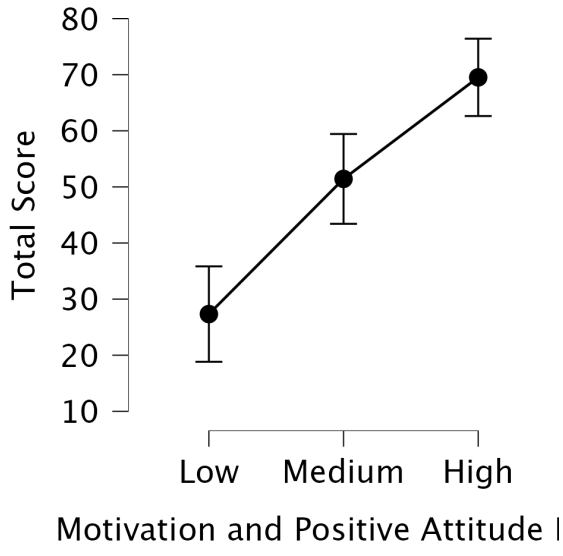
Descriptives - Total Score

Motivation and Positive Attitude Level	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
High	17	69.529	13.408	3.252	0.193
Low	12	27.333	13.385	3.864	0.490
Medium	14	51.429	13.866	3.706	0.270

As seen in Table 7 and Table 8 above, a One-Way ANOVA revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in total scores between at least two groups, $F(2,40) = [34.109]$, $p = <.001$ with a large effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.630$, demonstrating that the motivation and positive attitude levels of the participants had an impact on their total scores in the Writing Task. The mean values in Table 8 indicates that participants with higher levels of motivation and positive attitude performed better in the treatment by committing fewer language errors whereas participants with lower levels of motivation and positive attitude had lower success by committing more language errors. Figure 5 below shows the influence of motivation levels of the participants on their total scores in the Writing Task.

Figure 5

Descriptives plots



3.2.1 The Results of the Post Hoc Test

Since the One-Way ANOVA returned a significant f-statistic (F(2,40) = [34.109], p = <.001 with a large effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.630$), a Post Hoc Test was performed to see which groups had a difference in means. As seen in Table 9 below, Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons found that the mean value of total score was significantly different between all groups: Low and Medium (p = <.001, 95% C.I. = [-37.071, -11.119]), Low and High (p = <.001, 95% C.I. = [-54.632, -29.760]), and Medium and High (p = 0.002, 95% C.I. = [-30.005, -6.197]). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis 2 (H*o* 2) in favor of the alternative hypothesis 2 (Hα 2).

Table 9

Post Hoc Tests

Standard

Post Hoc Comparisons - Motivation and Positive Attitude Level

			95% CI for Mean Difference				
		Mean Difference	Lower	Upper	SE	t	p_{tukey}
Low	Medium	-24.095	-37.071	-11.119	5.331	-4.520	< .001
	High	-42.196	-54.632	-29.760	5.110	-8.258	< .001
Medium	High	-18.101	-30.005	-6.197	4.891	-3.701	0.002

Note. P-value and confidence intervals adjusted for comparing a family of 3 estimates (confidence intervals corrected using the tukey method).

Chapter 4: Discussion

This section presents the interpretation of the results based on the aforementioned research questions and conjectured hypothesis.

4.1 Main Differences Between the Linguistic Features of Spanish and English

Spanish and English languages, although they belong to the same language family (see Page 3), have linguistic features that substantially differ from each other. To begin with a concise contrastive analysis of both languages, as Anderson & Centeno (2007) also explain, sentences can be constructed without an overt subject in Spanish since "Spanish is uniformly inflected, that is, all verb forms must be inflected, it permits omission of the subject (Lakshmanan, 1995; as cited in Anderson & Centeno, 2007) whereas the use of subjects is always compulsory in English. Regarding word order of noun phrase (NP), Spanish uses DET + NOUN + ADJECTIVE whereas the noun phrase word order of English is DET + ADJECTIVE + NOUN. Therefore, unlike English, most adjectives follow the noun. Furthermore, when forming a plural noun phrase in Spanish, it is obligatory to add the suffix *-s* to the adjective as well (i.e., *casas bonitas* 'beautiful houses'). In terms of sentence word order, although both languages follow a subject-verb-object (SVO) order, "Spanish word order is more flexible; the subject, object and verb constituents can occur in different positions within the sentence (Mackenzie, 2001; as cited in Anderson & Centeno, 2007)." As for the question formation, English always makes use of auxiliary verbs whereas in Spanish, auxiliary verbs are never utilized. Instead, subject-verb inversion is obligatory in *wh*-questions in nearly all Spanish dialects. On the other hand, yes-no interrogative sentences in Spanish does not require subject-verb inversion, "as intonational cues indicate their interrogative nature (p. 30)." When it comes to the formation of negative sentences, unlike English, the use of auxiliary verbs is not required. Instead, the negative adverbs (i.e., *no* and

nunca) is placed ahead the inflected verb (Anderson & Centeno, 2007). Finally, Spanish is not as rich as English in terms of the diversity of prepositions. For instance, the preposition "*en*" in Spanish has the following four equivalents in English: in, on, at, and into. Therefore, students may not understand the functions of English prepositions due to the lack of them in their L1 (Spanish), and thus misuse them, carrying the risk of being fossilized if not treated.

Since English and Spanish are classified under the same language family, they share several similarities, some of which might be "tricky" on the part of the Spanish EFL learners. For example, both languages share a lot of 'false friends', which we can define as "those words of a language that are similar in form, but not in meaning, to some words of another language (Cabrera & Bartolomé, 2005)." Another similar concept between the two languages is "cognates", which can be defined as "words Latin-based, mean approximately the same thing, and share similar orthographic features (Nash, 1997; as cited in Lubliner & Hiebert, 2011)." As we will see in 4.2.2, not also false friends but also cognates can interfere with English acquisition.

4.2 Potential Significance of the Findings

4.2.1 The Impact of Cross-linguistic Influence on the Writing of Spanish Secondary School EFL Students

The first conjectured hypothesis (Hα 1) was that cross-linguistic influence has a statistically significant impact on the writing of Spanish 3rd ESO EFL students. As shown in Tables 5 and 6 above, the results of the Paired Samples T-Test of the number of general errors (M = 11.860, SD = 5.557) and the number of errors due to L1 influence (M = 12.488, SD = 5.970) on the writing of the participants showed that the difference was not statistically significant: $t(42) = -1.166$, $p = 0.250$ with a low Cohen's d effect. Based on these results, the alternative hypothesis 1 (Hα 1) has been rejected, and the null hypothesis 1 (Ho 1) has been

accepted. Nevertheless, as shown in Figure 4, there was a small difference between the mean of the number of general errors (M = 11.860) and of the number of errors due to L1 influence (M = 12.488), indicating that the total number of the L1 errors was slightly higher than the number of general errors.

43 participants produced a total of 1047 errors in the Writing Task. 510 of these errors were general errors while 537 were due to L1 influence. Out of 43 participants, 21 committed more L1 errors than general errors whereas 14 produced more general errors than L1 errors. The remaining 8 participants committed the same number of general errors and L1 errors. The classification of errors was realized based on Selinker's (1972) taxonomy of cognitive processes of Interlanguage, general error referring to *overgeneralization of TL linguistic material* whereas L1 errors refers to *language transfer* (see **1.2.4.3**). The most common overgeneralization errors in students' answers were related to verb conjugation (regularization of irregular verbs and subject-verb disagreement) and noun pluralization (the use of regular plural forms for irregular nouns and incorrect pluralization of nouns). The most frequently observed L1 errors were of omission of the subject, incorrect construction of noun phrases, omission and/or incorrect collocation of auxiliary verbs in question formation & yes-no interrogative sentences, incorrect translation of the Spanish preposition "*en*", the negative influence of false friends, and spelling errors due to cognates. Table 10 below outlines the taxonomy of observed L1 errors in the study and their corresponding examples from participants' answers to the Writing Task.

Table 10

The taxonomy of participants' L1 errors and corresponding examples

Most Common Types of L1 Errors Observed in the Answers	Error Examples from Participants' Answers
Omission of the subject	*Is a movie about mental disorders… *Talks about a guy that went… *Will be a lot of contamination… *Is a cute way to respect them. In that year *will be working or studying. *Is my favorite saga. Maybe *has a lot of advantages.
Incorrect construction of noun phrases	A world *very technological (*a very technological world*) *Technology advanced (*advanced technology*) The most *intelligents animals (*los animales más inteligentes*) When the *firsts scientists go to Mars… (*los primeros científicos*) My *favorites films… (*mis películas favoritas*) *Mobiles phones (*teléfonos móviles*) The *richs people (*las personas ricas*) A ship *very huge (*un barco muy grande*) In *ours lives (*en nuestras vidas*) *Difficults situtations (*situaciones difíciles*) The hair *very long (*el pelo muy largo*) *Others big films (*otras grandes películas*)
Omission and/or incorrect collocation of auxiliary verbs in question formation & yes-no interrogative sentences	Spanish sentence: ¿Por qué no entras? Students' translation: Why you *don't enter? Spanish sentence: ¿A qué hora se despierta Paula por la mañana? Students' translation: What time Paula *wakes up in the morning?
Incorrect translation of	I prefer to live *on this time (*en este momento*).

Spanish preposition "*en*"	*On those times (*en esos tiempos*) *At that year (*en ese año*) *In home (*en casa*) *In the earth (*en el mundo*) *On my life (*en mi vida*)
The negative influence of false friends	Spanish sentence: Nací en Turquía, pero actualmente vivo en España por motivos académicos. Students' translation: I was born in Turkey, but I *actually live in Spain for academic reasons/purposes/motives. Spanish sentence: Mañana asistiremos a una lectura sobre cómo escribir historias creativas. Students' translation: Tomorrow we will *assist to a reading about how to write creative *histories. I would not live in 1970s because I like *actuality. Spanish sentence: Estaba embarazada cuando empecé a la universidad. Students' translation: I was *embarrassed when I started the university.
Spelling errors due to cognates	*inteligent (*inteligente*), *dificult (*difícil*), *accion movies, *posible (*posible*), *oportunities (*oportunidades*), *polution (*polución*), *diferent (*diferente*), *gigant (*gigante*), *comunity (*comunidad*), *evolucionated (*evolucionado*), *destruct (*destruir*), *interesant (*interesante*),

4.2.2 The Effect of Motivation and Positive Attitudes in the Prevention of Errors

The second conjectured hypothesis (Hα 2) was that learner motivation and positive attitudes towards English has a statistically significant impact on the overall number of L1 errors and general errors. As shown in Tables 7 and 8, the results of the One-Way ANOVA revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in total scores between at least two groups, $F(2,40) = [34.109]$, $p = <.001$ with a large effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.630$, indicating

that the motivation and positive attitude levels of the participants had a significant impact on their total number of errors observed in the Writing Task. According to the mean values in Table 8, participants with higher levels of motivation and positive attitude performed better in the treatment and thus got higher scores whereas participants with lower motivation levels committed higher number of errors and achieved lower scores (High Motivation: M = 69.529; Medium Motivation: M = 51.429; Low Motivation: M = 27.333). Furthermore, the results of the Post-Hoc Test showed that the mean value of total score was significantly different between all groups: Low and Medium (p = <.001, 95% C.I. = [-37.071, -11.119]), Low and High (p = <.001, 95% C.I. = [-54.632, -29.760]), and Medium and High (p = 0.002, 95% C.I. = [-30.005, -6.197]), meaning that the difference between all groups was also statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis 2 (Ho 2) has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis 2 (Hα 2) have been accepted.

4.2.3 Pedagogical Implications of the Findings

The statistical analyses of the study uncover two important results. First, although the difference was not statistically significant, cross-linguistic influence has an impact on the acquisition of English by Spanish secondary school EFL students. Second, learner motivation and positive attitude has a statistically significant impact on the prevention of learner errors committed in L2. These results signify significant pedagogical implications that cannot go unnoticed by language practitioners, material creators, and L2 learners. Above all, language teachers should acknowledge that learners' native language can have both facilitating and interfering impact on their acquisition of English. Regarding this issue, several strategies might be suggested for teachers. The first one is that L2 linguistic material, syllabus, and training can be adjusted according to the *needs* of L2 learners (Corder, 1967). For example, in the light of the results of this specific study, language teachers can explicitly raise

students' awareness on the issue of cross-linguistic influence through several activities which involve the comparative use of both languages in the learning process. In this regard, when teaching linguistic features of English that differ from learners' L1 and thus interfere with their acquisition of English, one useful strategy might be regarded as making use of learners' native language to explicitly explain the differences between the two systems so that any possible interference might be avoided. Another useful strategy to avoid cross-linguistic influence might be the adaptation of L2 linguistic material taking into account the learners' native language. To give an example, teachers might include contrastive activities in their syllabi such as translation activities, individual brainstorming activities to detect the possible transfer areas, and their whole class discussion.

When it comes to the learner motivation and positive attitude, it is of utmost importance in second language learning to keep learners motivated towards L2 and to ensure that they have positive attitudes towards both L2 and L2 culture since the effect of motivation and positive attitude plays a vital role in language learning process as also shown by the results of this study. As Lightbown & Spada (2006) mention, "teachers can make a positive contribution to students' motivation to learn if classrooms are places that students enjoy coming to because the content is interesting and relevant to their age and level of ability, the learning goals are challenging yet manageable and clear, and the atmosphere is supportive (p. 64)." In this respect, Lightbown & Spada suggest the following useful pedagogical practices: *motivating students into the lesson* at the beginning of the lesson by providing information about forthcoming activities so that learners' interest in the lesson can be maintained, the inclusion of *a variety of tasks, activities, and materials* so that students' attention is increased whereas their boredom is decreased, and *making use of co-operative rather than competitive goals* so that the confidence levels of the learners are increased (p. 65)." Apart from these strategies, another important aspect to take into account is the provision of positive

constructive feedback to the learners as much as possible. In this way, learners can be made aware of their lacks in L2 and have a chance to correct them before they are "fossilized."

4.3 Limitations of the Study & Implications for Future Research

Although the present study yielded positive and significant outcomes as well as important pedagogical implications, it is subject to some limitations. One possible limitation to the study was the CEFR levels of the participants. Rather than employing an English proficiency test to determine their levels, the CEFR levels of the participants were estimated to be between B1.1 and B1.2 according to the English level of the coursebook that they are utilizing in all 3 ESO classrooms. Therefore, participants were assumed to have the average level of English expected of 3rd ESO students.

Another possible limitation to the study was the existence of bilingualism among participants. All participants were Catalan-Spanish bilinguals. Whether bilingual children have a better capacity and aptitude to learn English has always been a popular debate topic in the field of SLA. However, this debate is beyond the scope of this study. As an implication for future research, the impact of bilingualism on the cross-linguistic influence when learning English as a second language might be an interesting research topic.

The absence of a pre-test and a post-test can be regarded among the limitations of the study. However, the main objective of the study was to investigate the impact of cross-linguistic influence without any explicit or implicit instruction with the participants. Otherwise, the expected results would not have been observed in the study. As an implication for future research, the same study might be designed as having a pre-test, treatment, and post-test to measure the impact of explicit and/or implicit instruction on cross-linguistic influence and to identify fossilized linguistic items in English L2 learners.

The time constraint was the biggest limitation to the present study. The timeframe for the study was ideally between February and May 2024. Such a short timeframe led to the variables being kept simple and smoothly measurable. If this study is given a longer time interval, one of the future implications to researchers might be to measure more variables such as the influence of biological sex (male/female) and positive reinforcement on the prevention of learner errors.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The concept of interference from learners' second language when learning a second language has always been a topic of a great deal of discussion and research, beginning with behaviorism and surviving until today. Important linguists and researchers conducted extensive research to uncover the reasons of L2 learners' errors. Furthermore, several of them come up with different theories to explain the causes of errors. The first chapter of this paper thud has been devoted to providing detailed information about the most popular of these theories, namely Behavioristic Theory of Language Learning, Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), Error Analysis (EA), and Interlanguage. There is one common thread that all these theories agree on: that there exists influence from learner's L1 to some extent.

The present study primarily aimed to investigate the potential impact of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) on the writing of Spanish 3rd ESO EFL students. For this purpose, a participant pre-questionnaire and a wring task were designed and administered to the participants. The statistical analysis of the Paired-Samples T-Test revealed that there was not statistically significant between the number of general errors and the number of errors due to L1 in the Writing Task, although the total number of the latter was higher than the total number of the former in all 43 participants' answer: $t(42) = -1.166$, $p = 0.250$ with a low Cohen's d effect. As a second hypothesis, the impact of learner motivation and positive attitudes on the prevention of learner errors was also examined through participants' answers to the pre-questionnaire. The statistical analysis of the One-Way ANOVA showed that there was a statistically significant impact of learner motivation and positive attitudes on the prevention of errors: Students with higher levels of motivation performed better and got higher scores in the writing task whereas students with lower levels of motivation got lower scores: $F(2,40) = [34.109]$, $p = <.001$ with a large effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.630$. Furthermore, the

results of Tukey's HSD Test for multiple comparisons revealed that the mean value of total score was significantly different between all groups.

The present study yielded significant results and suggest important pedagogical implications. The effect of learners' first language on their acquisition of English is an unquestionable fact that cannot go unnoticed by those involved in language teaching and learning. The adjustments teachers make to their syllabi and the strategies they implement are crucial for students to become aware of this concept and to minimize the risk of fossilization of uncorrected errors. At the same time, it is important to ensure that student motivation and positive attitudes towards language are maintained as it has been made clear by the results of the study. It is hoped that pedagogical implications as well as implications for further future research prove invaluable to language practitioners and provide support for shaping the trajectory of future research.

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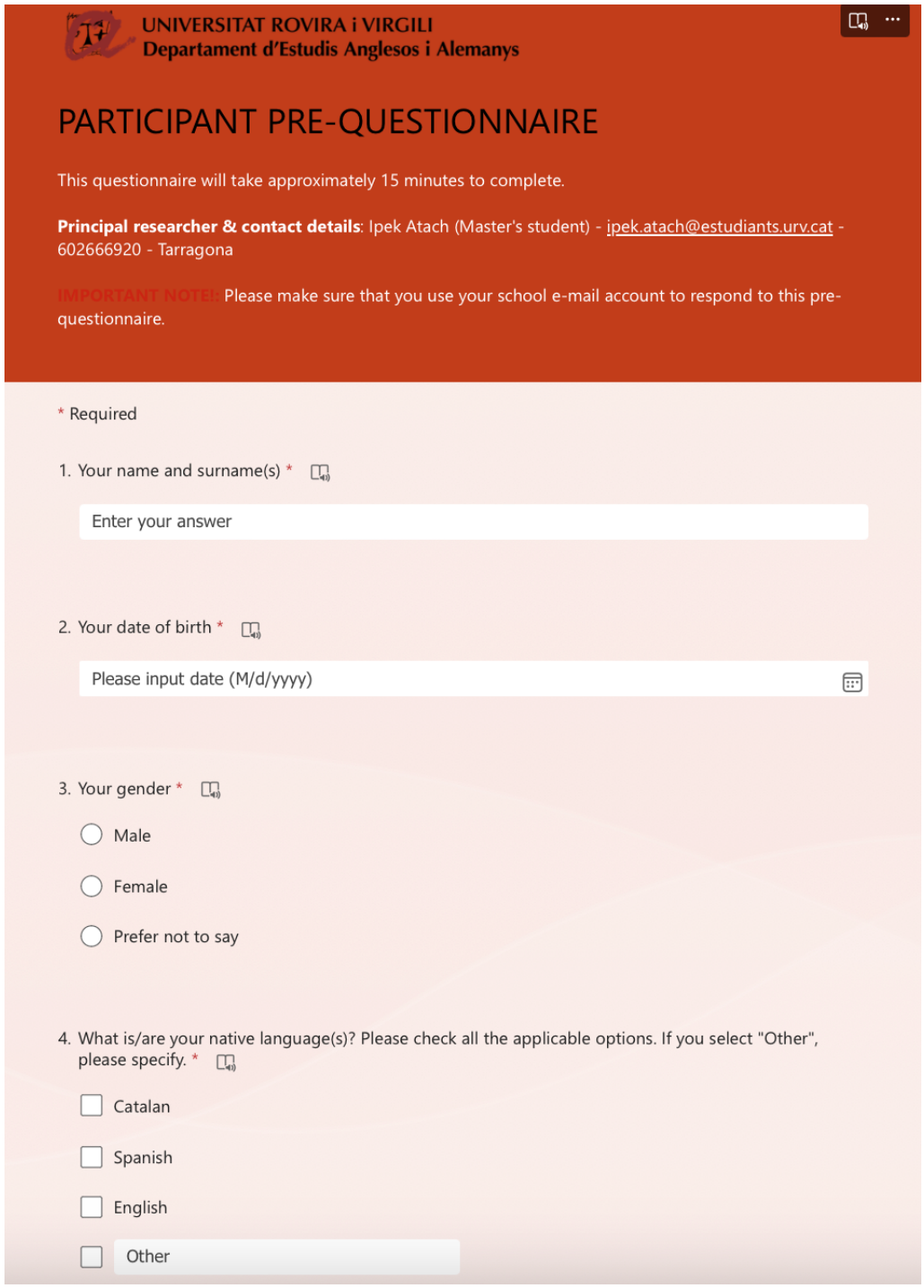
Appendix A

Participant Pre-questionnaire

The following participant pre-questionnaire was administered via Microsoft Forms to all participants in the same session where they were first asked to read carefully and complete the Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form.



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA i VIRGILI
Departament d'Estudis Anglesos i Alemanys

PARTICIPANT PRE-QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Principal researcher & contact details: Ipek Atach (Master's student) - ipek.atach@estudiants.urv.cat - 602666920 - Tarragona

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please make sure that you use your school e-mail account to respond to this pre-questionnaire.

* Required

1. Your name and surname(s) *

Enter your answer

2. Your date of birth *

Please input date (M/d/yyyy)

3. Your gender *

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

4. What is/are your native language(s)? Please check all the applicable options. If you select "Other", please specify. *

- Catalan
- Spanish
- English
- Other

5. What is the native language(s) of your mother? If you select "Other", please specify. *

- [ ] Catalan
- [ ] Spanish
- [ ] English
- [ ] Other

6. Which language do you use to communicate with your mother? If you select "Other", please specify. *

- ◯ Catalan
- ◯ Spanish
- ◯ English
- ◯ Other

7. What is the native language(s) of your father? If you select "Other", please specify. *

- [ ] Catalan
- [ ] Spanish
- [ ] English
- [ ] Other

8. Which language do you use to communicate with your father? If you select "Other", please specify. *

- ◯ Catalan
- ◯ Spanish
- ◯ English
- ◯ Other

9. When you are together, which language do you usually prefer to communicate with your family members at home? If you select "Other", please specify. *

- ◯ Catalan
- ◯ Spanish
- ◯ English
- ◯ Other

10. Which language do you prefer to communicate with your friends (outside the school environment)? If you select "Other", please specify. *

- ◯ Catalan
- ◯ Spanish
- ◯ English
- ◯ Other

11. Which language do you usually prefer to communicate outside the house (i.e., in a shop or restaurant)? If you select "Other", please specify. *

- ◯ Catalan
- ◯ Spanish
- ◯ English
- ◯ Other

12. What is your preferred language in general? *

- ◯ Catalan
- ◯ Spanish
- ◯ English
- ◯ Other

13. At what age did you start learning English? *

- ◯ 0-2 years
- ◯ 3-4 years
- ◯ 5-6 years
- ◯ 7-10 years
- ◯ 11-15 years

14. How did you learn English for the first time? *

- ◯ Through my parents' talking to me
- ◯ Self-study
- ◯ Private lessons
- ◯ School classes
- ◯ Language academy
- ◯ Online courses

15. Outside of school classes, do you take private lessons or go to a language academy to improve your English? *

- ◯ Yes, I both take private lessons and go to a language academy.
- ◯ I take private lessons, but I don't go to a language academy.
- ◯ I go to a language academy, but I don't take private lessons.
- ◯ No, I don't take private lessons or go to a language academy.

16. Except English classes at school, approximately how many hours per week do you engage in activities that require the direct (i.e., actively speaking or writing) or indirect (i.e., reading or listening comprehension) use of English? *

- ◯ 0-4 hours
- ◯ 5-8 hours
- ◯ 9-12 hours
- ◯ More than 12 hours

17. I love reading books, poems, articles, or blogs in English. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
◯	◯	◯	◯

18. I love writing essays, short stories, or diaries in English. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
◯	◯	◯	◯

19. I love watching videos, movies, TV series, TV shows, or documentaries in English. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
◯	◯	◯	◯

20. I prefer to watch English movies, TV series, TV shows, or documentaries dubbed in Spanish. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

21. I prefer to watch English movies, TV series, TV shows, or documentaries with Spanish subtitles. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

22. I prefer to watch English movies, TV series, TV shows, or documentaries with English subtitles. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

23. I love listening to podcasts and audiobooks in English. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

24. During the day, I mostly listen to English songs rather than the songs in other languages. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

25. I love engaging in conversations in English with my family or friends. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

26. To practice my English, I use language learning apps such as Duolingo or Memrise. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

27. In general, I can say that I have a positive attitude towards English language. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

28. When I write in English, I always translate from my native language(s) into English in my mind first. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

29. I usually make use of cognates (words looking and sounding similar in your native language(s) and English) when I write in English. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

30. When I write in English, I usually transfer grammatical structures from my native language(s) into English.
*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

31. When I have to learn new vocabulary items, I usually memorize them without paying much attention to the grammar and context in which they are used.
*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

32. I practice regularly to improve my writing skills in English and to minimize my mistakes.
*

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

33. I always pay attention to the feedback provided by my teacher on my writing in English. *

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

34. I feel reluctant and nervous to write in English because I'm afraid of making mistakes. *

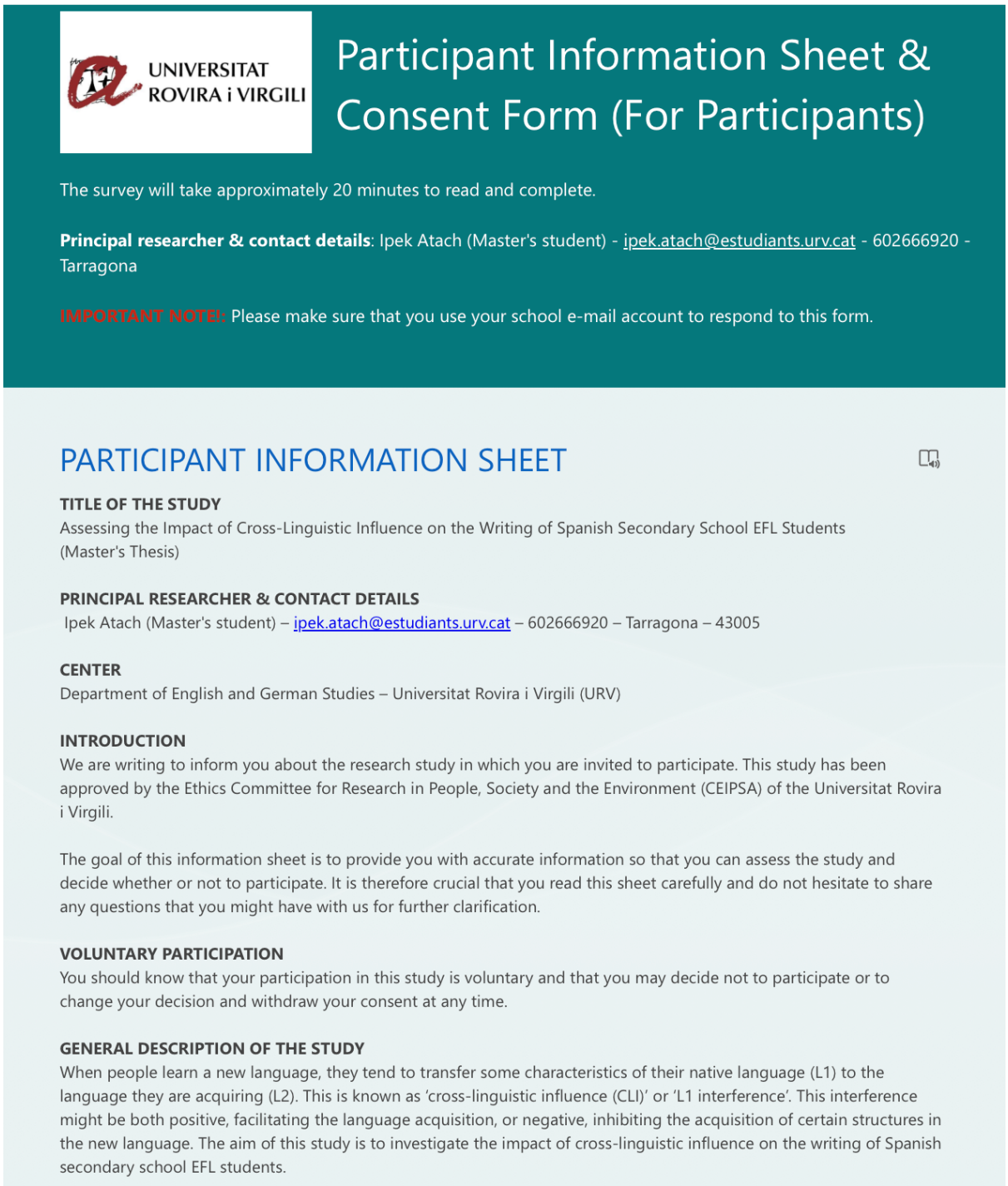
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
○	○	○	○

Submit

Appendix B

Participant Information Sheet & Consent From

The Participant Information Sheet and the Consent Form provided by the Ethics Committee for Research in People, Society, and the Environment (CEIPSA) of Universitat Rovira i Virgili were converted into a single form using the web-based application *Microsoft Forms* and administered to all participants and/or their legal representatives when needed.



UNIVERSITAT ROVIRA i VIRGILI

Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form (For Participants)

The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to read and complete.

Principal researcher & contact details: Ipek Atach (Master's student) - ipek.atach@estudiants.urv.cat - 602666920 - Tarragona

IMPORTANT NOTE!: Please make sure that you use your school e-mail account to respond to this form.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

TITLE OF THE STUDY
Assessing the Impact of Cross-Linguistic Influence on the Writing of Spanish Secondary School EFL Students (Master's Thesis)

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER & CONTACT DETAILS
Ipek Atach (Master's student) – ipek.atach@estudiants.urv.cat – 602666920 – Tarragona – 43005

CENTER
Department of English and German Studies – Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV)

INTRODUCTION
We are writing to inform you about the research study in which you are invited to participate. This study has been approved by the Ethics Committee for Research in People, Society and the Environment (CEIPSA) of the Universitat Rovira i Virgili.

The goal of this information sheet is to provide you with accurate information so that you can assess the study and decide whether or not to participate. It is therefore crucial that you read this sheet carefully and do not hesitate to share any questions that you might have with us for further clarification.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
You should know that your participation in this study is voluntary and that you may decide not to participate or to change your decision and withdraw your consent at any time.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY
When people learn a new language, they tend to transfer some characteristics of their native language (L1) to the language they are acquiring (L2). This is known as 'cross-linguistic influence (CLI)' or 'L1 interference'. This interference might be both positive, facilitating the language acquisition, or negative, inhibiting the acquisition of certain structures in the new language. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of cross-linguistic influence on the writing of Spanish secondary school EFL students.

The study will consist of two parts. In the first part, participants will be asked to complete a pre-questionnaire consisting of 31 short questions. The data collected through this questionnaire will be related to the participants' native languages in the family, language preferences, English language learning background, general perceptions and attitudes toward English, and writing habits in English. In the second part, participants will be asked to complete a writing task consisting of translating 11 short sentences from Spanish to English and answering 3 long answer open-ended questions. These questions aim to get participants to use different tenses and phrases in English and do not carry any other subliminal meaning. Approximately 65 students will participate in the study. They will be asked to write their names, birth dates, and genders in the pre-questionnaire and only their names in the writing task. However, in processing the pre-questionnaire and writing task, their names will be converted into numbers. Their personal information will be known only by me. Thanks to the answers given in these data collection tools, I will assess the extent of the positive and negative influence of their native language (Spanish) on the their acquisition of a second language (English).

BENEFITS AND RISKS

Through this project, students will have the opportunity to participate in a research study and to contribute to the expansion of knowledge in this field anonymously, albeit indirectly. In the writing task, they will also have the opportunity to recall and practice what they have learned so far in English language via a couple of translation and writing activities. The study poses no inherent risk to the participants.

Next

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (CONT.)

CONFIDENCIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

All the information collected on the participants in the framework of this study will be kept strictly confidential and with the application of the corresponding security measures that guarantee, in addition to its confidentiality, its integrity, availability, authenticity and traceability.

The personal data collected for the study will be identified by a code and only the main researcher or his/her collaborators will be able to relate this data to the participants. Participants will never be identified in any report, presentation, or publication arising from this study. Therefore, your identity will not be revealed to any person, except when required by the Ethics Committee to which the study is submitted in order to verify the study data and procedures.

For the processing of the data, the Rovira y Virgili University's own information system installed in its computer network will be used, applying the information security measures established by Royal Decree 3/2010 that regulates the National Security scheme. Specifically, data will be collected through Microsoft Forms and a written test and will be entered into private excel file. Subsequently, JASP Statistical Software will be used to analyze the data.

The research staff of the study agree to comply with Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the protection of personal data and guarantee of digital rights, in addition to Regulation (EU) No. 2016/679, of the European Parliament and of the Council, of April 27, 2016, on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and will sign a commitment to participation and confidentiality.

The purpose of data processing is participation in the study in accordance with the consent of the participant or his/her legal guardian. The participant may discontinue participation in the study by withdrawing his/her consent at any time, without justification being required. In this case, the data cannot be deleted in order to guarantee the validity of the results and to comply with the legal obligations applicable to the study, but they will be coded in such a way that it is not possible to link them to your person.

Back Next

BASIC INFORMATION ON PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

Data Controller: The data controller is the Universitat Rovira i Virgili with Tax Identification Number Q9350003A and based at Carrer de l'Escorxador, s/n, 43003, Tarragona.
Purpose: To participate in the Master's Thesis under the terms described in the participant information sheet.
Rights: As a participant of the study, you can exercise the right to access, rectify, remove, move, limit or oppose the processing of your data in writing to the General Registry of the URV at the same address as the URV, or in person at the General Registry of the URV or telematically in accordance with the instructions at https://seuelectronica.urv.cat/registre.html.
Further Information: You can find additional information about the processing of personal data in the *Master's thesis at the URV* and about your rights at the URV's Processing Registry, which is published at https://seuelectronica.urv.cat/rgpd, where you will also find the Privacy Policy of the URV. you may also find this information on the Participant's Information Document regarding the study. Furthermore, you may ask our data protection officers any question regarding the protection of personal data by sending an email to dpd@urv.cat.

Back Next

EXTENDED INFORMATION ON THE PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA

In accordance with the provisions of current legislation on data protection applicable to the Rovira i Virgili University (URV) and published in the "Applicable legislation" section of the "Protection of personal data" area of the Electronic Office (https: //seuelectronica.urv.cat/rgpd/), the following information is brought to the attention of interested parties:

a) Who is responsible for the processing of your data?
Identification: Universitat Rovira I Virgili; CIF: Q9350003A
Mailing address: Carrer de l'Escorxador, s/n, 43003 Tarragona
DPD (Delegats de Protecció de Dades de la URV - Data Protection Officers) Contact Details: E-mail: dpd@urv.cat

b) What personal data do we process and for what purpose?
Personal data are processed for the purpose of participating in Master's thesis on the terms described in the participant information sheet. In the event that the study provides for the publication, dissemination and reuse of the results obtained including personal data, personal data will be used for this purpose provided that the interested party has given his/her consent.

c) To which recipients will your data be communicated?
Within the framework of the aforementioned processing, your data will not be passed on to third parties unless there is a legal obligation to do so or unless expressly stated in the participant information sheet.

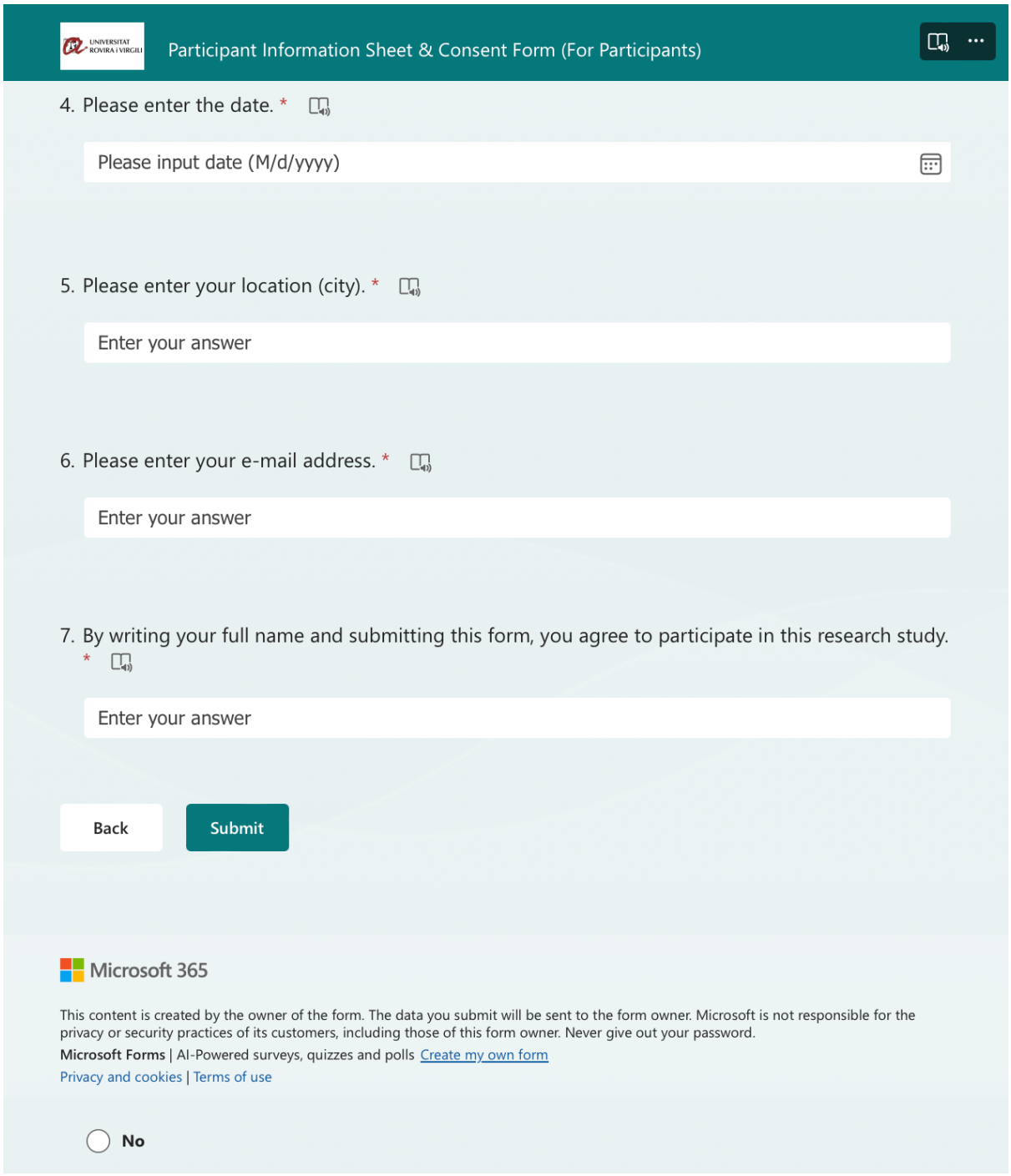
d) What is the legitimacy for the processing of your data?
The legitimacy of this treatment is based on the consent given by the person concerned expressly.

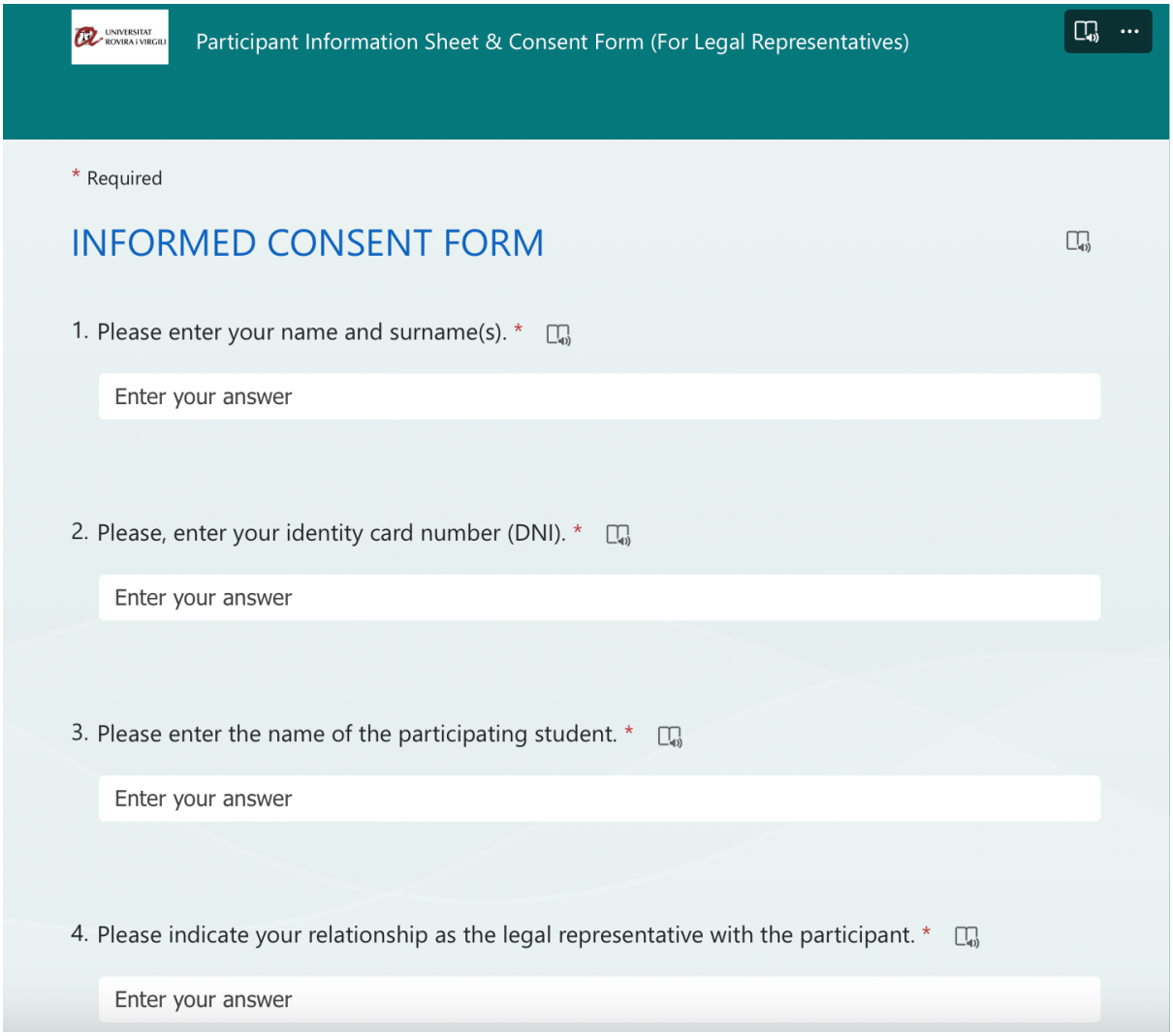
e) What security measures do we apply in the processing of your data?
The University is responsible for applying the security measures and other obligations arising from the legislation for the protection of personal data, in accordance with the National Security Scheme, Royal Decree 3/2010.

In this sense, the Rovira i Virgili University has provided a Security Policy that can be consulted in the section on "Legislation and regulations" of the University website within "Own regulations" and "Other regulations", http: //www.urv.cat/ca/universitat/normatives/altres-normes/.

In addition, the Participant Information Sheet specifies some specific safety measures that will be taken into account during the study.

Back Next


Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form (For Participants)
4. Please enter the date. *
Please input date (M/d/yyyy)
5. Please enter your location (city). *
Enter your answer
6. Please enter your e-mail address. *
Enter your answer
7. By writing your full name and submitting this form, you agree to participate in this research study. *
Enter your answer
Back
Submit
Microsoft 365
This content is created by the owner of the form. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner. Microsoft is not responsible for the privacy or security practices of its customers, including those of this form owner. Never give out your password.
Microsoft Forms | AI-Powered surveys, quizzes and polls Create my own form
Privacy and cookies | Terms of use
No



5. - I have read the copy that I have received of the participant information document regarding the study.
- I have been able to ask and have received answers to my personal questions regarding the study and my participation in it.
- I understand that I am participating in this study in accordance with the specifications in the participant information document and in accordance with the answers that I have received to my questions and I understand the risks and benefits that this entails.
- I accept that my participation is voluntary and I freely agree to participate in the study.
- I understand that I can withdraw at any time from participating in the study and that my withdrawal will not affect me negatively in any way.
- I have been informed about how my personal data will be processed.
- I give my consent for my data to be accessed and used under the conditions specified in the document containing information on the study addressed to the participant.
- Once the research has been completed, the data obtained may be of interest to other related studies. In this regard, I authorize the completely anonymous use of the data in other related research projects. *

- ◯ **Yes**
- ◯ **No**

6. Please enter the date. *

Please input date (M/d/yyyy)

7. Please enter your location (city). *

Enter your answer

8. Please enter your e-mail address. *

Enter your answer

9. By writing your full name and submitting this form, you agree to participate in this research study. *

Enter your answer

Back Submit

Appendix C

Writing Task

The following writing task was administered in hard copy to all participants. They were asked to complete the task in one hour and deliver it to me afterwards.

PART 1. Translate the following sentences from Spanish to English.

1. ¿A qué estás esperando? ¿Por qué no entras?

_____

2. ¿A qué hora se despierta Paula por la mañana?

_____

3. Tu madre está hablando con tu profesora en la escuela.

_____

4. Este examen es el más difícil que he hecho en mi vida.

_____

5. Mañana asistiremos a una lectura sobre cómo escribir historias creativas.

_____

6. No tengas miedo! No estarás solo en casa.

_____

7. Según los científicos, los animales más inteligentes del mundo son los delfines.

_____

8. Voy al gimnasio tres veces por semana.

_____

9. Nací en Turquía, pero actualmente vivo en España por motivos académicos.

_____

10. Estaba embarazada cuando empecé la universidad.

_____

11. Cuando te sientas solo, recuerda tus mejores recuerdos con tu familia y amigos.

PART 2. Answer the following questions (between 100-150 words for each).

1. What types of movies do you usually like watching? What is your favorite film? What is it about? Provide some information about its setting, characters, plot, etc.

2. What do you think the world will be like in 2060? Write your predictions in terms of technology, education, health, professions, environment, relations between countries, etc. What do you think you'll be doing in that year?

3. If you had the chance, would you want to live in 1970s? Why? Why not? What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of living in the past and living in the present? Explain your ideas.