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SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**



**THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE TRANSFER IN THE ENGLISH LEARNED AT THE ADVANCED LEVEL
AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR, MAIN
CAMPUS, DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2016**

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INTRODUCTION

Learning a new language is always a big challenge. Throughout history, many and different strategies have been developed in order to learn in the best possible way. The methods, over the years, have been constantly changed and improved. A common concern of the methods used to teach or to learn a new language has been the role of the first language of a learner, during the learning of a new language. This is taken in account seriously because this language L1 (mother tongue or first language) will have an impact in the learning of the target language, L2. This is due the way we process the inputs of a new language during its learning. However, the scenario becomes quite different when there is already a previous knowledge of two languages during the learning of a new language, L3.

Given the fact that the knowledge of previous languages have an influence upon the learning of a new language, this impact in the target language is called “transfer”. According to Peuker (2015), the transfer effects in multilingual language development, have been studied since, at least, 50 years ago. A series of experiments about memory and learning theory (Brown 1958; Keppell & Underwood 1962; Murdock 1961; Peterson & Peterson 1959) produced the first investigations about the effects of language transfer. From its inception, the transfer was typified as a negative effect in the learning process and several forms of negative transfer were called “interference”. It was not until 1963, when Vildomec studied the positive transfer effects and appreciate it as a “facilitation” in the learning process.

Consequently, all the previous languages, that a subject already speaks, will have an impact in the learning of new languages. This situation is faced by all the students from the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador without exception. The students of Modern Languages, in particular, meet this scenario, for they are exposed to the learning of two new languages at the same time in the course of its major. According to this scenario, the students of modern Languages are the ones who face directly the sway of learning, at the same time, French and English -which are two languages with different roots- while they already speak a common mother tongue, Spanish.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A. Historical Framework

The study of the influence of the native language has gone through multiple and significant changes over the past years, given the impact that it has in the learning process of a new language. All these changes have allowed that language transfer had become an important subject of analysis in the studies of the acquisition of a second language. Therefore, this has led to a major reconsideration of the concept of language transfer and the impact that has in the field. Since the first consideration of the role of native language over a new target language, language transfer eventually, has been taking a more important role in the linguistic field.

The first studies of language transfer were made by some American linguistics during the years of 1940s and 1950s. The studies in Contrastive Analysis in language contact situation (Lado, 1957) were highly influential in the field of second language acquisition. The study asserts that there is a marked tendency of the individuals to transfer structures and meanings from their native language to a foreign language in order to adapt to the foreign culture and language. Not only was the language but also elements of the cultures that were adapted in order to fit in the foreign culture.

Harris (1954), already had proposed a translation-type model that was focused purely in the comparison of languages. This model was called “transfer grammar” and it was pointed to find parallels, between languages, in the translation. These, were the first attempts that lead to new investigations about the speech behavior on second language learners. However, in terms of language transfer it was Pietro (1964) who established that Contrast Analysis was important as a preliminary step to understanding the range of transfer from one linguistic structure to another.

Through the years, and with different methods (especially comparison), many authors tried to establish the deviations that occurred between a source language and a recipient language, having as the recipient language, the English. Selinker (1969), was the one who formulated questions about transfer, that still remain in current researches about the topic: What can be transferred or actually is transferred? How does language transfer occur? What type of language transfer occurs? Even though these questions were central part of the researches about

language transfer, they were set aside by the research trend of that time: the link between first and second language acquisition.

The failure of the Contrastive Analysis and the significant and notorious similarities between first and second language acquisition caused that the concept of transfer was discredited during a large lapse of time. Nevertheless, the arguments to minimize the real importance of the transfer, present theoretical complications. During this time, Dulay and Burt (1974) had a very influential role in the field of second language acquisition, especially in the subject concerning to language transfer. They attempted to make an analogy between the processes of first language acquisition and those of second language acquisition.

Finally, other contributions worth of mentioning in the study of language transfer, were made by Andersen (1983) and Odlin (1987). Andersen explored an interesting and original concept of transfer, taking it as a filter that controls what the learners retain from the second language input and that the natural acquisitions processes work together with language transfer processes. Odlin, on the other hand, expressed the importance of transfer in a second language acquisition because the first tongue marks how we learn the new language; he also visualized positive effects as facilitation and the negatives effects as interference. All this has led to the acceptance that language transfer is a real and central phenomenon that must be extremely considered as a part of a second language acquisition and what the constraints are during the occurring of the phenomenon.

B. Description of the Problem

The Second language acquisition is always linked to the mother tongue. Our mother tongue conditions us for a second language learning. In all the researches made up to date it has become more and more evident the importance that has the role of the mother tongue (and any other known languages) in the acquisition process of a second foreign language. All learners of a second foreign language face, in greater or less extent, the impact of the mother tongue over the target language. There are studies that show that features of the first language, known by a subject, impact the learning of a new language. This marks the starting point for the definition of Transfer.

According to Odlin, “Transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that had been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired (1989:27)”. He explained that transfer is an extremely important factor in second language acquisition: the first tongue marks how we learn the new language. Even though transfer is what we carry from our mother tongue, sometimes these details, structures or sounds help us to get the target language. However not all the features of the mother tongue will be successful implemented to ease the acquisition of a new language. In this sense it can be said that the transfer may occur in two possible ways: positive and negative. Odlin visualized positive effects of transfer as facilitation and negatives effects of transfer as interference.

This research is named: “The role of language transfer in the English learned at the advanced level at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, main campus, during the academic year 2016 “. It is aimed to look for the real role(s) of the transfer effect among the students of Foreign Language Department. Learners of a second foreign language experience, at some point, the influence of their mother tongue or another learned language, over a new one. The research is focused on the students from Modern Languages, due the fact that they interact with three languages (Spanish, French and English) at the same time, however it is intended only to delve into the students’ issues at learning English as second language. The study contemplates the fact that Spanish is the mother tongue and, also, they have knowledge about other language, in this particular case, French

This study looks for significant issues in specific areas such as Grammar, Vocabulary, Orthography and punctuation. These areas cover the fundamental knowledge that students from Modern Languages should manage successfully to have English as second language. Each area will be analyzed from separate perspectives in order to recognize the final effects produced by language transfer. The chosen background where students have to face the set of two languages at the same time will provide the sample where, Orthography and Punctuation, Grammar and Vocabulary of students will be tested. The objective is to understand the role of language transfer and determine whether it is absolute Spanish transfer, or if includes features from French or even if it is a cumulative of both previous languages.

At the end, the study will show the final conclusions about the real role of language transfer at the Foreign Language Department. It is expected this could help both, learners (with Spanish as native tongue) and teachers, to understand the impact of other language

(French) when they are learning English, and the association and dissociation that arise among the languages. It is also targeted to determine the outcome of language transfer (positive or negative) in order to enhance the positive aspects and realize likely issues to avoid, among the learned languages. The understanding of the way that transfer phenomena is produced, could result of great aid to students and teachers as well, considering the possibility of focusing efforts to apply some theoretical researches to enhance or diminish the transfer effects in the learning process of English as a second language.

C. Objectives

General objective

- To find out the role of language transfer in the English learned at the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of El Salvador, main campus.

Specific objectives

- To identify the language area (Grammar, Vocabulary, Orthography and punctuation) more impacted by transfer effects.
- To determine the tendency of the transfer phenomenon, among the students of Modern Languages at the Department of Foreign Languages who manage 3 languages (English, French and Spanish), in order to establish the direction and the binomial of languages where the transfer role is more remarkable.

D. Research questions

The study of language transfer triggers basic questions about the topic that, even nowadays remain. However this study is focused on answering the following questions about transfer:

- 1) What are the real transfer effects in multilingual learners at the Foreign Language Department?

- 2) From what language is there more interference or more facilitation?
- 3) What areas of language are the most influenced by language transfer among of Modern Language learners?

E. Justification/Rationale

This will be the first study conducted at the University of El Salvador, with the clear objective of being a tool, for teachers and students, to improve the English learning process. Being aware about gaps that result from transfer effects it could lead to a better development of learning techniques used to learn a new language. The study tries to remark to the students that, when learning another language, there are some similar features (structures, sounds, cognates, etc.) that present some resemblances, between the first language and a new target language. However the learning process becomes more complex when students face the learning of two new target languages at the same time. Being aware of aspects that impact the target language could help to improve the learning process by giving an important feedback about of structures that must be avoided in order to not fall in some false cognates, nonexistent structures, unknown sounds, and other features of the target language.

F. Limitations

This study is limited to three Linguistic areas; Grammar, Vocabulary, Orthography and punctuation. However one of the Linguistic area most affected by transfer is Phonology. A deeper study of the transfer effects in the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador should consider to add the Phonological area in order to have a more completed analysis of the topic. These could lead to important information to manage the transfer effects of the three languages (English, Spanish and French) in the student's population.

A deeply study about transfer, also, implies both types of transfer: Static and Dynamic. This study will show results of static transfer, since it includes as delimitation, students from Modern Language at the Foreign Language Department. These students have as requirement the advanced level in English and French. An interesting improvement in other researches about transfer could include the dynamic transfer. This would allow assessing the students at different

stages of their learning, from the earliest subjects of skill's development areas until the last ones. That kind of study will require a larger interval of time (at least three years), considering the same sample. Another way of studying dynamic transfer could involve having different samples from different levels of English's learners and make a comparison among the levels, beginners, intermediate and advanced.

G. Some other considerations

Since L2 follows the steps of L1, during this study French is considered as a second language because the similarities that both languages present. This premise will allow showing, at the end of the study, results provided by all the linguistic areas evaluated, permitting to make real conclusions supported by the obtained results.

H. Definitions

The definitions presented below, are shown in order to facilitate the familiarization with the concept of language transfer. Given the relation between Second Language Acquisition and transfer, there are some terms that could lead to a misinterpretation or confusion with transfer or the context in which are used. All the definitions were taken from Brooks, P. & Kempe, V. Encyclopedia of language development.

Code mixing (noun)

A mixing of two codes or languages, usually without a change of topic. This is quite common in bilingual or multilingual communities and is often a mark of solidarity, e.g. between bilingual friends or colleagues in an informal situation. Code mixing can involve various levels of language, e.g., phonology, morphology, grammatical structures or lexical items.

Code switching (noun)

A change by a speaker (or writer) from one language or language variety to another one. Code switching can take place in a conversation when one speaker uses one language and the other speaker answers in a different language. A person may start speaking one language and then change to another one in the middle of their speech, or sometimes even in the middle of a sentence.

Cross-linguistic influence (noun)

A cover-term used to refer to phenomena such as borrowing, interference and language transfer in which one language shows the influence of another. It is sometimes preferred to the more widely used term “transfer” and specially “interference”, because “cross-linguistic influence” avoids association with behaviorism.

Language transfer (noun)

The effect of one language on the learning of another. Two types of language transfer may occur. Positive transfer is transfer which makes learning easier, and may occur when both the native language and the target language have the same form. Negative transfer, also known as interference, is the use of a native-language pattern or rule which leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language. Although L1 to L2 transfer has been investigated most widely, it is also generally recognized that there can also be transfer from an L2 to one’s native language, as well as L2 to L3 transfer from one second or foreign language to another.

First language (noun)

(Generally) a person’s mother tongue or the language acquired first. In multilingual communities, however, where a child may gradually shift from the main use of one language to the main use of another, first language may refer to the language the child feels most comfortable using. Often this term is used synonymously with native language. First language is also known as L1.

Foreign language (noun)

A language which is not the native language of large numbers of people in a particular country or region, is not used as a medium of instruction in schools, and is not widely used as a medium of communication in government, media, etc. Foreign language are typically taught as school subjects for the purpose of communication with foreigner or for reading printed material in the language.

Second language (noun)

In a broad sense, any language learned after one has learnt one's native language. However, when contrasted with foreign language, the term refers more narrowly to a language that plays a major role in a particular country or region though it may not be the first language of many people who use it.

Target language (noun)

(In language teaching) the language which a person is learning, in contrast to a first language or mother tongue.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term transfer, has been difficult to define, in a proper manner, along the years. According to Webster Dictionary (2014) the word “Transfer” derives from the Latin word “transferre”, which means “to carry”, “to bear” or “to print, impress or otherwise copy from one surface to another”. It also can mean “the carry-over or generalization of learned responses from one type of situation to another”, especially “the application in one field of study or effort of knowledge, skill, power, or ability acquired in another”. In Linguistic, transfer, has taken a significant value, given the role that mother tongue has over the acquisition of a second language and the effects than can produce.

Recently, Brooks & Kempe (2014) defined “transfer” as the influence from one language system to the other”. There have been many efforts dedicated to find a suitable definition for transfer. During the way, there were encountered, some terms that, in greater or lesser extent, could led to confusion about the real concept of transfer. To reach a definition that fulfill, in the most acceptable approach, what really transfer is, many distinctions between similar concepts have been made. One of those related terms is code-switching.

The Encyclopedia of Language Development (2014), defines code-switch as a change of language within a conversation, most often when bilinguals interact with other bilinguals. This difference was first touched in the early nineties, at Grosjean’s works (as cited in Malmkjaer, 2002) who made one of the first approximations for defining transfer. Grosjean (1992) distinguishes between a “monolingual mode” and “bilingual mode”. Monolingual mode is when bilinguals use one language with monolingual speakers of the same language, whereas bilingual mode is when bilinguals are together and have the option of “codeswitching”.

In the monolingual mode, bilinguals may occasionally speak mixing languages. Often, the dominant language influences the less dominant language. This influence was first called “interference”, however, in general terms the word “transfer” is preferred. Language interference (transfer) is often used when people studying two languages, mix them. Malmkjaer (2002) continues expressing the Grosjean’s ideas proposed in 1992 where he distinguishes between static and dynamic interferences.

Static interference refers to the permanent influence of one of the bilingual’s language into the other (accent, intonation and the pronunciation of individual sounds are common areas where static interference may be present). Dynamic interference, in the other hand, is conceived like features from one language that are transferred temporarily into the other. This

can occur in syntax, phonology or vocabulary either written or spoken language. So, it is possible to define linguistic transfer as the knowledge that learners carry from their first language (L1) to help them to learn a second language (L2).

Because transfer usually occurs from the dominant language into the less dominant, it is often a feature of second language acquisition. Second language acquisition is always linked with the mother tongue. According to Saville-Troike (2006) "There is a complete agreement that, since L2 acquisition follows L1 acquisition, a major component of the initial state for L2 learning must be prior knowledge of L1". By meaning that if L1 becomes our initial state for learning an L2, it is possible to assert that the prior knowledge of L1 is responsible of the transfer from L1 to L2, during the development of a second language.

A. Areas of the language influenced by transfer

Language can be defined, in a general way, as a very complete and unique system of communication. Richards & Smith (2010) define language as "The system of human communication which consist of the structured arrangement of sounds (or their written representation)". Brooks & Kempe (2014) describe four different linguistic areas where transfer phenomenon could appear at different levels: Phonology, Morphology, Lexicon, and Grammar. They state that the phonological perception and production are very impacted by transfer and, also remark, there are clear differences in pronunciation, accent and difficulty in perceiving novel phonological distinctions.

The age of learners and the amount of exposure to each language (input), according to Brooks & Kempe (2014), is also a factor that produce a discrepancy at the manner of producing sounds. Children and adult bilinguals show cross-language influences in their ability to perceive and produce sounds of two languages. For learners exposed to an L2 later in life, there are significant influences from the L1. Learners often find difficult to accurately perceive novel sound distinctions that do not exist in their native language. In the same way, L2 learners are not always able to produce the sounds of the language in the same manner that native-speakers do, which leads to accented speech.

In contrast with children, adult learners of a new second language, experience a reduction in perceiving and producing sounds of both languages. For adult learners it becomes harder to have a larger language production when there are some gaps in their L1, especially

when the L2 contains sounds that L1 does not. Adding to this point Swan & Smith (2001) showed a list of some possible difficulties for English learners, depending on their first language. These difficulties display the impact L1 has, mostly in areas as Phonology, Orthography and punctuation, Grammar and Vocabulary.

Coen & Walter (as cited in Swan & Smith, 2001) specify the possible situations that learners, with some romantic languages as a first language, face when learning English. The cases of Spanish or French are very remarked in the area of Phonology, due to the gap that exists in some vowel and consonant sounds. For example: learners with Spanish as L1 possess only 5 specific vowels sounds and 5 diphthongs whereas English features at least 14 different sounds. Therefore learners with Spanish as L1 meet difficulty to produce or adapt new sounds. The same applies to the consonant features, as well as the influence of spelling on pronunciation, the Rhythm and Stress.

Brooke & Kempe (2014) include in the areas influenced by transfer branches of Lexicon, Syntax, and Morphology. At the lexical level, negative transfer might occur in the case of false cognates, also known as interlingual homographs. Swan & Smith (2001), also, include areas such as Orthography and punctuation without letting aside Grammar, probably one of the most affected area when having Spanish as mother tongue. Other features such as word order, questions, question tags, negatives, verbs, ellipsis, time, tense and aspect, passives, infinitives, articles, gender, number, adjectives, pronouns, possessives, indirect speech and prepositions are extremely touched by transfer.

Swan and Smith (2001) have registered a list of several cases of learners with different mother (Spanish, Catalan and French) and the same target language (English) (contribution of Norman Coe and Catherine Walter, respectively). The particularity of these cases reside in their mother tongues, they proceed from the same root (Latin). Even with the similarities that each case presents, the transfer effects will be different in each one of them, as a result of the different background that each learner possess. This encapsulates that the transfer phenomenon is always attached to the mother tongue.

B. Transfer in multilingualism learners

The study of transfer has always been very interesting for linguists, pragmatist and people interested in languages as well. Some of the latest studies of transfer phenomenon in

multilingualism was made by Peukert (2015). He includes an introduction about how these kinds of studies have been made for many predecessors. He, especially remarks the contributions made, about the topic, by Brown (1958), Keppel & Underwood (1962), Murdock (1961), Peterson & Peterson (1959); almost sixty year ago when the first research about transfer effects started.

Transfer studies implies a very deeply language research and a lot of variables to take in account. This makes every single study about transfer a very proper and unique research. The influence or impact of transfer it is not the same when learners have a different L1, hence, having more than one L1 make a transfer study completely different. In this sense it is possible to say that the number of previous languages a learner has, will control the transfer effects. Peukert (2015) presented a consideration of this situation: a transfer study in bilingual learners will be different from one with multilingual learners in complexity, sampling, direction of effects, and selection of variables.

Along with Peukert (2015) many authors such as Aronin & Hufeisen (2009), Aronin & Singleton, (2008), Aronin & Singleton (2012), De Angelis (2011, 2007 & 2005) and Gut (2010) have added more substance to the question of why the study of more than two languages is different in principle from the study of just two languages. Peukert has suggested a change in the studies of transfer, according to the number of language that the learner already manages. Also, he proposes a different approach to take in consideration because there is an increase in complexity.

Take as an example the case of a systematic study of transfer effects of two languages A and B. The researcher must consider four possible scenarios: (1) language A impacts language B only; (2) language B impacts language A only; (3) language A and B impact each other and (4) neither language A nor B impacts the other. In mathematical terms, we calculate n^k where "n" is the cardinal of the set of two languages, A and B and "k" is the number of impacting factors, which also equals two because in this case the two languages impact each other. It follows that $n=k$ and $2^2 = 4$ All four scenarios must be considered in any reliable experiment, so adding only one language C, it gives us $3^3=27$ possible scenarios.

The combinations shown previously, suggest that transfer does not go only in one direction, hence, the transfer effects are not unidirectional. Sometimes learner's L1 can be influenced by some elements of L2 as well. If a multilingual learner is considered, then, transfer can go in any direction of the multiple L2's of the learner, or multiple L2's can influence the L1, a situation that, for its nature, could go in both directions. This will produce

effects in one of the languages, in two of the languages or in multiple languages, either in one direction or in both directions.

It is important to clarify that some of those possible combinations are only theoretical. In practice they do not represent any impact, or the possibility that neither language is affected by the other as well, very uncommon in principle but that might happen. Consider the next setup: A subject knowing a language A, a language B and a language C. In this scenario there are some combinations that are not possible: the cases with an equal triad (A,A,A) or (B,B,B) or (C,C,C). There is no sense that language A impacts A and A, a language cannot impact itself. This is the reason why some possibilities are not considered.

In summary, transfer influences cannot all be treated in the same way. All the researches about transfer have demonstrated that the different scenarios should consider the variables about the number of previous languages acquired. With bilingual learners there is a correlation between L1 and L2. However, with multilingual learners the transfer phenomenon is not correlative, because the possibilities expand. Also, transfer phenomenon could be presented in one or in both directions, to the target language or to the previous language as well.

C. The final influence of transfer

The final influences of transfer, are the final product that learners of a new language have as outcome. Saville-Troike (2006) described very simply the way how the complex process of a second language acquisition goes on. She presented three states: The initial that includes the underlying knowledge about languages structures and principles that is in learner's head at the very starts of L1 to L2 acquisition. A second state called the intermediate which covers all stage of basic language development including the maturation of "child grammar" (also called interlanguage). And the final state which is the outcome of L1 and L2 learning.

Saville-Troike (2006) explains that the first state is the innate capacity for language acquisition. The second state, "intermediate state", involves the progress from the initial to final state; in this stadium is where happen linguistic situations such as "cross-linguistic influence" or "transfer effects of prior knowledge from L1 to L2". Therefore it is important to keep in mind that "transfer" occurs in the middle of the process, as a way to express into the

target language. That is the reason, by which, the role of transfer may occur in positive or negative way.

The positive way of transfer involves all the background that mother tongue has in common with target language, in order to help learners to appropriate L2. Nevertheless a negative transfer acts the other way around. When an L1 structure or rule is used in an L2 utterance and this results inappropriate is considered an error. Even though some authors have affirmed, through time, that transfer is considered exclusive and responsible for some errors, there are some others like Siemund & Simon cited by Liu (2014) and Peukert (2015), who have tried to show that transfer phenomenon could become a positive tool to learn a new language.

To conclude, some authors consider that the previous knowledge of any language, it can be seen as a set of strategies for learning a new language. Consequently, the final role of the transfer phenomenon is not limited to be exclusively negative. This phenomenon can be positive, and also can be single or multiple, and touch one or more of the Linguistic areas (Phonology, Morphology, Lexicon, and Grammar). The role of transfer in the learning of a new language is a reality and it is an important determinant in a second language acquisition. As Ramón (2009) mentioned, the real role of the transfer is the interaction with all the linguistic aspects involved for learning and using a new second language.

METHODS

To understand the phenomenon of transfer at the Foreign Language Department, the methodology was based on a “quantitative” approach. The objective was measuring the quantity of times that the phenomena happened. The quantitative study allowed us to have real results based on mathematic fields. The way to measure those events was through an instrument designed with specific purposes and getting numerical results to obtain a frequency of the times that phenomenon happened, and then, try to establish a tendency or a pattern.

A. Hypothesis

In order to conduct the research about transfer among the students of Modern Languages, a hypothesis was established: “The previous knowledge of any language does not cause any language transfer in the students of advanced level of the Modern Languages at the Foreign Language Department of the University of El Salvador, main campus, during the academic year 2016”.

B. Describing the instrument

To reach the objective of the study, an instrument with two parts was developed: A survey and a questionnaire. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to recognize when the transfer occurred and the direction in what the languages were affected. Each section was aimed to look for specific criteria in the way of answering from students. The answer would be analyzed in order to obtain evidence that prove the effects of transfer in the assessed learners.

The first part of the instrument, the survey was about generalities and some students’ opinions. Independent variables such as age, gender and level at the major. This part was designed to make comparisons of the obtained results. There were also, included two questions about previous knowledge of languages before enroll in the university. It must be recalled that, for this study, Spanish is the mother tongue of the learners and French is considered a second language.

The second part, the questionnaire, was based on the study “The relationship between L3 transfer and structural similarity across development” (Cabrelli, Amaro & Rothman, 2010-2013). That study involved English, Spanish and Brazil-Portuguese, where Brazilian-Portuguese was the target language. This part, was divided in four sections. Each section was heading for recollecting specific data that could evidence transfer language. In our case were involved English, French and Spanish, being Spanish the mother tongue.

In the first section, three statements were presented to the students, each one in a different language, in order to translate to the language required. This was planned to assess the use of the punctuation signs, plural, agreement and other features as well. The first sentence was in Spanish to translate to French and English. This was conducted to assess the use of “tag questions” a structure than in English has a very specific way to express it, and that is not found in the other two languages.

The second statement was required to translate it from English to Spanish and to French. This statement was presented with the objective of illustrating the importance of the verb “to be”. The verb “to be” in English can be used to express status or characteristics of something or someone (as a stative verb). In contrast, this structure is different in French and Spanish as well, having as best example the case of age; which is why this exercise contains this specific point.

The final statement of this section was required to translate it from French to Spanish and to English. This was conducted to appraise the use of possessive adjectives and the agreement with the grammatical person. This structures, in each of the languages involved, present clear differences. The agreement of the grammatical persons with a possessive adjective, in English, works in different way than in Spanish and in French.

The second section was made in order to realize if the students were able to recognize particular characteristic features, proper of the English language. This included two possible answer in each statement. All the possible answers gave to the students could be considered correct, because all of them allowed communicating. However, this part was to see the option chosen by the students because they considered the best answer or which one they feel more comfortable to answer.

The third section consisted in identifying sentences with mistakes and then correct them. The mistakes included were directed to test the reactions of the students to structures that could lead to confusions between languages, like prepositions in English and their similar

in French and Spanish. Other statements included the correct use of Capital letters, punctuation marks, and some structures that only English features. This was made in order to determine what the students could relate or match with previous knowledge of French or Spanish, and adapt it to English.

The fourth section was about cognates. Cognates are words of different languages that originate from a common ancestor. Since, cognates have a common origin, it is taken for granted that they have the same meaning independently of the language. However, cognates do not need to have the same meaning. For this part two columns of cognates were shown. In the first one, cognates of English and Spanish and in the second one, English and French. Both sides had some false cognates. The main idea was to know with which cognates the students succeeded or failed using Spanish or using French.

Summarizing, through this instrument it is expected to demonstrate the real role of language transfer. The outcome received will be useful to find out how the languages resulted affected by transfer. The results will clarify other kinds of effects that could appear or how Spanish or French have been impacted by the learning of a new language. At the end this will help to understand the transfer effects in order to take them as an advantage enhancing the learning of English as a second language at the department of Foreign Language at the University of El Salvador.

C. Population

The research was carried out among the students of the Foreign Language Department, who have reached an “Advanced English level”. The research was addressed to students who knew at least two previous languages: Spanish as a mother tongue and French as a second language. This was aimed to show the language that presented the most influence while learning of English, and, show at the same time in what direction the transfer effects occurred. In order to know the language more impacted by transfer, it was considered three linguistic areas: Orthography and Punctuation, Grammar and Vocabulary.

D. Sample

The groups chosen was from “English Composition I”. The members of the groups have succeeded, recently, subjects from the skill's development area of English and French. The general idea was to evaluate the final English outcome from students who have learned French as a second language and have the same mother tongue (Spanish). The reason to have Spanish as requirement was in order to analyze if the mother tongue was influenced by any of the other languages, taking in consideration that transfer effects can happen in both directions.

RESULTS

As part of the study, the data collection was made by the results of the questionnaire designed specifically for this purpose. The instrument was divided in two main areas: General information, containing the gender, age, year of entrance at the FLD, students' previous knowledges about the target language and their perception about their experience in the learning of languages at the FLD of El Salvador University. The second part was divided in four sections and was strictly related with the language. There were some exercises combining English, French and Spanish that included translation, identification of mistakes, student's preference for a language and cognates.

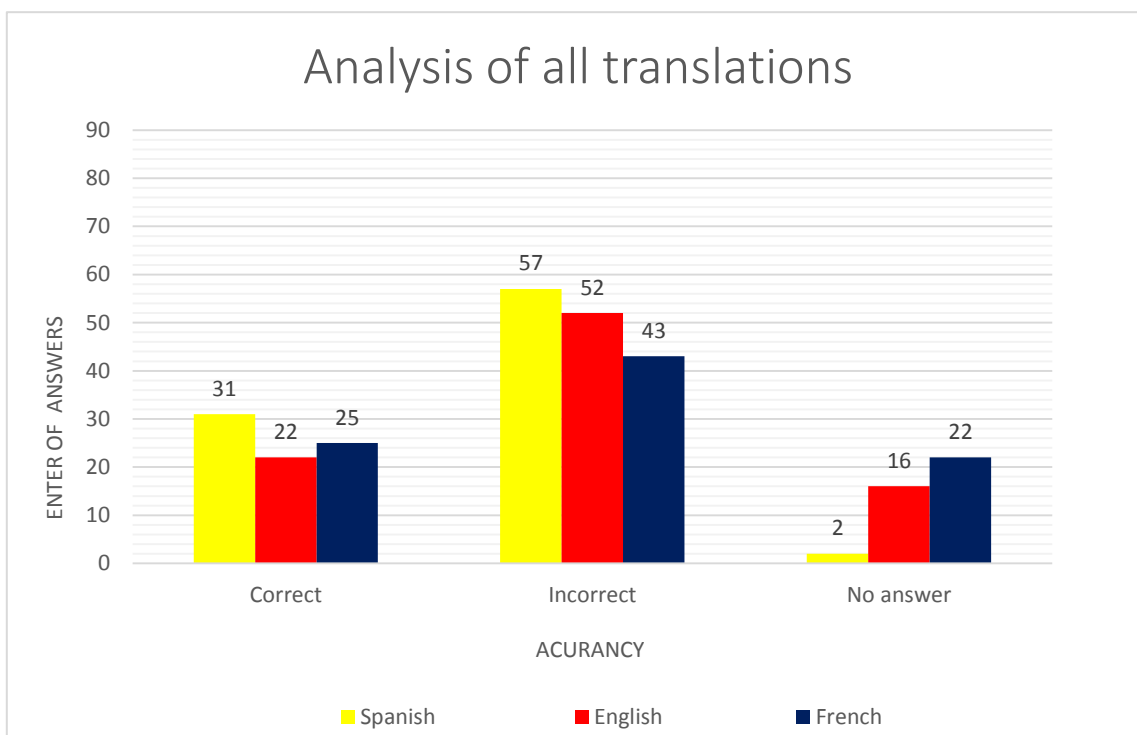
A. Transfer effects in learners at the FLD

Table 1 -Translation summary. Accuracy in translation section.

Language	Correct	Incorrect	No answer
From Spanish to English and French			
"¿A Pedro le parece que María es bella, no?"			
It seems to Peter that Mary is beautiful, doesn't he?	11	20	14
Il semble que Marie est belle pour Pierre, n'est-ce pas?	13	17	15
From English to Spanish and French			
"He looks older, but actually, he is fifteen years old"			
Él parece mayor pero en realidad tiene quince años.	22	22	1
Il semble plus vieux, mais il a quinze ans.	12	26	7
From French to Spanish and English			
"Quel est son but dans la vie?"			
¿Cuál es su (de él) objetivo en la vida?	9	35	1
What is his/her goal in life?	11	32	2
Total	78	152	40

Table 1 summarized all the results in translation section. The students received a sentence in one language, and then, they were requested to translate it to the other two languages. The first sentence was in Spanish and it was required to translate to French and English. Then, from English to Spanish and French and finally from French to Spanish and English.

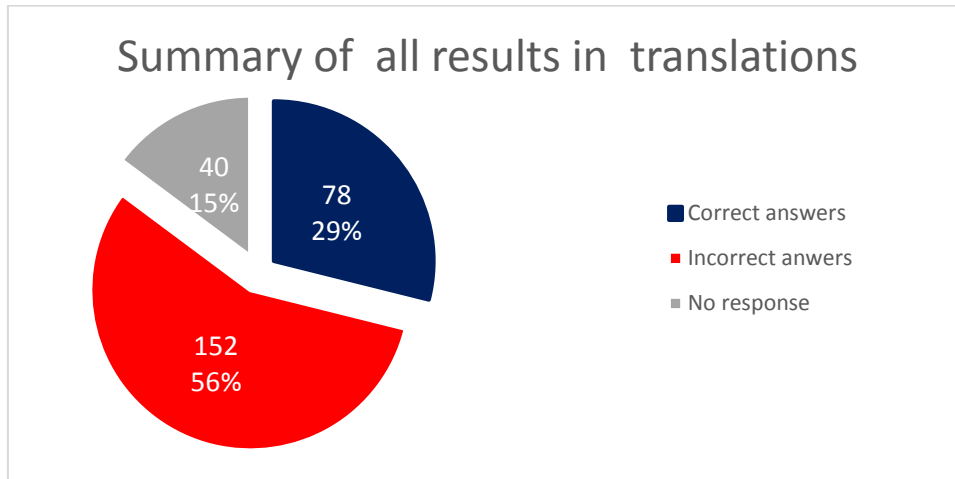
Figure 1- Accuracy of the results got in all translations from one language to the other two.



According with the data displayed in the figure 1, there were remarkable details. French was the language less answered by the students followed by English and then Spanish. There was more confidence, among the students, to answer in English that in French. It was expected that the best successful answers were the sentences related with Spanish. This expectation turned out to be true, however the main surprise was the grade of accuracy of Spanish, since it is the mother tongue. Nevertheless in general, the accuracy level was in all the cases lesser than the mistakes found.

The main mistakes in Spanish were related with written accents or punctuation. These details were more related with orthography than with transfer problems. However this kind of chart showed how English is impacted, not only by Spanish (the mother tongue of all the students), but also with features from French. French as a second tongue, also, has been impacted by the learning of the other two languages.

Figure 1A Summary of all the results in translation section.



The previous graph shows all the results in the translations exercises, from one language (English, French and Spanish) to the others two (English, French or Spanish). At the end, it was remarkable the great quantity of mistakes that overpassed the half (152 enters). Those mistakes occurred mostly in Spanish translation, then in English and finally in French translations.

Table 2 Summary of all the mistakes found in translation section among the three languages

Classification of all the mistakes in translation section.	Q8 Spanish		Q9 English		Q10 French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
Grammar problems	12	28	0	26	4	0
Punctuation problems	3	4	10	2	0	0
Orthography Spelling problems	2	6	31	23	16	0
Use of other elements or structures different to the target language (Visible transfer)	30	30	22	20	46	36
Vocabulary problems	0	4	3	4	0	0
No answer	3*	1*	1*	7*	1*	2*
Sub Total	47	72	66	75	66	36
Total						362

*This values are not included in totals

The table shows a summary of all the mistakes found in translation items, the first three columns from Spanish to French and English. The following ones, from English to Spanish and French. And the final two, from French to Spanish and English as well. The table above includes all the registered mistakes, there were approximately 362 registers, a huge quantity in comparison with the number of the participant, since the sample was composed by just forty five students. This indicates that there were many cases where students got more than one mistakes. Finally it has to be remarked that not all the mistakes were linked with transfer issues, there were some problems related with the language itself.

For example, in the case of Spanish, students did not show strong knowledge about the diacritic accent, getting a mistake which was categorized in the orthography section. However this kind of mistake does not show transfer issues. On the other hand a mistake where students wrote “quinze” in French instead of “quinze” represented a transfer issue from the Spanish noun “quinze”.

Table 3 Summary of transfer issues among the complete translation section

Classification of all the mistakes in translation section.	Q8 Spanish		Q9 English		Q10 French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
Use of other elements or structures different to the target language (Visible transfer)	30	30	22	20	46	36
Sub Total	30	30	22	20	46	36
Total						184 / 362

From the total of 364 registers collected among all the mistakes found, fifty one percent (51%) was strictly related with transfer issues. Those mistakes were not necessarily linked with a previous language to the target language. For that reason, mistakes were analyzed in order to classify from what language they came from, and establish, with better accuracy, the interaction among the three languages.

The table above includes the registers that were strictly related with transfer issues. There were 184 total registers. The first column indicates the language from which the sentence was proposed and then the target language, which received some transfer issues. This is indicated by a number of inputs that represents the frequency of occurrence of the phenomenon.

B. Interaction among the languages

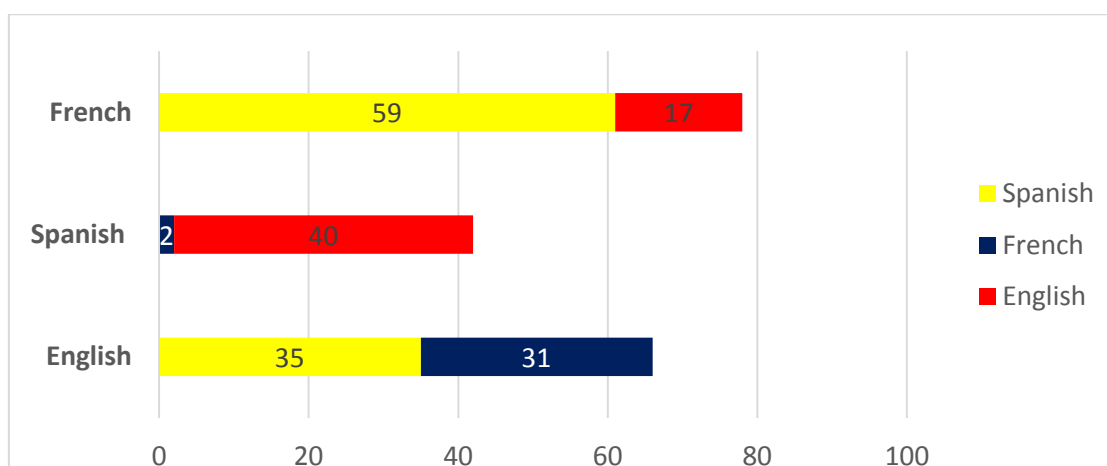
Table 4 Summary of transfer issues among the complete translation section

From	Spanish		English		French	
Target language	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
Registers (186)	59	35	40	17	2	31

Table 3 and 4 summarized the registered in relation with transfer issues among the entire translation exercise. The first table indicates the frequency in which the phenomena issues happened. For example: English translation registered a total 66 transfer issues among the entire exercise. From this results, 35 came from Spanish interference and 31 from French. However, not all the problems described where rigorously connected only with the source language (Spanish and French respectively). Transfer issues come from any previous language knowledge of the students.

Table 4 shows the interaction among the languages. First column includes the language from which students received transfer issues to the target. In this way, English received a total of 66 enters of transfer issues, more of them related with Spanish (35 items) than with French (31 registers).

Figure 4 Interaction of the previous language knowledge related with transfer issues



As it could be noticed in the figure 4, all the previous knowledges interact with the target language. This phenomenon happened even with the mother tongue. Spanish in this case, was impacted by French and English in a total of 42 items.

The previous results show the interaction among the languages. These results were collected just in translations, with open questions. This was made to perceive the interaction among the three languages (Spanish, English and French) and how each language impacts over the other two.

C. Areas of the language influenced by transfer issues

Table 4-Areas of the language influenced by transfer issues in Translation section

Summary: Areas affected by transfer issues per language	Spanish		English		French	
Grammar	55	33	2	11		31
Orthography	5				2	
Vocabulary	1		18	6		
Punctuation		2	20			
	61	35	40	17	2	31
						186

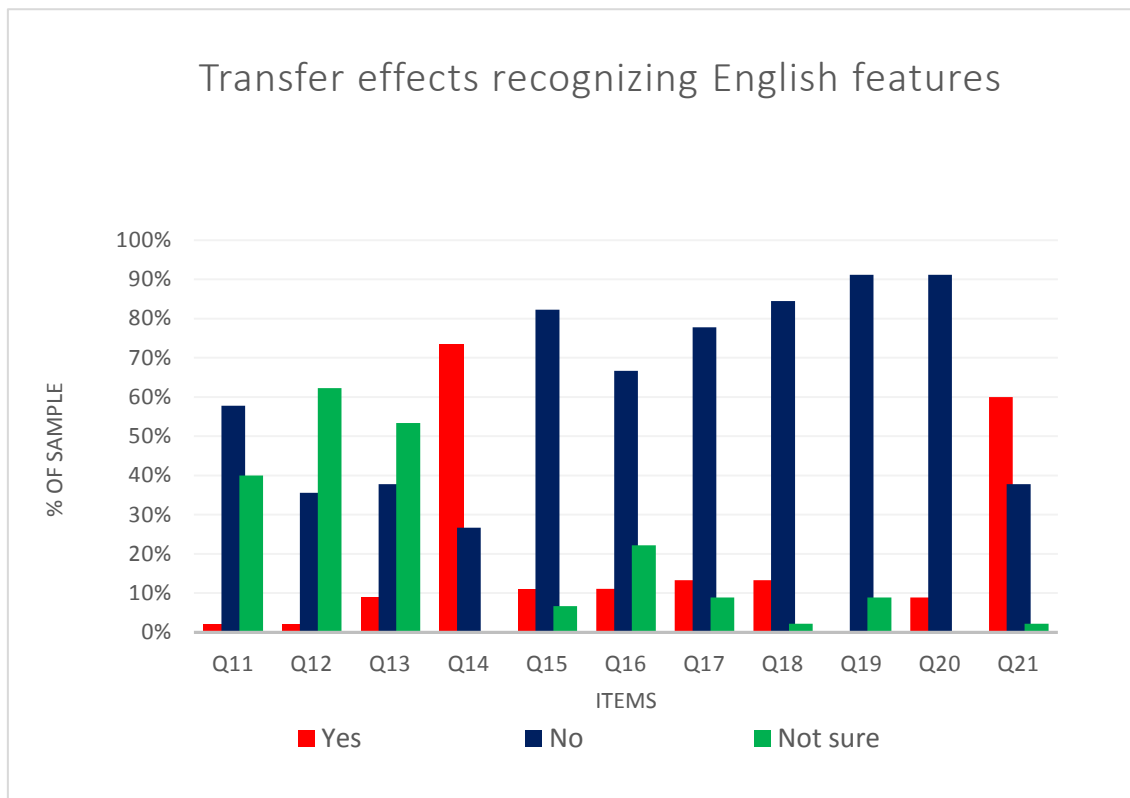
In order to get a deep analysis in what areas where the most impacted, in the learning of English, the instrument contained three more section. This sections were Recognition of English Features, Identification of mistakes, and a Vocabulary list to be check. The results are displayed with a summary for each section.

Did it show transfer recognizing English features?	Yes	No	Not sure
Q11 Preposition at the end	2,22%	57,78%	40,00%
Q12 Auxiliary to make negative	2,22%	35,56%	62,22%
Q13 Verb with reflexive pronouns	8,89%	37,78%	53,33%
Q14 Best verb and best preposition	73,33%	26,67%	0,00%
Q15 Possessive forms	11,11%	82,22%	6,67%
Q16 Extra information, French	11,11%	66,67%	22,22%
Q17 Gerund preference	13,33%	77,78%	8,89%
Q18 Extra information, French	13,33%	84,44%	2,22%
Q19 Verbs at the end	0,00%	91,11%	8,89%
Q20 Use of indefinite article	8,89%	91,11%	0,00%
Q21 Use of definite and indefinite articles	60,00%	37,78%	2,22%
Average	18.59%	62.63%	18.79%

Table 5 – Percentage of transfer occurred during the recognition of English features

The second part included eleven set of sentences, from question number 11 to number 21. Among these set of sentences there were some with different kinds of mistakes: grammar, spelling, the use of capital letter, and others without mistakes but with a very particular way to express an idea. Students had to choose one item from the set. The result of this selection was based on a specific objective, which is listed in the first column. The results in table 3 display the percentage of how successful the exercise was, which turns out to be the equivalent to the grade of transfer in every point.

Figure 5– Transfer effects in the choices made by students, recognizing specific English features



The figure 5 shows the results in every point evaluated. The majority of the students showed a solid knowledge about the English feature asked. However there were some results that indicated stronger knowledges than others, those were more representative in features that are exclusive related with English.

Figure 5A – Percentage of succeed recognizing English Features.

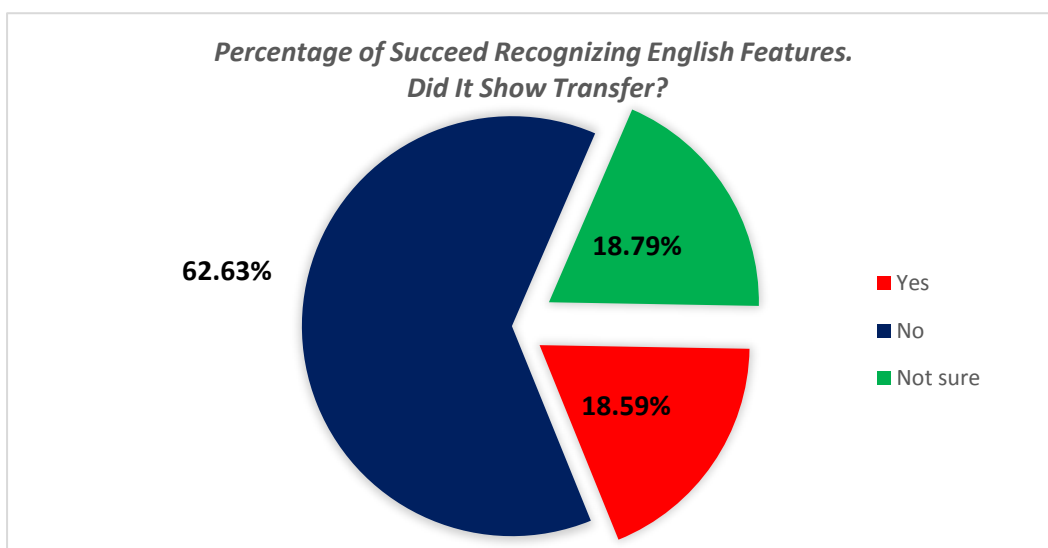
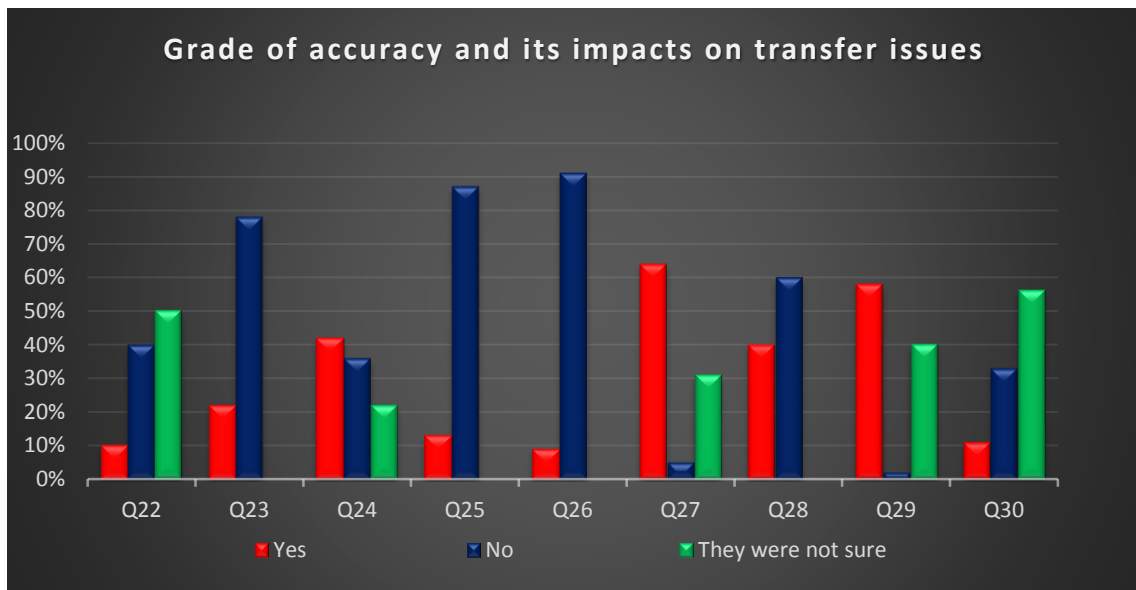


Table 6 – Percentages of transfer occurred finding English mistakes

Percentages of transfer issues occurred finding English mistakes	Did it show transfer?		
	Yes	No	Not sure
Q22 Capital letters	10,00%	40,00%	50,00%
Q23 Place of adverb	22,00%	78,00%	0,00%
Q24 Place of adverb	42,00%	36,00%	22,00%
Q25 Articles	13,00%	87,00%	0,00%
Q26 Gender	9,00%	91,00%	0,00%
Q27 Verb as modals	64,00%	5,00%	31,00%
Q28 Place of adjectives	40,00%	60,00%	0,00%
Q29 Capital letter & prepositions	58,00%	2,00%	40,00%
Q30 Capital letter	11,00%	33,00%	56,00%
Average	29,89%	48,00%	22,11%

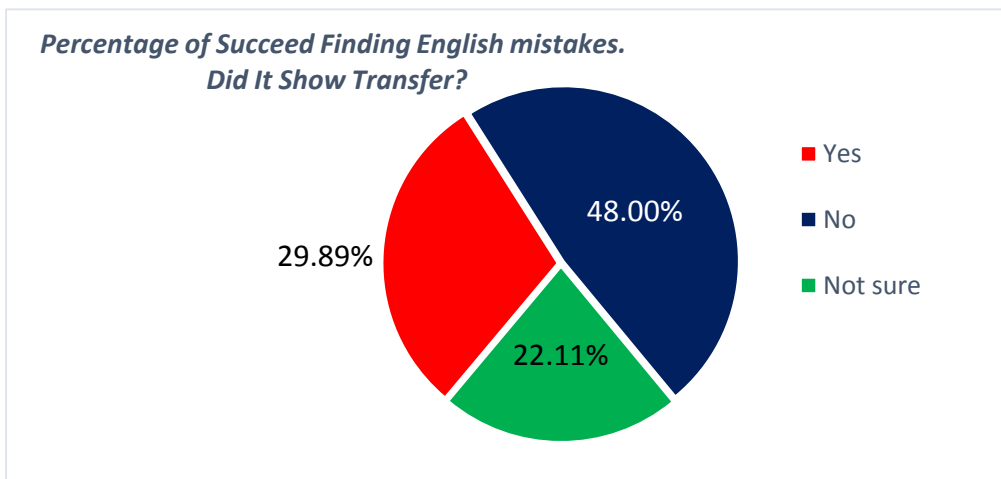
The following section had the purpose to recognize and adjust some mistakes. There were nine sentences to correct (question 22 to question 30), with different kind of mistakes: punctuation, capital letters, and grammar details such as the place of adverbs and adjectives, prepositions, etc. From this section, it can be seen that transfer effects are more remarkable in some aspect than in others. In the table 6, the first column indicates the point to evaluate in the sentence and then shows the results that sign the grade of transfer in each point.

Figure 6 – Percentages of transfer occurred finding English mistakes



The figure 6 shows the performance of students finding English mistakes. As in the previous sections, there were some cases where it looked like an easy task (questions 25 and 26). Nevertheless there were some other cases, for example finding orthography and punctuation mistakes, where students received a complicated challenge.

Figure 6A - Summary of how much transfer students showed finding English mistakes



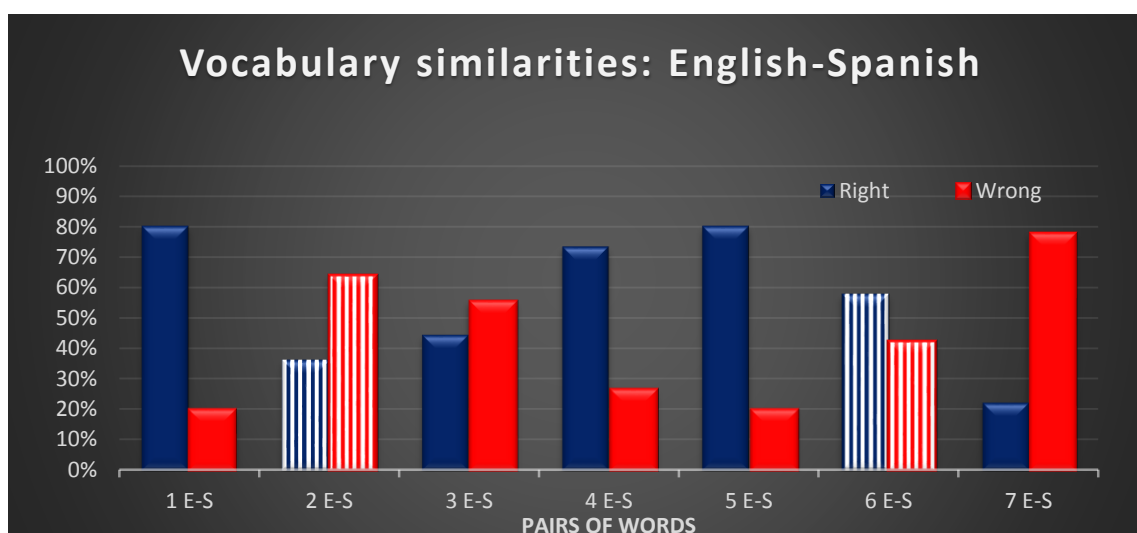
In order to study the vocabulary area, there was a final part in the questionnaire that included fourteen pairs of words with similar writing, in both languages. Spanish –English and French- English. Among those pairs of words, there were some cognates, words with the same meaning in the target language, which was in both cases English.

Table 7 – Vocabulary assessment among the pairs English-Spanish

Pairs of words: English Spanish		Cognate	Yes	No	Right	Wrong
1	Actually - Actualmente	No	9	36	80%	20%
2	Submission - Sumisión	Yes	16	29	36%	64%
3	Deception - Decepción	No	25	20	44%	56%
4	Current - Corriente	No	12	33	73%	27%
5	Advertisement -	No	9	36	80%	20%
6	Desert - Desierto	Yes	26	19	58%	42%
7	Bizarre - Bizarro	No	35	10	22%	78%
	Obtained answers		145	170		
	Expected answers		90	225		

The proposed idea was to recognize if there were transfer issues in vocabulary. Students received seven pair of words with similar writing, and they were asked to check only the pairs that had the same meaning. Among the seven pairs of words, there were only two pair of cognates, the others were just similar words. Table 7 summarizes the results among the pairs Spanish – English.

Figure 7 – Summary of vocabulary assessment among the pairs English-Spanish



The previous graph shows the grade of accuracy recognizing cognates among the pair Spanish – English. Even though more than the half showed a stronger vocabulary knowledge, the percentage was quite similar to those students who didn't succeed these part of the exercise.

Figure 7A Grade of accuracy recognizing cognate between English - Spanish

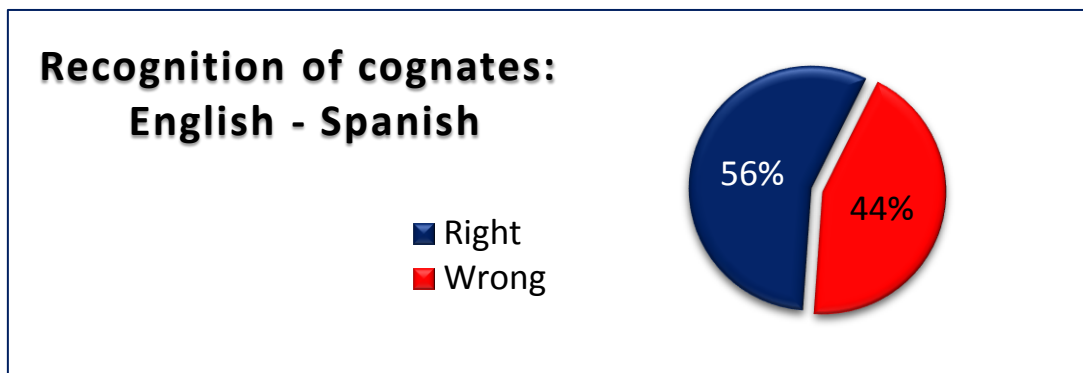


Table 8 - Vocabulary assessment among the pairs English-French

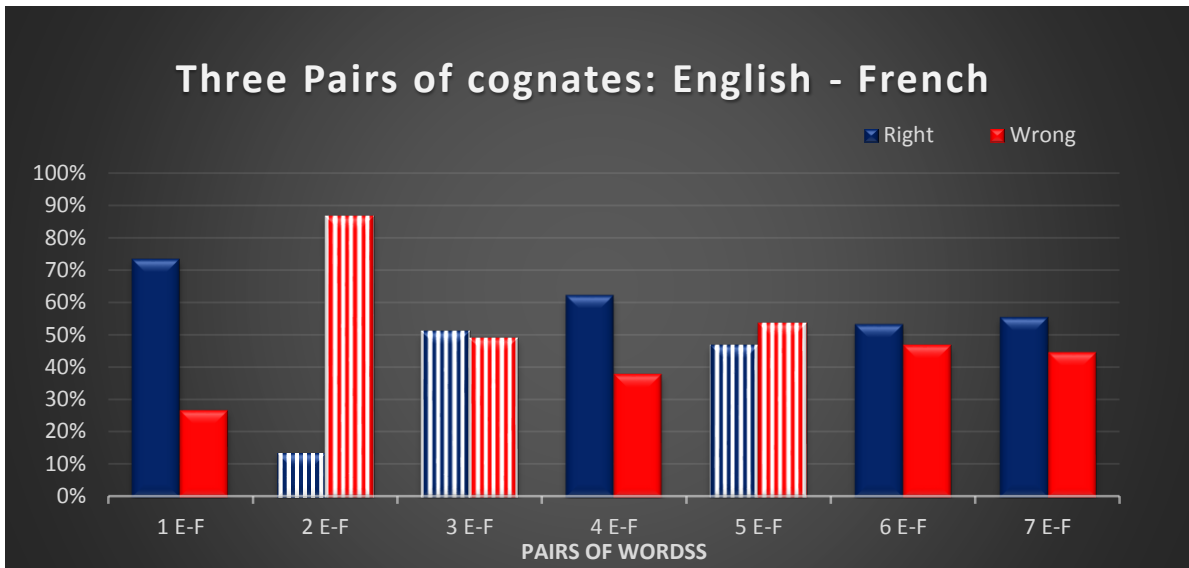
Pairs of words: English - French		Cognate	Yes	No	Right	Wrong
1	Bachelor - Bachelier	No	12	33	73%	27%
2	Cognate - Cognat	Yes	6	39	13%	87%
3	Affair - Affaire	Yes	23	22	51%	49%
4	Attend - Attendre	No	17	28	62%	38%
5	Journée - Journey	Yes	21	24	47%	53%
6	Pretend - Pretendre	No	21	24	53%	47%
7	Achieve - Achever	No	20	25	56%	44%
Obtained answers			120	195		
Expected answers			135	180		

Figure 8A Grade of accuracy recognizing cognate between English



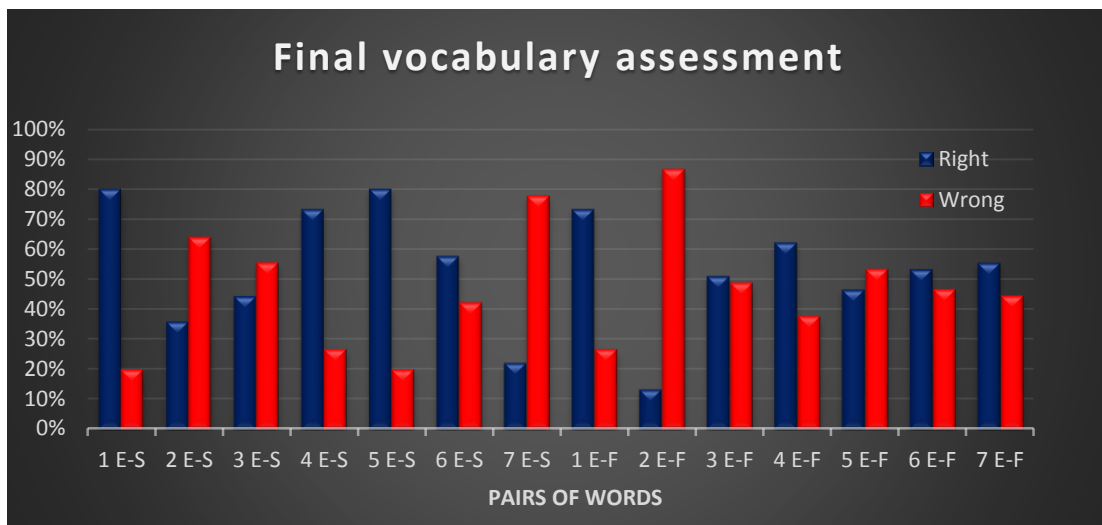
Figure 7A represents the grade of success in pairs of words English-Spanish and figure 8A the pairs English- French. In both cases the grade of accuracy is showed in blue section. Even though the first pairs got a better performance, the variation was just a 5%.

Figure 8 - Summary of vocabulary assessment among the pairs English-French



The results were similar to the previous pairs, however the grade of accuracy change but only in a 2%. This means that students had some transfer issues in vocabulary, when the words had almost the same writing.

Figure 8A Final vocabulary assessment



Concluding this section, the figure 8A shows all the results in vocabulary section. In this graph is possible to appreciate that the best performance was, in general terms, among the pair Spanish- English. The lowest performance in the pairs English-French may be due that in Spanish the vocabulary skills were stronger than in French, since Spanish is the mother tongue of all the participants of the study.

FINDINGS

As part of this study, all data was collected by the instrument: The generalities by a survey. And the language results by a questionnaire. This instrument was addressed to students from Modern Languages, specifically to the students currently studying “Composition I”. The survey was divided in some areas: general information, the perception of the learning from the students, their previous knowledges and their experiences at the Foreign Language Department as well. The other four sections, were strictly related with the use of the written language: translation, selection of the better answer, correction of some mistakes and cognates.

The first area of the survey was related with general information. Population was composed predominantly by females (66%) and the rest (33%) by males. The variable “age” was more constant, because 88% of the students were located in the same age range, from 21 to 25 years. According to the year of entrance, just 62% of the sample were suitably adjusted with the plan of the major, at least in the English area.

About the previous English knowledges, most of the students expressed they have received English just in high school. On the other hand a 24% of the students learned English in another private institution as free courses. The students also were required to answer about their perception of the difficulty of learning English and French at the same time at FLD. The majority encountered, learning both languages at the same time somewhat difficult. The perception of the difficulty of learning two languages simultaneously, was higher in the female students than the male students’ perception.

When it was asked about the performance in the major, even when 36% of the students expressed that learning both languages represented a very difficult challenge, the amount of students who had failed at least one course was higher (47%). In other words, almost the half of students had failed at least one course, the majority related with French courses, specifically with French Grammar. Among those who had failed courses, a 98% was related with at least one French course and just a 2% was related only with English.

The second part of the instrument was segmented in four sections. The general purpose was to evaluate written English production. The first section was a “translation section” in order to explore what elements were exchanged among the three languages. There were three exercises, the first of them to translate from a Spanish to French and English. The main problems were related with grammar area. There were a huge quantity of mistakes

related with grammar structures of tag question and the agreement with subjects and auxiliaries in French and in English as well, this last one presented the more remarkable mistakes.

The first item was proposed as an interrogative sentence in Spanish. It was composed by an affirmative sentence and an “interrogative particle” at the end. To make the translation to French, students applied a Spanish characteristic: the use of an implicit subject, and forgot to include the pronoun “ce” in the French translation. This generated a big amount of errors. Despite the mistakes displayed in the English translation, most of the students translated the sentence containing an implicit subject, considering the English equivalent of the French pronoun “ce” as the impersonal “it”. This created multiple non-suitable answers for the English tag question.

Another borrowed element, in the translation section, was the case of the “double negation”, a particular structure from French. Nevertheless, at the end of this first French answer, it showed better results than the English ones, even though both of them came from the same original sentence in Spanish. The mistakes were mostly related with Grammar, sense, punctuation, capital letter and spelling. The Transfer problems occurred by taking elements from Spanish, such as “the interrogative particle” and the use of “implicit subject”. From French, it took the use of calque translation of the pronoun “ce” for the English pronoun “it”.

The next sentence was given in English to be translated to French and Spanish. This sentence evidenced great exchanges between French spelling and Spanish spelling, due to their similarities, and represent great transfer issues. It was common to read in the Spanish translation “quinze” instead of “quince”, and in the other way around in the French translation. The Spanish inaccuracies were mostly associated with Orthography, in this particular case with written accents. Even though orthography was considered not so important for the students, there was a big difference between “él” and “el” because it was making reference about two different grammatical categories.

The transfer problems were linked with spelling and some issues about vocabulary. In this case of misunderstanding of some no-cognate words and the use of some French words in English statements and vice versa. Additionally, there were issues with the interpretation of verbs, making a reflexing verb with a different meaning; however the most representative problem was the use of a state verb (verb to be) to express the age. This is a significant case of “calque”, since in Spanish and French as well, a non-state verb is needed to express “age”.

The final sentence proposed was in French to be translated to Spanish and English. This sentence had big unsuccessful results. This led to an evident misunderstanding, since students interpreted the sentence with its Spanish equivalents instead of the French one. The statement made referenced to the third person of the singular, according with the French possessive adjective used. However a great quantity of students linked the statement with Spanish possessive adjective, forgetting that in Spanish multiple persons can use the same possessive adjective (see chart below).

Table 9 – Possessive adjectives in French

Possessive adjectives in French			
English	Masculine/Singular	Feminine / Singular	Plural
My	Mon	Ma	Mes
Your	Ton	Ta	Tes
His/her/ its	Son	Sa	Ses
Our	Notre	Notre	Nos
Your	Votre	Votre	Vos
Their	Leur	Leur	Leurs

The original statement was: ““Quel est son but dans la vie?” As it can be checked in the table above the only grammatical person that could fix the translation was the third person.

Table 10 – Possessive adjectives in Spanish.

Possessive adjectives in Spanish				
English	Singular		Plural	
	Feminine	Masculine	Feminine	Masculine
My	Mi		Mis	
Your (informal)	Tu		Tus	
Your		Su	Su	
His/her/ its		Su	Sus	
Our	Nuestra	Notre	Nuestras	Nuestros
Your	Vuestra	Votre	Vuestras	Vuestros
Their	Su		Sus	Sus

According with the results showed, the majority of students got a wrong answer. Fifty three percent (53%) of the students associated the possessive masculine adjective “son” in

French with the singular possessive adjective in Spanish “su” (as the table below remarked). This mistake was translated to the English version, where the quantity increased from 53% to 71%. In addition the inaccuracy in Spanish continued presenting the same errors: punctuation and written accents, however in this case the main problem was about “sense”.

The difficulty, in the English translation, was almost the same as in Spanish. This consisted in problems of sense that the translations entailed. The direct translations of some words, between the languages, also, added more confusion to some sentences. Words such as “which” and “what” translated to the Spanish word “cuál” are a true example of this situation. A case of double punctuation was observed in an English answer, this, is a particular Spanish feature and was transmitted to an English answer.

Table 11 Summary of transfer issues among the complete translation section

	English	French	Spanish	Total (Received)
English		31	35	66
French	17		59	76
Spanish	40	2		42
Total (Impacted)	57	33	96	184

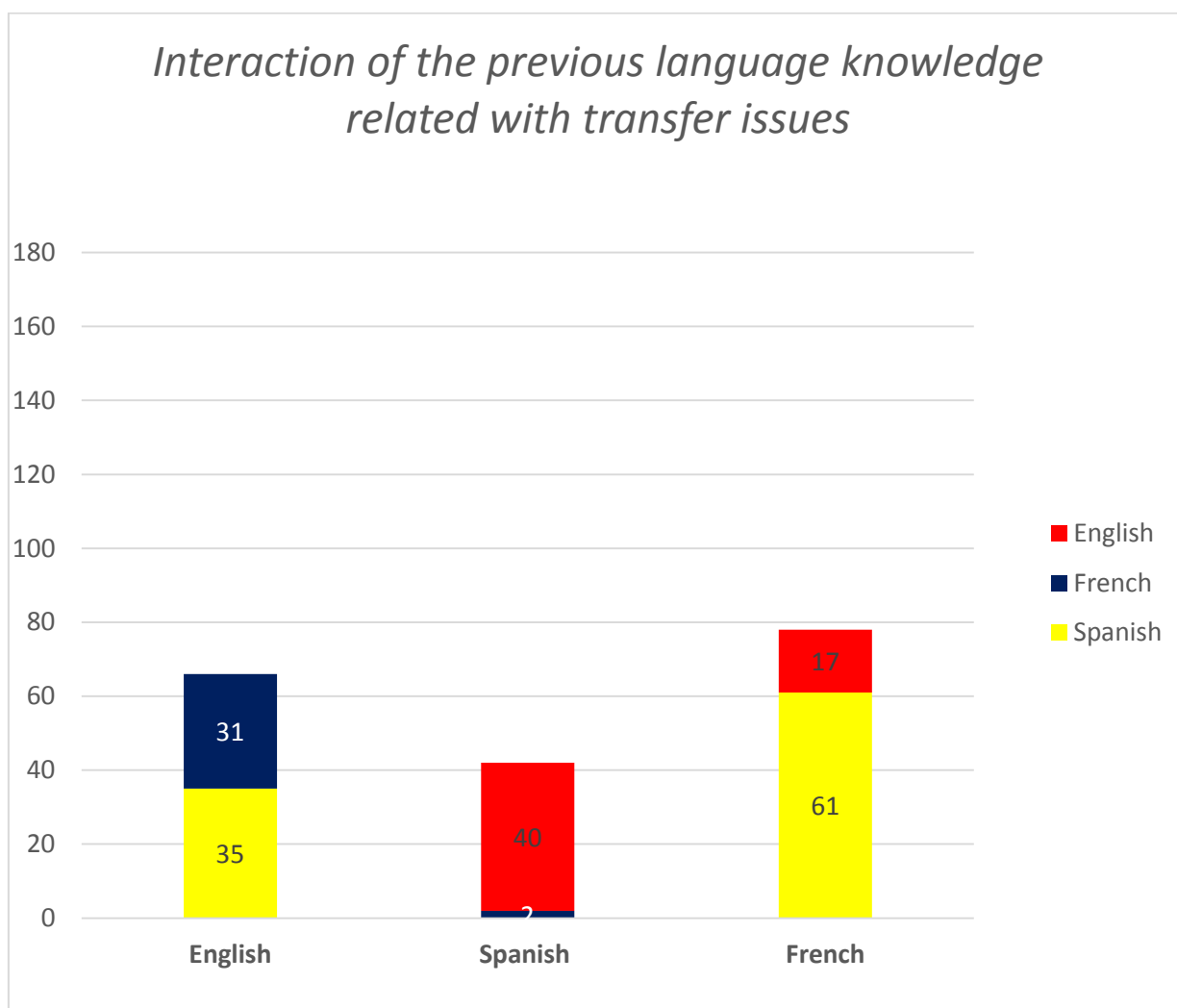
According to this summary, the total in each column indicates the number of registers that a language impacted over the other languages. For example, among the entire exercise: English impacted 57 times, French 33 items, and Spanish influenced over 96 registers. In the other hand, rows represented how many times the language was impacted. For example, English was impacted 66 times by other previous language knowledge; French was impacted 76 times; and Spanish was touched 42 times by some English and French features.

Table 11 Interaction of the previous language knowledge related with transfer issues

Summary: Transfer issues in translation	Spanish		English		French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
Grammar	55	33	2	11		31
Orthography	5				2	
Vocabulary	1		18	6		
Punctuation		2	20			
	61	35	40	17	2	31
						186

This matrix made us realize that transfer is a complex phenomenon, which it does not happen in only one direction. This is a clear example how the Spanish, even being the mother tongue, could be touched by the knowledges of one, or more languages, depending the number of languages that the student already knows. Nevertheless, at the end, it was clearly evidenced that it is the mother tongue the one that has more influence over the other language.

Figure 11 Interaction of the previous language knowledge related with transfer issues



This graph shows how much each language, (French, Spanish and English) received transfer issues from the other two languages. It is represented as the weight of a column. In this perspective, a language supports the weight from the other two previous languages' knowledge. As an example, English received a total of 66 enters related with transfer issues, 35 times linked with Spanish and 31 items associated with French. This made a whole total of 184 registers connected with transfer.

The question number eleven was proposed to know the performance of the students with a specific English feature. This case was made to see how much familiarized were the students with ending phrases in a preposition. A fifty eight percent of the sample chose the right answer. It has to be remarked that English is the only language that allows this characteristic. French and Spanish don't allowed to finish a sentence with a preposition.

Question number twelve included the used of an auxiliary to make a negation. Furthermore, it included the identifying of the unnecessary use of the relative pronoun "that" which accompanied the verb "want". For those who decided to keep the pronoun "that", this could lead to deduce that they made a direct translation from Spanish, a calque from: "no quiero que ...". Nevertheless just a small portion of the students chose the wrong answer.

Question number thirteen was about the verb "cut". The verb cut present differences from Spanish, French and English. In English, it needs a reflexive pronoun, because of the nature of the verb, in French and in Spanish this verb does not need that feature. Four answers were displayed and just 38% realized about this detail. The great majority left this question choosing the answer "none of the above".

Question number fourteen involved the expression "make a decision". This expression could be interpreted as "take a decision" from the Spanish calque "tomar una decisión". In Spanish and in French it is used the same verb: "tomar" and "prendre" respectively. Moreover, there was another detail to consider: the precise preposition to introduce the noun "vacation". At the end a 27% of the students had the correct answer.

Question fifteen was one where the students presented a high percentage of accuracy. The question was proposed to see the use of the possessive form in English. The results showed that most of the students were extremely familiar with these feature in English. The results show that an 82% of the students choose the option that contained the possessive form. This indicate a low amount of possible transfer issues in the use of the possessive form.

The question sixteen included a question and two possible answers: Didn't you go to the grocer's? No, I went to the baker's / No, it's to the baker's that I went. Even though both answers have almost the same meaning, the last one it was not the natural way for an English speakers. It had a resemblance with the direct translation from the French "C'est la boulangerie où je viens". This answer was chosen just for a minority of the students, 11%. The rest was extremely comforted with the English way of answering.

Question seventeen was related with the use of gerund. Two sentences were proposed with similar meanings. The idea was to choose the one that students considered the most appropriate. In this case a great quantity of students, seventy eight percent (78%), realized the presence of the gerund and circled this option. Gerunds are part of Spanish's French's structures as well. However, English is the language that uses the most and it is a very particular choice for native speakers.

Question eighteen was related with French features. French speakers love to include more details in a sentence. The first sentence indicated the way as the subject of the sentence performed the action. The second one, it was so simple and practical, just describing the action, as native English speakers should have done it. The majority of the students identified as the better option the one that described English characteristics.

Question nineteen was also linked with another romantic language features. Spanish and French don't have the characteristic to end a sentence with a verb or a preposition, English does. The first sentence included a noun at the end, and the other ended in a verb. Since the sentences were presented in English, English features was to be preferred. Most the students were in agreement showing, how much this kind of English features have been acquired by them.

Question twenty included the use of the indefinite article "a" preceding a countable noun. This feature is for English and French but not necessary for Spanish grammar, where is possible to omit the article. In the sentence "she is a teacher", Spanish translations could have two right possibilities "Ella es una profesora" or "Ella es profesora". However in English the article is required but not as much as in French, where its use is imperative. At the end results showed that the use of the article in English was a considerable acquired element among of the students.

Question twenty one was also proposed to explore the use of articles. Both kinds of articles were proposed in the same sentence. Students' results showed how they just focused on the indefinite article and kept the unnecessary definite article "the". Including the definite article could show a remarkable French characteristic, ever since Spanish could omit it without any problem. The majority, almost sixty percent (60%), forgot this aspect getting wrong answers.

Figure 12 – Summary of students’ preference recognizing English features.

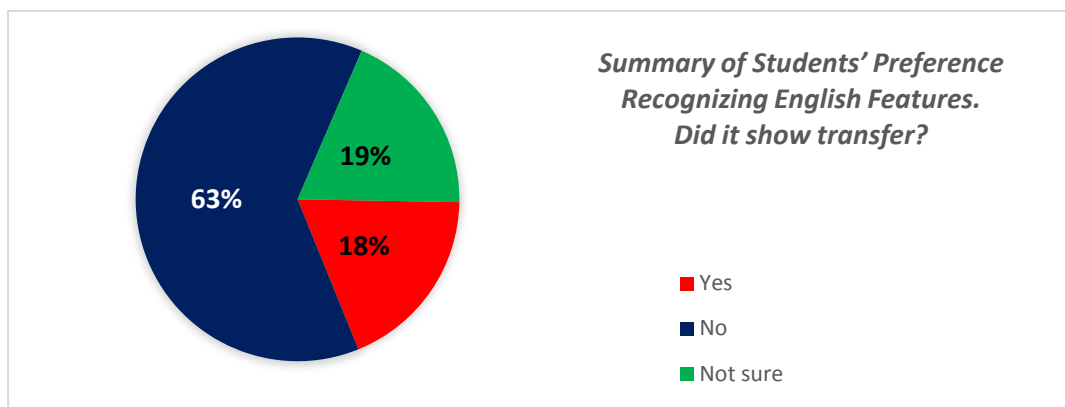


Table 12 – Summary of students’ preference recognizing English features

	Yes	No	Not sure
Did students show transfer issues? Recognizing English features	18.59%	62.63%	18.79%

To conclude this section, the previous figure summarized the result of all the questions asked. Showing wrong answers as possible transfer issues. In general terms, there was a total of 495 enters to this section, from this amount just 92 registers represented some transfer issues an equivalent of 18.59% , a quantity very similar from those students who did not give any answers (18.79%) the rest 62.63% showed stronger skills to recognize English features.

The third part of the questionnaire had for objective, to focus on the mistakes. Students received nine sentences, all of them contained at least one mistake. In some cases errors were more evident than in others due the nature of the mistakes. They were grouped as missing capital letters, wrong spelling, grammar mistakes, etc. For this reason students were less successful in some answers. In general terms, the results shows that students did not have conscious about the importance of orthography and punctuation.

Question 22, the first sentence in this section needed just a capital letter correction at the beginning. The three languages in study required this at the beginning of a sentence. The majority of the students, (53%) fifty three percent, did not realize this mistake. Others, in order to correct the sentence, included extra elements and wrote again the sentences without realizing the capital letter mistake.

The question 23 was linked with grammar and the place of an adverb. It got a great accuracy with the answers. With the result could be inferred, that students had more facility to identify a grammar mistake over a mistake of Capitalization. Seventy eight (78%) percent of the students were successful in this sentences. The remaining seven percent (7%), who corrected wrongly, included issues always related with grammar.

The question 24 was also related with the grammar area and the place of an adverb. Unlike of the previous one, the grade of accuracy decreased at 38%. The reason could be linked with the fact that it was an exclamatory sentence and the stronger influence by similar structures of Spanish and French as well. Another details was the fact that despite the students performed, an excellent correction, most of them forgot to include the punctuation marks, reducing the exclamatory sentence just to an affirmative one.

The question 25 included an unnecessary extra element, a definitive article. In English that article have to be omitted. The sentence proposed was: "This is the mine and that is the hers." In English possessive adjectives do not need an introductive article, as in Spanish and French where the definite article is required. Even though most of the students (89%) realized of this mistake, there were a fewer percentage who did not change anything.

The question 26 involved a grammar mistake: gender a category of a noun. It was presented a common noun than later was substituted by a pronoun. In the case of English, a common noun should be replaced for an impersonal pronoun. In Spanish, as well as in French, the pronoun has to be in accord with the gender of the noun. This feature was very recognized for the students who performed a great outcome, 89% of accuracy.

In question 27 it was included the particularity of the verb "let". Here, a sentence that could be reduced with the same meaning. However most of the students made a change without keeping the sense of the sentence. This case illustrated the simplicity of English over French and Spanish. The great majority of the students focused on adding an extra element instead of taking an easier way and focusing on the particularity of the verb "let".

Question 28, was related with the place of an adverb and the mistake in the spelling of a very common word "coffee". Even though the previous results about the place of an adverb and adjective were successful, in this case the accuracy were just sixty percent (60%). The sentence was presented as an interrogative sentence, and as an exclamatory sentence as well. Students got confused in relation with a normal affirmative sentence and the place of the grammar elements.

The question 29 involved many mistakes: omitted capital letters, mismatch of preposition and articles and the wrong spelling. This sentence was extremely unsuccessful and corrected just in a partial way. The most effective correction was spelling, reaching a 22%. Despite the low result, the spelling turned out to have the best performance. This was because Spanish was the only language among of the three in study where double “s” do not exist, which was a feature easily identified by the students.

Table 13 – Percentages of transfer occurred finding English mistakes

Percentage of transfer occurred finding English mistakes.			
English mistakes.	Did it show transfer?		
	Yes	No	Not sure
Average	29,89%	48,00%	22,11%

Figure 13 – Percentages of transfer occurred finding English mistakes

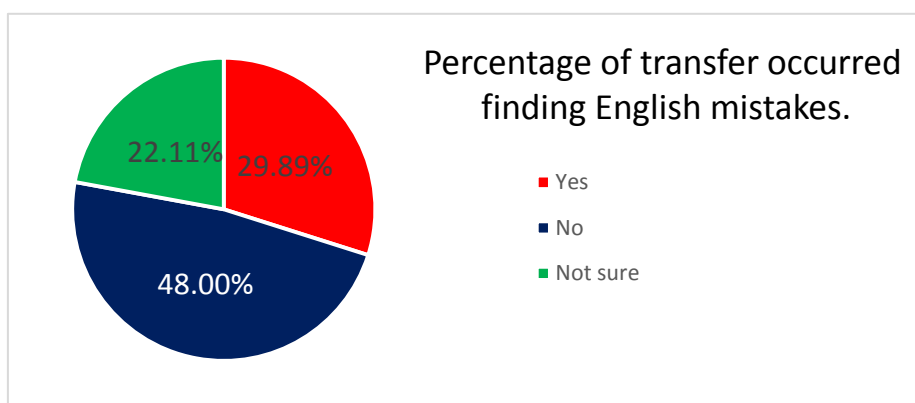


Table 13 shows how successful students were finding mistakes. There were 405 registers in total, from those 48% got precision in their answers and just 29.89% showed some possible transfer issues 121 items. This section had a less accuracy than the previous one, which just only contemplated the identification of English Features, in this case considering the a better emphasis finding mistakes, it could look than students were more aware finding mistakes than Punctuation and Orthographies mistakes and for that reason the reduction in the grade of accuracy.

To summarize this section, it could say that transfer effects were more remarkable in some aspects than in others. It looked like grammar aspect were the most important for the students, but capital letter or punctuation were details not considered, by the students, for corrections.

The last part of the questionnaire, the fourth section, involved vocabulary. The exercise was related with pair of words with almost the same writing however with equal or different meaning. There were fourteen pairs of words, divided in two groups: English-Spanish and English-French. For the first group, English–Spanish just two of seven were cognates and in the other group three of them were cognates. The results showed a better grade of success in the Spanish cognate pairs. However the accuracy it was in general term, it was not as expected considering that Spanish as mother tongue had stronger vocabulary skills than French words.

Table 14A Summary “Vocabulary assessment” Paris of words: English - Spanish.

Pairs of words with same meaning:	Correct	Wrong	% correct	% Wrong
English -Spanish				
Obtained answers	132	183	56%	44%

From a total of 315 possible right answers, in Spanish just 132 got right responses and the rest 183 items got wrong selections. A percentage greater than the half (58%) showed some transfer issues with the vocabulary pairs in the binomial Spanish – English.

Table 14B Summary “Vocabulary assessment” Paris of words: English -French

Pairs of words with same meaning:	Correct	Wrong	% correct	% Wrong
English -French				
Obtained answers	120	195	51%	49%

In the case of French the situation was similar 195/315 were failed and the percentage related with transfer issues increased to 62% just 3% more than in Spanish. An example was the case of the word “Bizarre” which has the same meaning in English and French, but a different one in Spanish, where it means “gallant”. This generated a little complication in the vocabulary skills among the students. The percentage of success in this section made us realize how important it is to improve the vocabulary skills and how the identification of real cognates could become a great tool for learning any language.

Figure 14A – Grade of accuracy recognizing cognates among the pairs English - Spanish

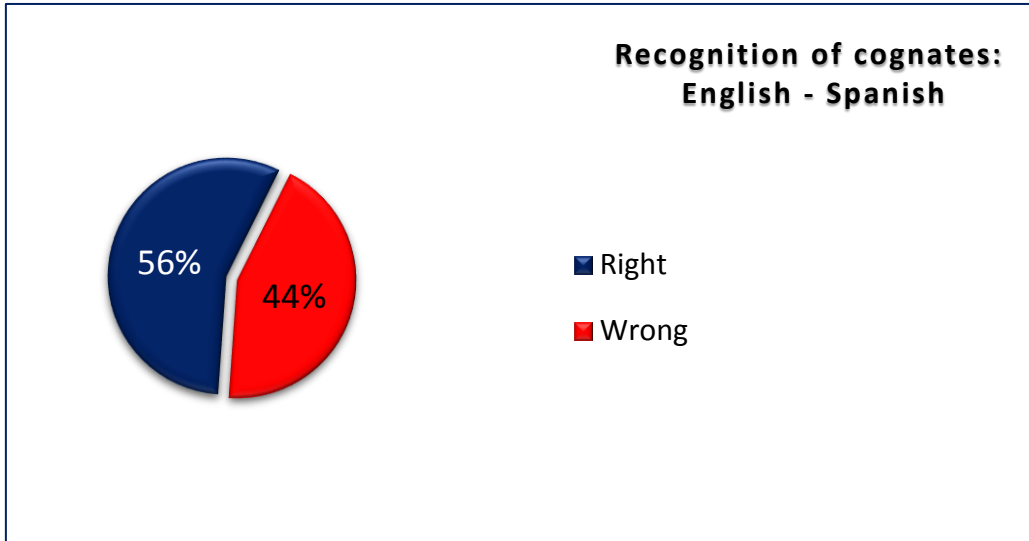
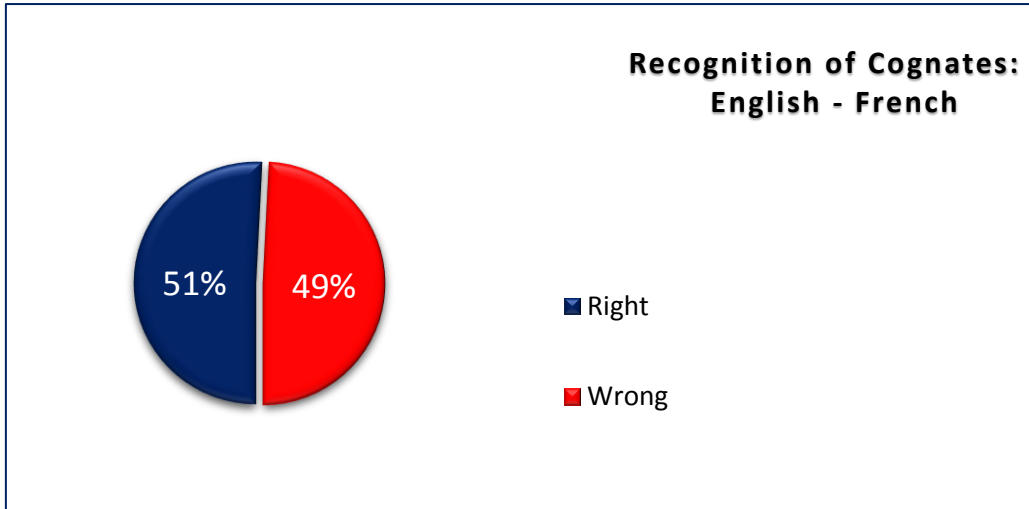


Figure 14B Grade of accuracy recognizing cognates among the pairs English-French



This graph showed the results in vocabulary, from the complete pairs of words: English– Spanish, and English – French. It can be noticed a lightly better performance in the first seven pairs as a result of Spanish being the mother tongue.

CONCLUSIONS

It was evident that the previous knowledge of any language have a role in the learning of a new language. And as it had been evident that the number of previous languages would influence this learning. According with the results previously presented, the transfer phenomenon was experienced by the students, during their learning process. This phenomenon was related not only with the carriage of some feature from the mother tongue, it also included other elements linked with the additional knowledge of elements from other language.

Based on the collected data by the instrument, which was limited to the written way, English received a great influence from Spanish and French features. The first section of the questionnaire included some open questions related with translation. This section showed how strong the role of the mother tongue was. It evidenced the interaction with the other language knowledges and also the direction to which the transfer phenomena occurs. It was also clear that Spanish was also touched by some features from English and French.

Table 11 Interaction of the previous language knowledge related with transfer issues

Summary: Transfer issues in translation	Spanish		English		French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
Grammar	55	33	2	11		31
Orthography	5				2	
Vocabulary	1		18	6		
Punctuation		2	20			
	61	35	40	17	2	31
						186

The table 11 shows the interaction among the languages involved: French, English and Spanish. Since this study focusses on the learning of English, that column was highlighted to count how many times a transfer issue was displayed during the development of the translation exercises.

In agreement with these results, it can be concluded that the transfer phenomenon was not exclusive from only one language. The results show how Spanish and French, as previous language of the students, influenced the English performance. The outcomes were extremely balanced, Spanish predisposed over 35 English answers, meanwhile French influenced over 31 English answers.

The transfer phenomenon did not happen only to the target language, English. French and Spanish also received some features from English, even though in less quantity of items. The phenomenon occurred for all the languages involved. In other words, the transfer phenomenon took place “from” all of the previous language of the students and “towards to” the number of languages that the students already know, including the mother tongue.

Table 15 –Summary all transfer issues founded by work section

Areas by sections	Grammar	Orthography	Vocabulary	Punctuation	Total
Translation	64/186	0	0	2/186	66/186
Recognition of English Features	81/402		0	0	81/402
Identification of English Mistakes	85/315	36/315			85/315
Vocabulary			378/630		378/630

Table 15A –Summary all transfer issues founded by work section

Areas by sections	Grammar	Orthography	Vocabulary	Punctuation	Total
Translation	22%			1%	23%
Recognition of English Features	13%			0%	13%
Identification of English Mistakes	18%	7%		0%	25%
Vocabulary			39%	0%	39%
	53%	7%	39%	1%	100%

Table 15 presents a summary with all the mistakes that were related with transfer issues in the four section of the instrument. These inaccuracies were classified according to the impacted language area: Grammar, Orthography, Vocabulary and Punctuation. Table 15-A displays all the information, in percentages in order to make an easier comparison among those values.

Grammar, Punctuation, Orthography and Vocabulary were the four language areas evaluated among the study. The results evidenced that Grammar was the main area affected by transfer issues and how much was affected. More than the half of transfer issues were related with Grammar. English Grammar received a great quantity of Spanish structures as well as French grammar structures.

The translation section evinced the real accuracy in English Grammar. As an example: a “tag question” exercise contained a great quantity of Spanish features, however the features from French were extremely remarked. Students had to handle both interferences in order to get an answer, however those answers were the least successful. An explanation could be that Spanish, French as well as English allow the use of a kind of tag questions, however each language has a very particular way to build the structures.

In contrast, the greatest accuracy in English Grammar was showed among the features that are exclusive for English. Those structures were successfully acquired by the students. For example, the preference in the use of gerunds, the use of preposition at the end of a phrase and the particular way to make a possessive structure. These were the strongest aspects related with Grammar as well as the use and position of the adverbs and adjectives, some articles and preposition.

The following impacted area by transfer was Vocabulary. Students got confused with the meaning of some words, especially for those that exist in the three languages but with different meaning. An example of the case is the word *bizarre*. It has the same meaning in English and French but not in Spanish. Strong vocabulary skills were not showed in the mother tongue, Spanish. Even though the binomial pairs English- Spanish got the best accuracy in relation with English–French. The differential was not particularly noticed.

The next area was Orthography and Punctuation. Students did not have a real awareness about the importance of the use of capital letter in English. This phenomenon was common in the entire study with the other languages. The punctuation area was the least impacted since English does not require the punctuation mark at the beginning (exclamatory

and question). English and French share some features in the Punctuation area, however this features are not part of the Spanish rules, reason why there were excessive failures in the Spanish performance, related with Punctuation area.

Unfortunately, it looked like, despite the fact that students belong to the languages major, they had forgotten their mother language Features. There are some particularities in each language, that has to be respected, and Spanish is not the exception. Even though, a sentence could not change the meaning without a punctuation mark, it is not the same to express an idea in affirmative way or in exclamatory one. And even if the lack of one punctuation mark will not modify the message, language students should follow the features of their mother tongue and show a better performance, since they are language students.

At the end, the phenomena of transfer, at the Foreign Language Department, was exceptionally evidenced. It was more explored among the outcome of the students with the proposed exercises. Students presented a great capacity to identify mistakes, to correct them (in a partial way), to think about of some vocabulary and paired with cognates. Nevertheless when they were required to translate sentences, the list of mistakes increased considerably.

The real written production showed a mixture of other aspects, proper of the rest of the languages in the study. Grammar arose as the most impacted area. In order to complete exercises students used all the tools that they knew, adding some particularities from the previous knowledges they had. In this particular case knowledges from French and their mother tongue, Spanish. At the end, it was French the language from what they took the most.

This study concluded with the real role of transfer effects at the moment of learning English knowing Spanish and French as a previous knowledge. The study was limited just to a written way, and just with a very few population with a specific level. It could be greatly satisfactory to expand the work to the oral production and study phonological areas. This could take different stages of the phenomena at the beginning of the learning, at the middle and at the end. The transfer phenomena is a dynamic process such as the learning process itself. And there could explore some specific points to evaluate in order to have a better background of the phenomena.

Recommendations

A. To the Foreign Language Department

To promote the correct writing of Spanish through free courses or Spanish contents in order to encourage the importance of writing.

B. To the English Teacher

It is a fact that transfer issues exist in the classrooms. It has been evidence that the transfer impact mostly in the grammar areas. Teachers should help students to identify what are the details to which students have to focus in their learning. Teachers, as guides in the learning process, should have a very active role in the use some strategies to allow students realize the English structures or features that are completely different in both languages. This is necessary in order to avoid “errors”, but also to remark these differences as an easier way to reinforce knowledges. The encouragement of reading is a great way to improve vocabulary, in English as well as in French and Spanish.

C. To the students at the Foreign Language Department

Students must be aware that every language has a very particular system, even though there could be similarities among the mother tongue and other language. The recognition of the differences and similarities between languages could lead to a facilitation for the English learning. Every student is responsible of their own learning therefore the identification and implementation of strategies that could led them to improve their learning and the successful management of previous knowledge must be an essential part in the major. To identify efficient ways to learn vocabulary, especially those words that could cause misunderstandings.

D. To future research students

The transfer phenomenon is a dynamic situation and it is related with the English level of the students. Consequently there is a vast territory to explore and study the phenomenon at different levels: Basic, Intermediate and Advance. The future researches can be focused to consider the entire phenomenon with different researchers working groups from the very early stages of learning of the language, up to the end of the major. This will provide a precise scenario to delineate when the transfer appears and how it develops along the entire process of learning a language.

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ANNEXES



University of El Salvador
School of Arts and Sciences
Foreign Languages Department

Grade Process
Semester I/2016

Objective:

To know the role of language transfer in the learning of English

Instructions:

Check the option with you identify the most!

1 Are you ?

Male Female

2 How old are you ?

17 - 20 21-25 26-30 more than 30

3 In what year did you star your major at the Foreign Languaga Department?

4 How long had you studied English before registering in your current major?

- Just in the high school
- I studied in a bilingual school
- I haven't studied English before
- I have taken some free curses

Where _____

How many hours have you studied ?

- From 50 - 200 hours (Basic level)
- From 201 - 400 hours (Intermediate)
- More than 400 hours

5 How difficult has been for you to learn English and French at the same time?

- Extremealy difficult Somewhat difficult
- Very difficult No difficult at all

6 Have you ever failed an English Subject ?

Yes No

Which one _____

7 Have you ever failed a French Subject ?

Yes No

Which one _____

Translate the following statement in English and French

8 "¿A Pedro le parece que María es bella, no? "

French: _____

English: _____

9 "He looks older, but actually, he is fifteen years old"

Spanish: _____

French: _____

10 Quel est son but dans la vie ?

Spanish: _____

English: _____

Circle the option that you identify most

11 Did you like the woman we spoke to ?

Did you like the woman which you spoke?

None of above

12 I want that you don't go / I want that you not go / None

13 She cut herself the finger / she cut her / she cut it / None

14 I made a decision where to go in vacation

I took a decision where to go on vacation / None

15 The door of the garage / the garage's door / None

16 Didn't you go to the grocer's ?

No, I went to the baker's / No, it's to the baker's that I went / None

17 I love the feel of soft warm rain that falls on my face

I love the feel of soft warm rain falling on my face

None of above

- 18 She left the room running / She ran out of the room / None
- 19 I told her what wanted the directors / I told her what the directors wanted
None of above
- 20 She is a teacher / She is teacher / None
- 21 The English is a difficult language / The English is difficult language / None

Identify the sentences with mistakes and correct them

- 22 that's the man my sister interviewed.
- 23 I have too much eaten.
- 24 How he runs fast!
- 25 This is the mine and that is the hers.
- 26 I can't find my book - he was on the table a minute ago.
- 27 Let's take a drink.
- 28 Is your coffe enough sweet?
- 29 I will begin german clases on the first tuesday of january.
- 30 who does fred sit next to ?

31 **Check the pairs that have the same meaning**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Actually - Actualmente | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor - Bachelier |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Submission - Sumisión | <input type="checkbox"/> Cognate - Cognat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deception - Decepción | <input type="checkbox"/> Affair - Affaire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current - Corriente | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend - Attendre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement - Advertencia | <input type="checkbox"/> Journée - Journey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desert - Desierto | <input type="checkbox"/> Pretend - Pretendre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bizarre - Bizarro | <input type="checkbox"/> Achieve - Achever |

Thank you for your cooperation!

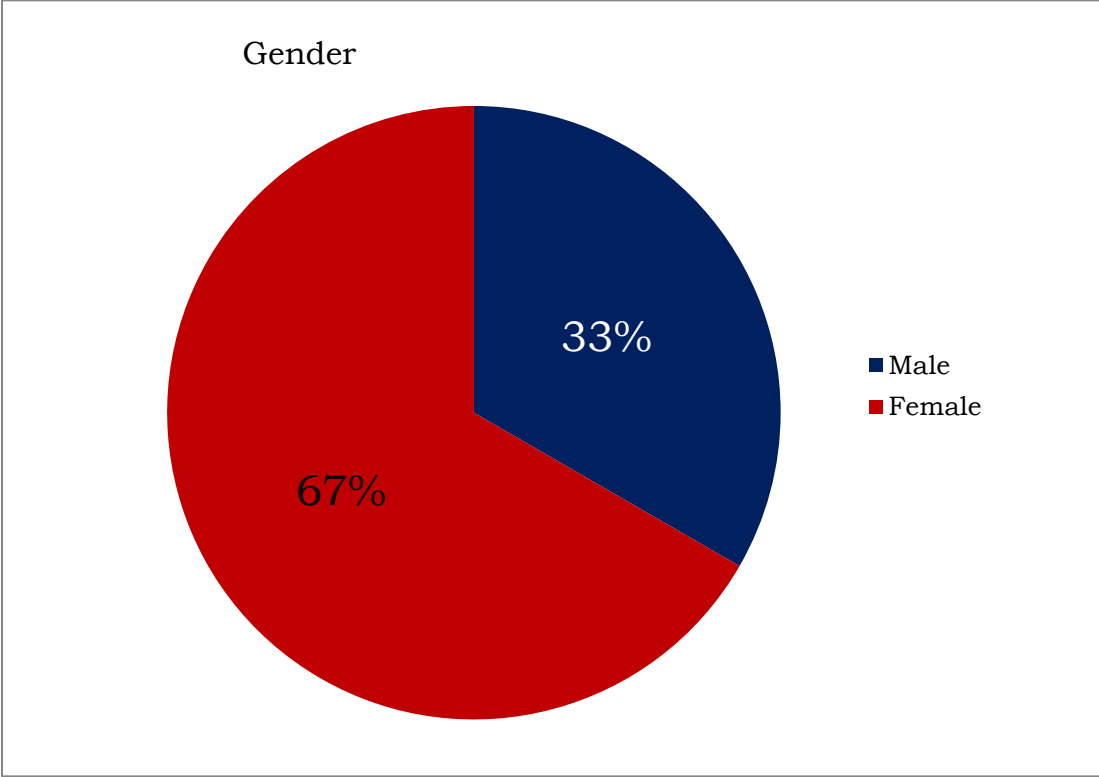
The first question of the survey was about the gender of the participants, students from the major of the Modern Language current taking the subject: "Composition I" belonging to the First semester of Two Thousand Sixteen, in total of forty five students the sample was composed as the following chart:

Table 1 Distribution of the group by gender

Gender	
Male	15
Female	30
Total	45

The majority of the sample was formed by females who represented sixty seven percent of the total of the group.

Figure 2 Distribution of the group by gender



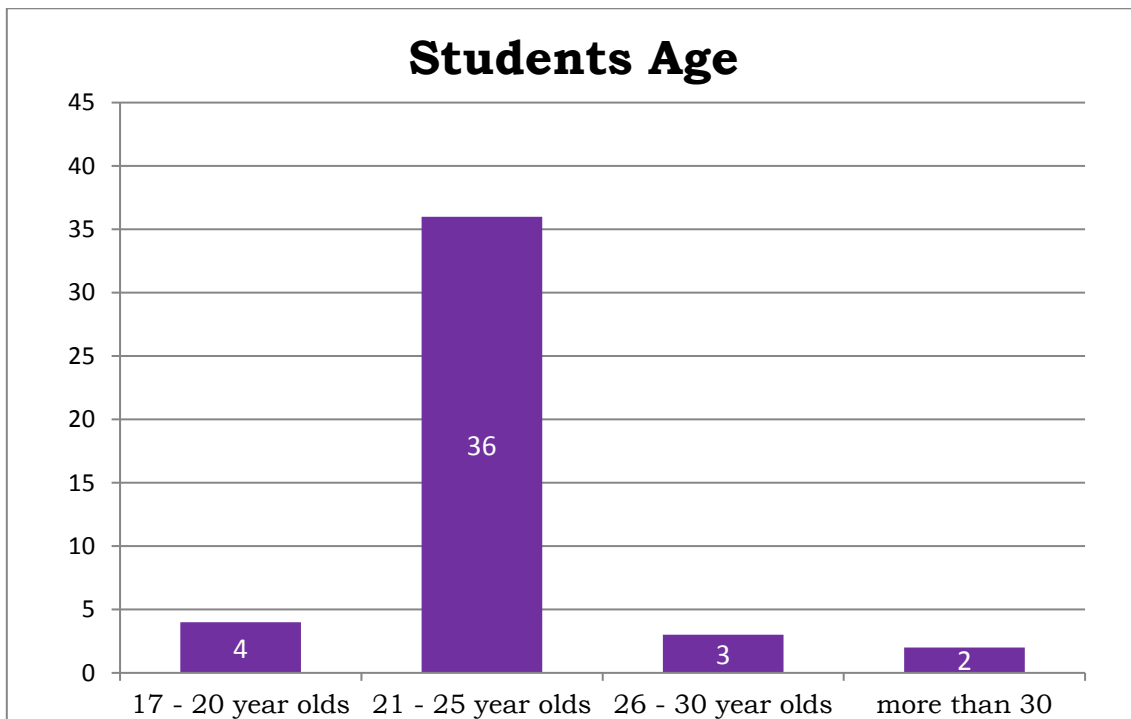
The second question was related with the age, there were four general groups that contained the ages of the participants obtaining this following results

Table 1 Distribution of the group by age

Age		
17 - 20 year olds	4	9%
21 - 25 year olds	36	80%
26 - 30 year olds	3	7%
more than 30	2	4%
Total	45	100%

The majority of students were in the second interval from twenty one to twenty five years olds and represent the eighty percent of the sample.

Figure 3 Distribution of the group by age

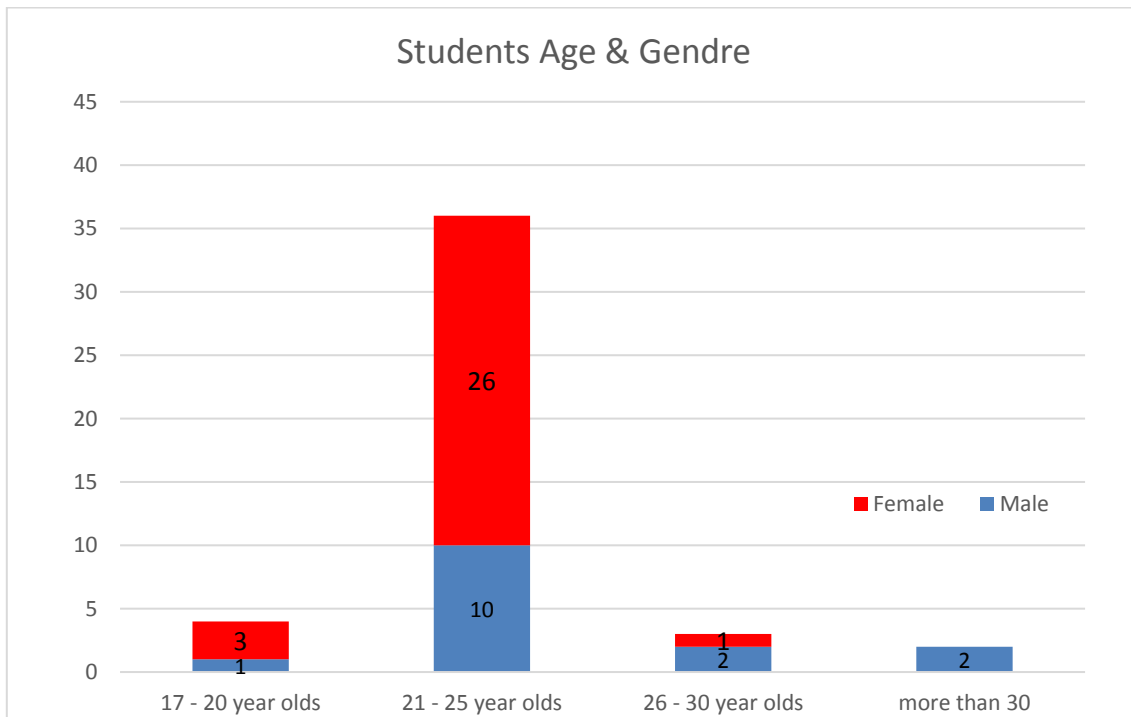


The following charts shows the distribution of the gender as well as the age the students who participated in the study.

Table 2.1 Age by gender

Age	Male	Female
17 - 20 year olds	1	3
21 - 25 year olds	10	26
26 - 30 year olds	2	1
more than 30	2	0
Total	15	30

Figure 2.1 Age by gender



In the question No.3 Students were asked about the year of entrance at the Foreign Language Department (FLD) in order to realize during how much time they have been exposed to the language. The results showed that sixty two (62%) percent of the sample were studying according with the major curricula.

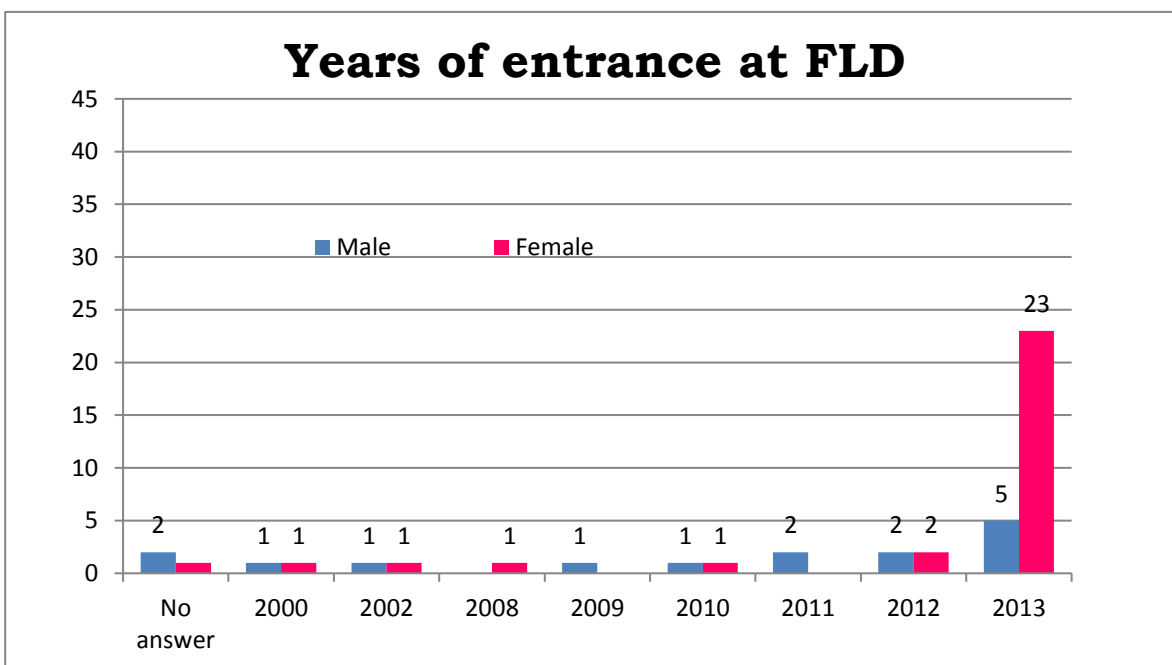
Question No. 3

In what year did you star your major at the Foreign Language Department?

Table 3 Distribution of academic year of entrance

Academic year	Male	Female	Total
No answer	2	1	3
2000	1	1	2
2002	1	1	2
2008		1	1
2009	1		1
2010	1	1	2
2011	2		2
2012	2	2	4
2013	5	23	28
Total	15	30	45

Figure 3 Distribution of academic year of entrance



In question No. 4 the students were required to answer how much knowledge of English they had before entering to the UES. The majority of the students answered that they knew about English only from the High School English Subjects, and a twenty five percent of the student continuing their English in free courses. Here the distribution of the answers.

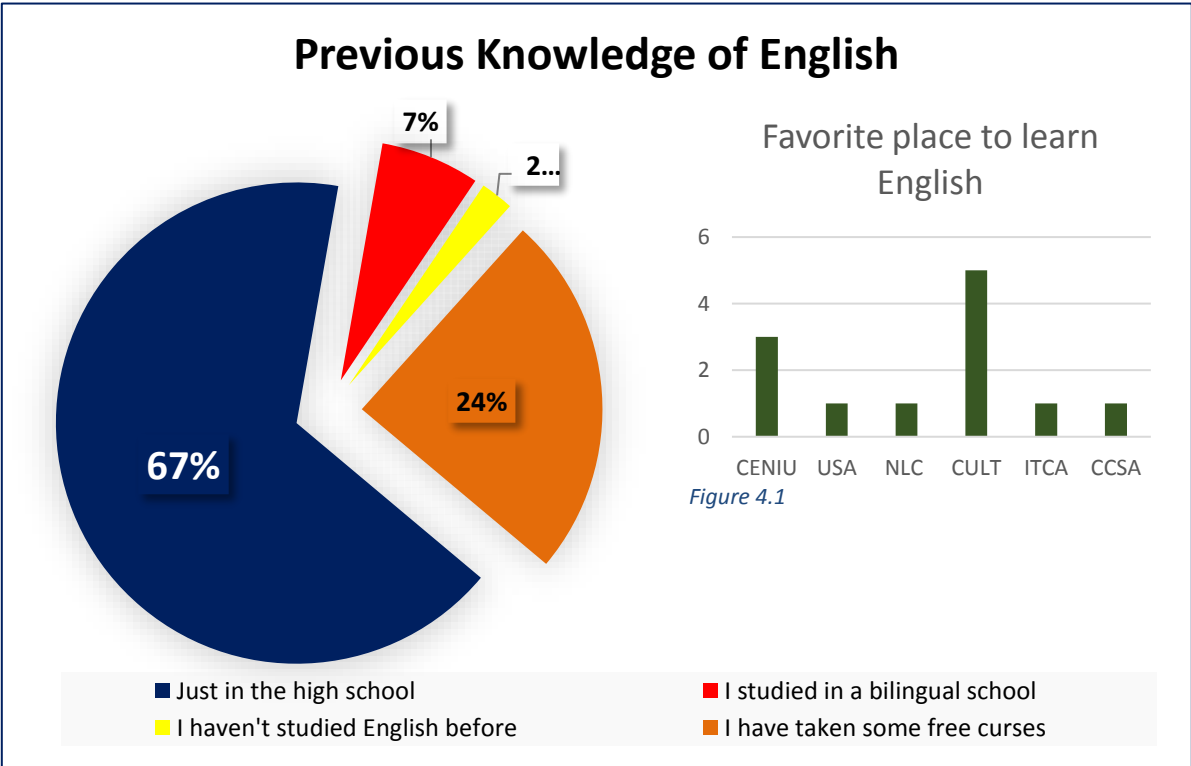
Question No. 4

How long had you studied English before registering in your current major?

Table 4 Previous knowledges of English among the students of the sample

	Total
Just in the high school	30
I studied in a bilingual school	3
I haven't studied English before	1
I have taken some free curses	11
	45

Figure 4 Previous knowledges of English among the students of the sample



The fifth question was about a perception, how difficult students considered learning English and French at the same time. First of all the perception was associated with the variable: gender and then with the age of the students.

Question No. 5

How difficult has been for you to learn English and French at the same time?

Table 5 Perception of grade of difficulty to learn both languages according with gender

Difficulty perception according to gender	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	
Extremely difficult	0	0	0	0	0
Very difficult	3	20	13	43,33	16
Somewhat difficult	6	40	16	53,33	22
No difficult	6	40	1	3,33	7
	15	100	30	100	45

Figure 5 Perception of grade of difficulty to learn both languages according with gender

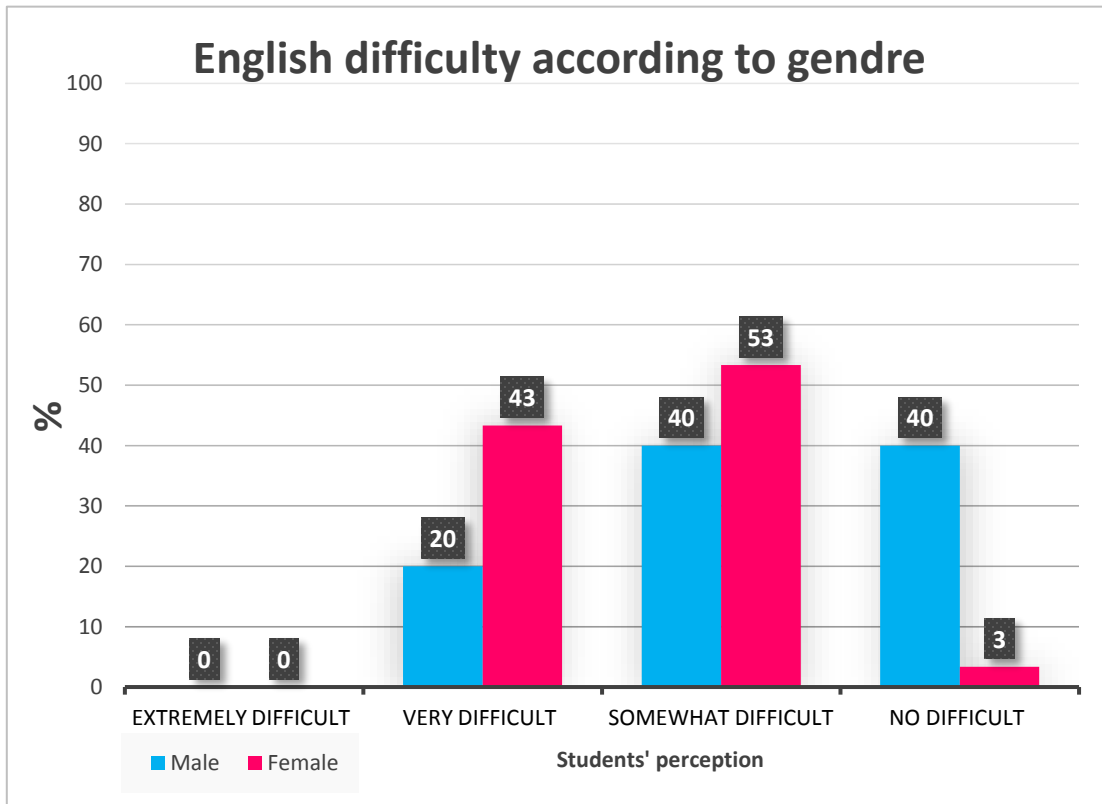
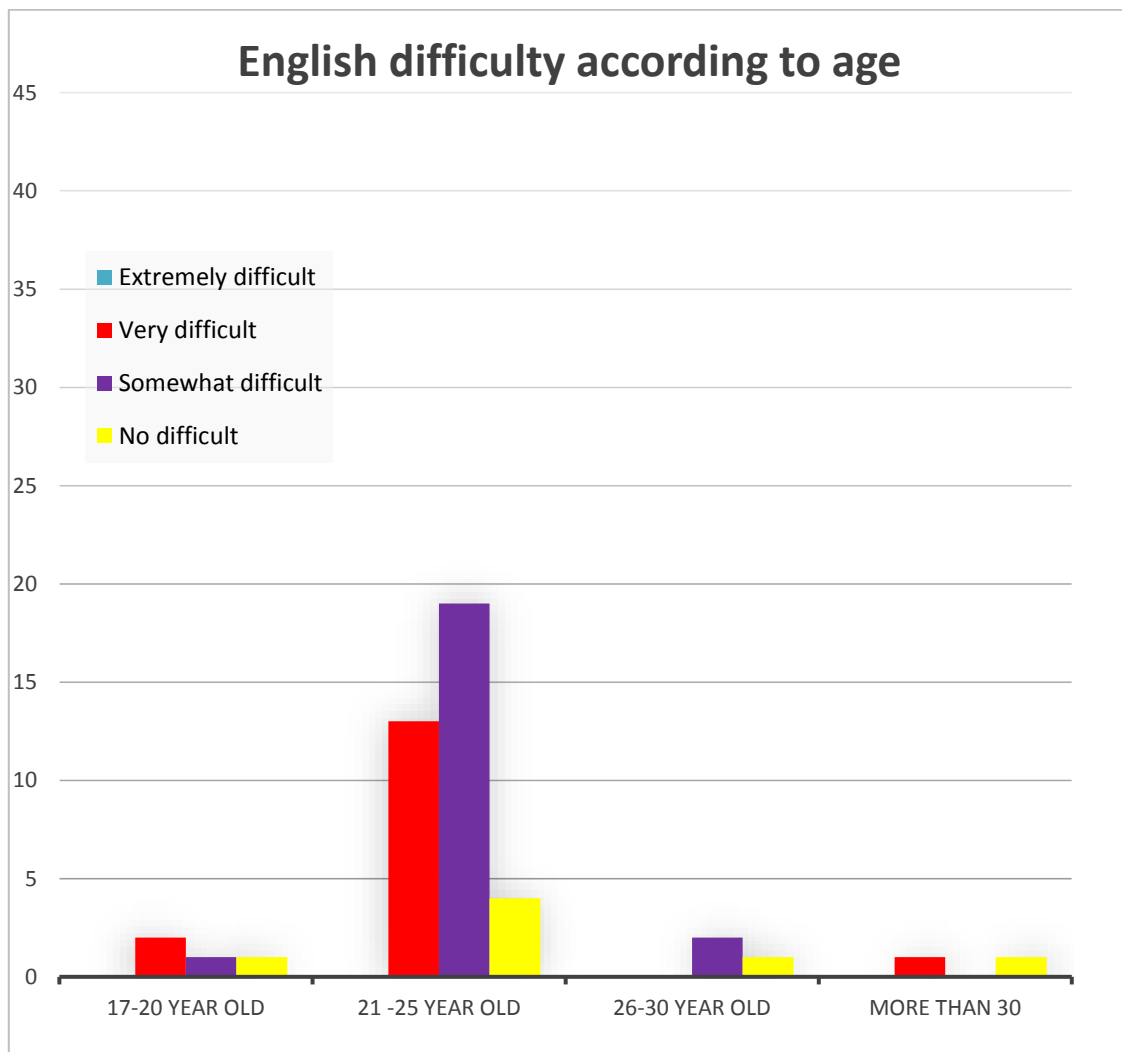


Table 5.1 Perception of the degree of difficulty according to student's age

Difficulty perception according to age	17-20 year old	21 -25 year old	26-30 year old	more than 30	Total
Extremely difficult	0	0	0	0	0
Very difficult	2	13	0	1	16
Somewhat difficult	1	19	2	0	22
No difficult	1	4	1	1	7
	4	36	3	2	45

Figure 5.1 Perception of the degree of difficulty according to student's age



Question No. 6 and 7 were designed to know about what were the common subjects that students failed in English or/and French areas.

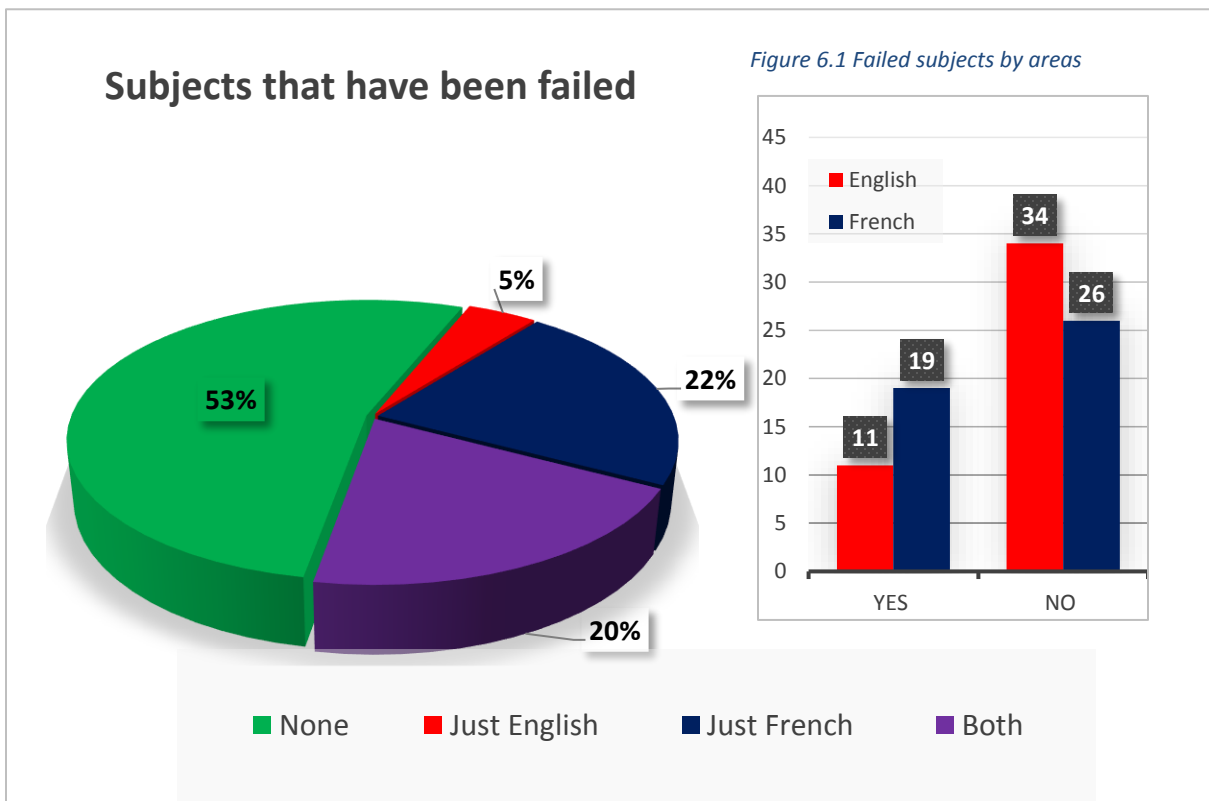
Table 6 Distribution of the failed subjects by areas

Have you ever failed a subject?	
None	24
Just English	2
Just French	10
Both	9
	45

Table 6.1 Failed subjects by areas

Have you ever failed a subject?	English	French	Total
Yes	11	19	30
No	34	26	60
	45	45	90

Figure 6 Failed subjects



The students shared information with the most commonly failed subjects in both areas:
English and French.

Table 7a English Subjects failed

English subjects failed	
Basic	2
Intermediate	2
Advance	1
Grammar I	2
Grammar II	2
Many	2
	11

Figure 7 a English Subjects failed

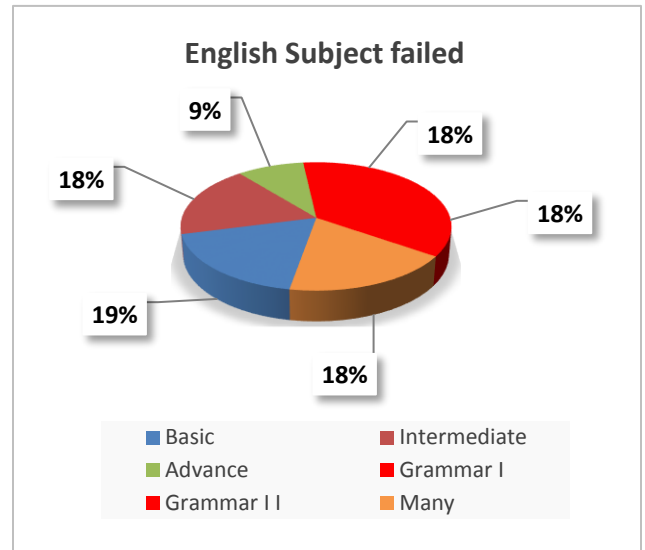
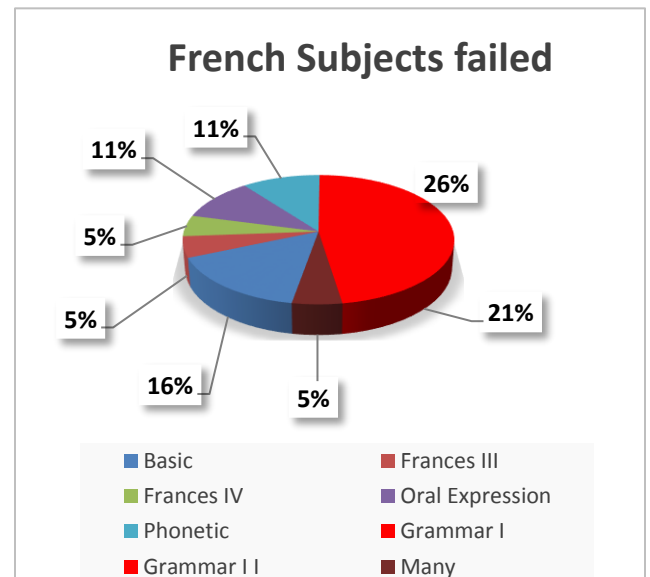


Table 7b French subjects failed

French subjects failed	
Basic	3
Frances III	1
Frances IV	1
Oral Expression	2
Phonetic	2
Grammar I	5
Grammar II	4
Many	1
	19

Figure 7 b French Subjects failed



From question Number Eight to Ten: TRANSLATION

In this section, students were required to write a complete sentence, a translation from one sentence to the other two languages making six sentence in total to be analyzed; from Spanish to French and English, from French to Spanish and English and then from English to Spanish and French. The first requirement was to translate the following statement: ¿A Pedro le parece que María es bella, no?

First, from Spanish to French and then to English, the possible expectation was: “Il semble que Marie est belle pour Pierre, n'est-ce pas? “ The results were grouped as its relation with the areas: Grammar, Sense, Punctuation, Spelling, Orthography, and use of other element that are not proper of the target language. The first results were showed in the next chart:

Table 8 Results in translation from Spanish to French

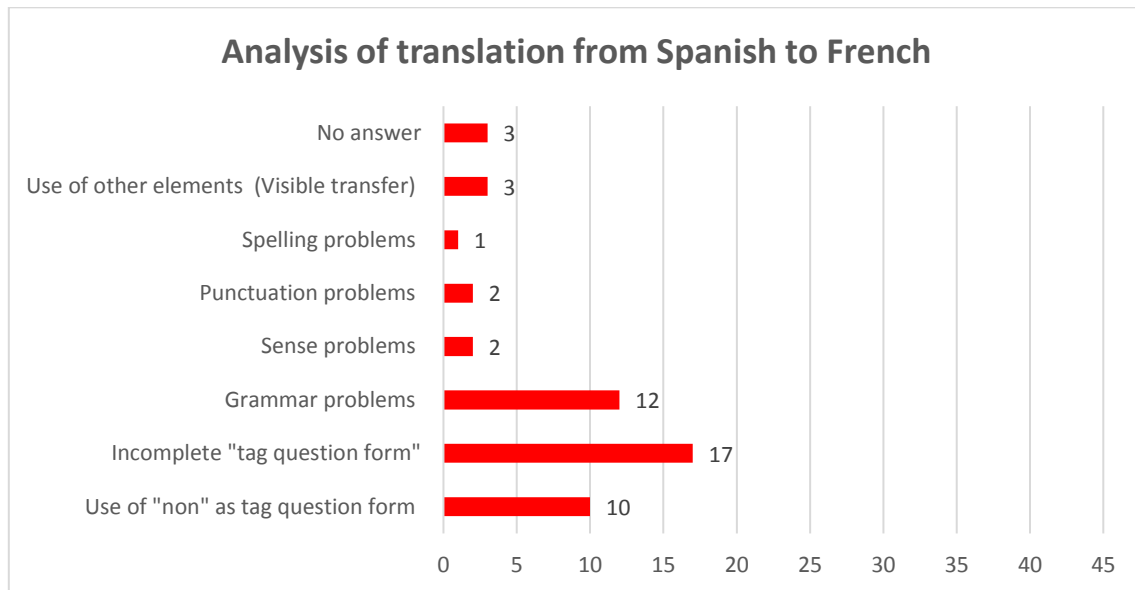
Il semble que Marie est belle pour Pierre, n'est-ce pas?	
Use of an introductive phrase	1/45
Use of perception verb	40 /45
Use of correct tag question form	13 /45
Use of incorrect tag question forms	17/45
Use an informal tag question form	10/45
Different way to answers	2/45
No answers	3/45

The major problem was in the structure of the tag question. As well as the conscious that it was an interrogative question and not just a simple statement. Trying to use the correct form of “tag question” there were so many mistakes, specially related with grammar. Following by other kind of problems as punctuation, spelling or capitalization. And just a six percent (3 students) used some element from the other language different to the target language.

Table 8.1 Details of the mistakes in the French translation.

Il semble que Marie est belle pour Pierre, n'est-ce pas?	
Use of "non" as tag question form	10**
Incomplete "tag question form" (implicit subject)	17**
Grammar problems	12
Sense problems	2
Punctuation problems	2
Spelling problems	1
Capitalization problems	0
Use of other elements (Visible transfer)	3**
No answer	3
** Represent transfer issues	50

Figure 8. 1 Mistakes in the French translation

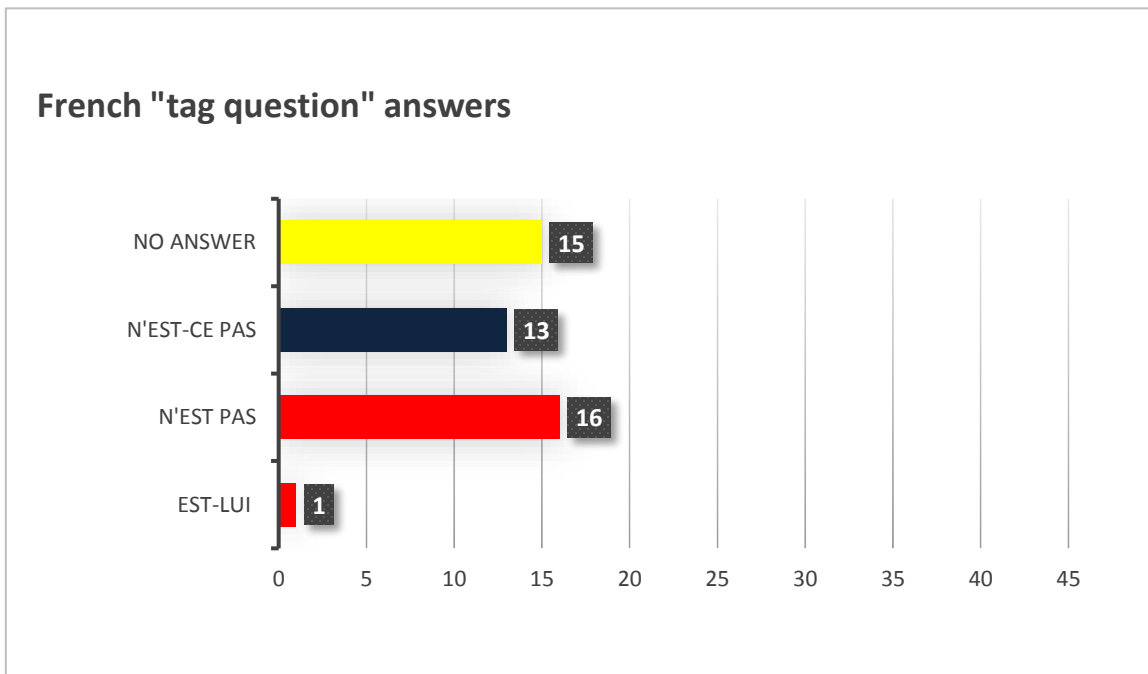


The tag question form, was the most frequently mistake among the answers, specialty in grammar. Incomplete tag question form were common, 37% of the students omitted the subject. This was an evident transfer issues, since the possibility to omit a subject is mostly a feature from Spanish language. French needs always the subject to build a sentence affirmative or interrogative.

Table 8.2 List of answers in "tag question" form in French answers

Tag question form	French
est-lui	1
n'est pas	16
n'est-ce pas	13
No Answers (3) Answers without tag question form (12)	15
	45

Figure 8. 2 Answers in "tag question" form in French answers



The big challenge in this sentences, as it had mentioned before, it was related with tag question forms, the previous chart lists the answers in this particular structures. It has to notice that the original statement included an interrogative particle in Spanish to transform an affirmative sentence to an interrogative one. Just one third of the sample succeeded the challenge.

The second part of the statement required the translation of the same Spanish sentence to English: “¿A Pedro le parece que María es bella, no?” The expectation was: It seems to Peter that Mary is beautiful, doesn't he?

Table 8.3 Results of the translation from Spanish to English

It seems to Peter that Mary is beautiful, doesn't he?	
Use of the introductory phrase "It seems to ... "	1/45
Use of perception verb	42/45
Use of correct tag question form	11/45
Use incorrect tag question form	20/45
Use informal tag question form “no”	5/45
Use informal tag question form “right”	6/45
No answer	1/45
Answer without tag question	2/45

Table 8.4 Details of the mistakes in the English translation from Spanish

It seems to Peter that Mary is beautiful, doesn't he?	
Use of "no" as tag question form	5**
Use of "right" as tag question form	6**
Grammar problems	28
Sense problems related with vocabulary	4
Punctuation problems	4
Spelling problems	3
Capitalization problems	3
Use of other elements (Visible transfer)	19**
No answer	1
** Transfer issues	73

In the contrast with the previous exercise, informal tag question included the use of particle as “no” and “right” at the end of the sentence. From the rest of mistake related with tag question just 17/20 were related with transfer issues. These registers included the use of an impersonal way, a very particular French feature to build this kind of structures.

Figure 8. 4 Details of the mistakes in the English translation from Spanish

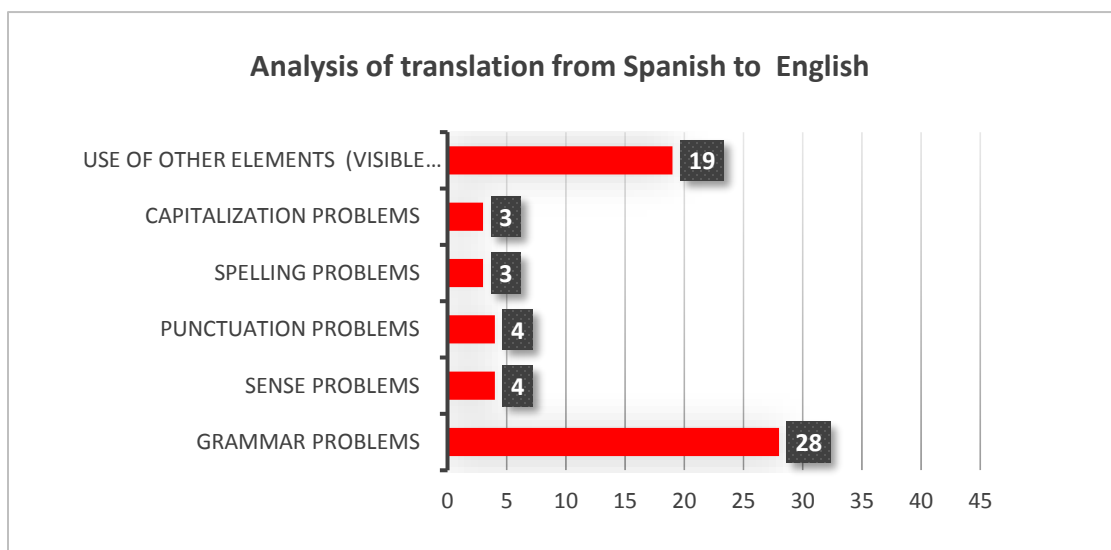


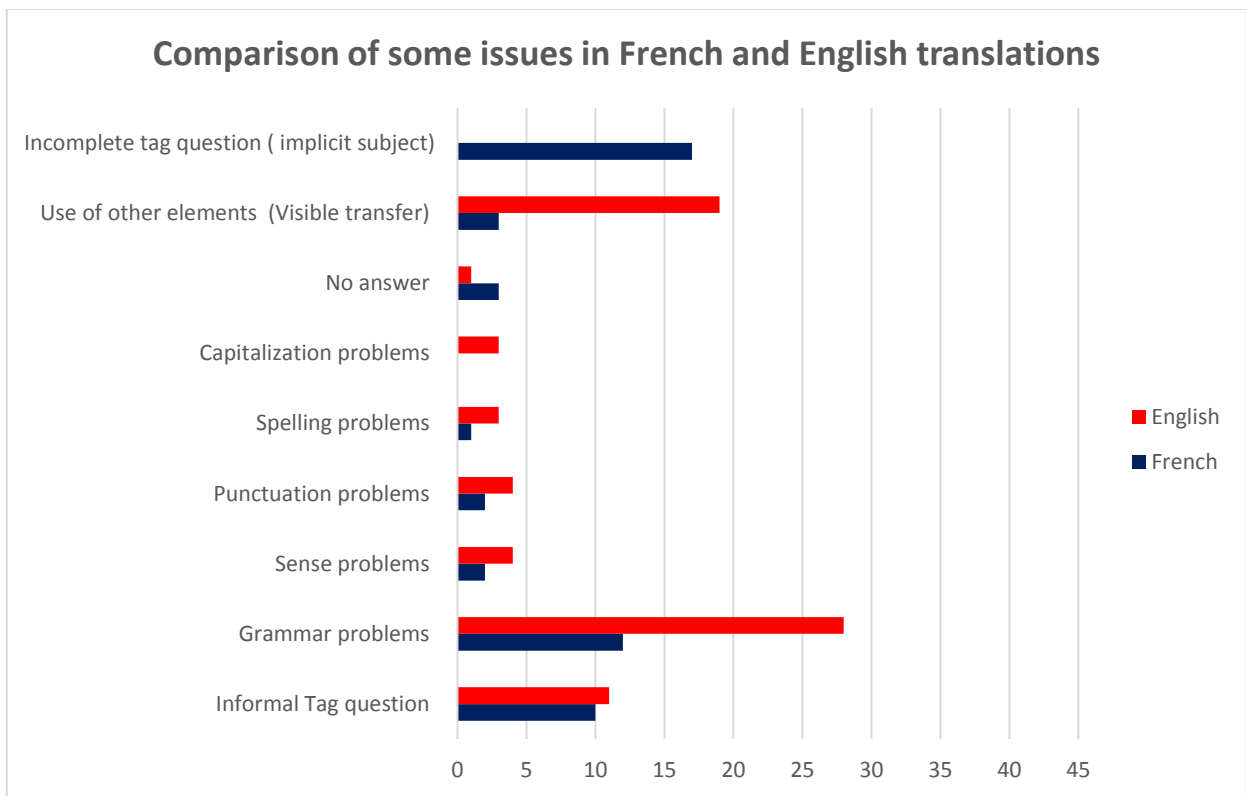
Table 8. 5 Details of the mistakes in tag question form in English translation from Spanish sentence

Tag question form	English
isn't he /she	4
isn't it	8
it isn't	1
is not	1
doesn't it	3
doesn't her	1
don't he	1
don't you	1
doesn't he	11
No answer (1) Use informal tag question (11) Answers without tag question (2)	14
	45

Table 8.6 Comparison between both translations: French and English from the original sentence in Spanish

Difficulties of translation from Spanish to ...	French	English
Informal Tag question	10*	11*
Incomplete tag question	17*	0
Grammar problems	12	28
Sense problems	2	4
Punctuation problems	2	4
Spelling problems	1	3
Capitalization problems	0	3
Use of other elements (Visible transfer)	3*	19*
No answer	3	1
	50	73

Figure 8. 6 Issues found among the both translations: French and English from the original sentence in Spanish



The complication in “tag question” and “transfer elements” invited to make a deep analysis of how the sample was in general, and how was the behavior between the answers, considering just the tag question section, almost the same quantity of students answered in the same way in both languages.

Table 8.7 Accuracy in tag question results in both translations: French and English

Tag question form in ...	French	English	Total
Correct	13	11	24
Incorrect	17	20	37
No answer	3	1	4
No answers with tag question form as informal question: “no”, “right” or other way to answer.	12	13	29
	45	45	90

Figure 8.7 Accuracy in tag question results in both translations: French and English

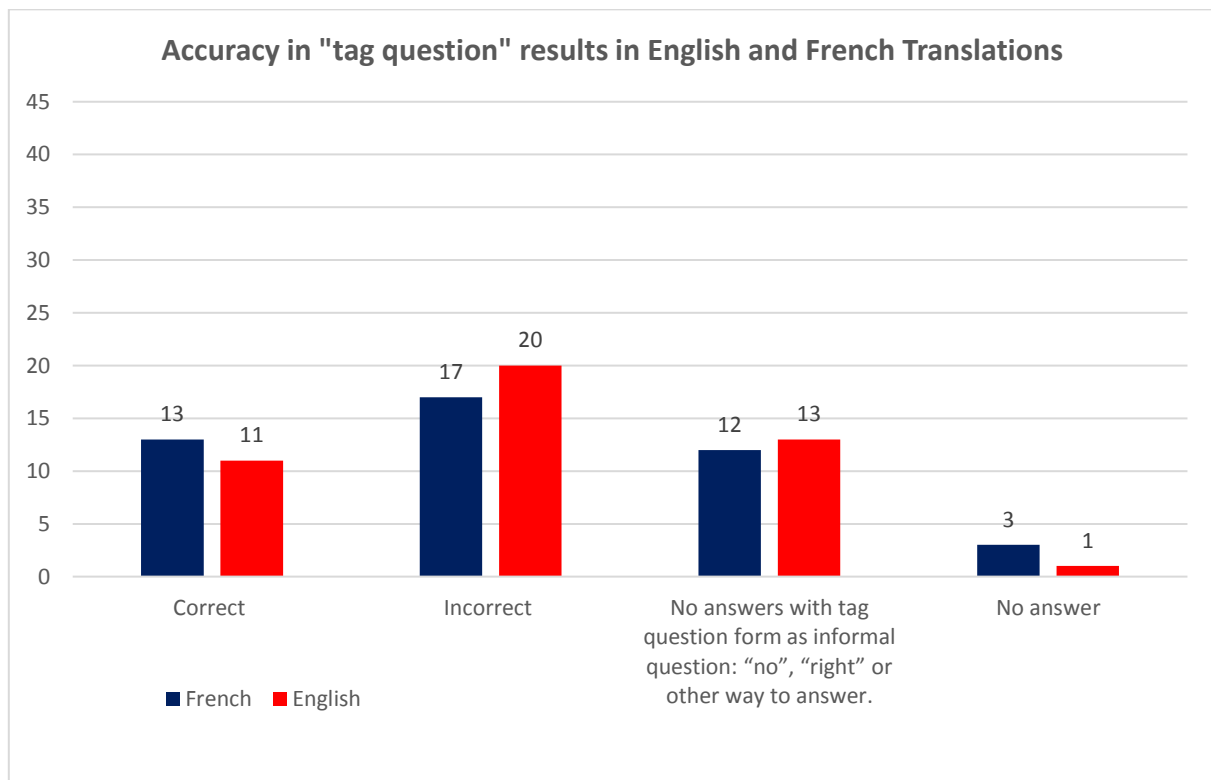


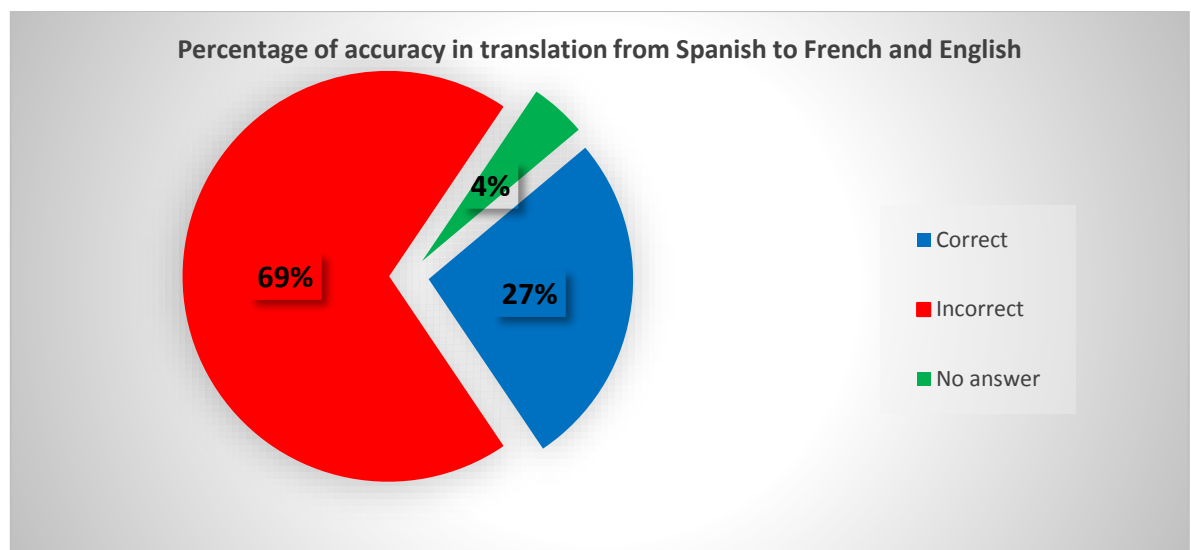
Figure 8.7 displays all the answers obtained in tag question exercises. The categories related with informal answered had to be moved to “incorrect answers”. Since the original interrogative particular “no” given in the Spanish proposal was just replaced for its equivalent in the target languages. To end a French or English question with a “no” made us realized how transfer phenomena happened across the both languages. Since French as well English need a particular structure to change the affirmative statement to an interrogative one.

Table 8.8 Accuracy in the entire translation exercise from Spanish to French and English

Q8 Summary in translation from Spanish to...	French	English	Total
Correct	13	11	24
Incorrect	29	33	62
No answer	3	1	4
	45	45	90

At the end just 6 students that represented the 13% of the sample achieved the entire challenge, to get both answers correct (French and English). The rest of the sample answered in a partial way. And the great majority got both incorrect answers. English answers were touched by French grammar as it could appreciate in the previous chart were English obtained more possible wrong answers.

Figure 8.8 Accuracy in the entire translation exercise from Spanish to French and English



The ninth question was part of the translation section, involving a statement with a comparative form, a cognate word and the use a specific verb to express age, a verb that change in English using the a state verb while in French as in Spanish involve a different verb.

The original statement was given in English “He looks older, but actually, he is fifteen years old” the expectation for the first part of the translation was: “Él parece mayor pero en realidad él tiene quince años”.

Table 9 Translation results from English to Spanish

Él parece mayor pero en realidad tiene quince años.	Total
Use of "implicit subject"	32*
Use of "number" instead of text	32*
Written accent problems	28
Translation of the verb "look"	11
Punctuation problems	10
Transfer	8
Agreement with the adjective to not include gender	6*
Sense problems	3
Vocabulary problems	3
Capitalization problems	2
Orthography	1
No answer	1
*The partial use of implicit subject was not a mistake as well as writing number instead of text	67

Figure 9 Translation results from English to Spanish



Table 9.1 Preference in the use of perception verbs used by students to translate the statement.

Él parece mayor pero en realidad tiene quince años. (Use of perception verbs)	
"parecer"	27
"lucir"	6
"mirar"	3
"ver"	7
Use of two verbs	1
No answer	1
	45

Figure 9.1 Preference in the use of perception verbs used by students to translate the statement.

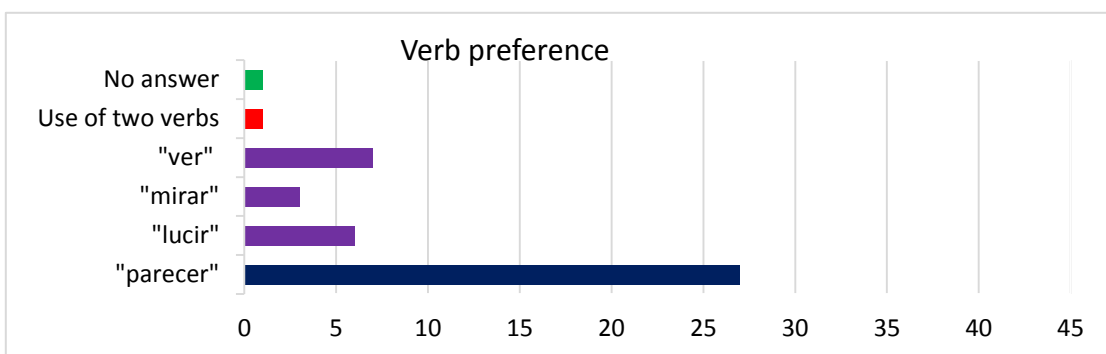
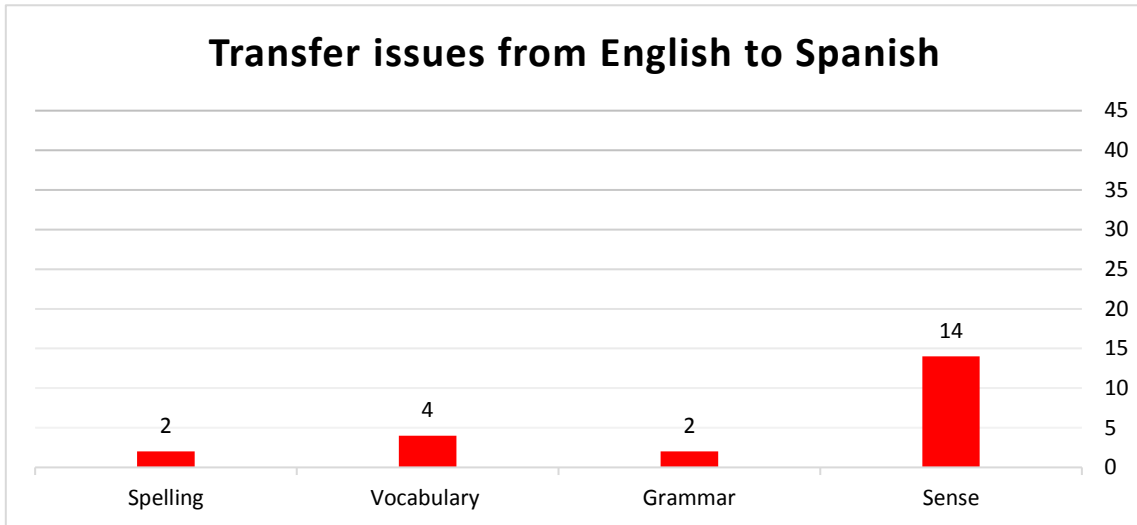


Table 9.2 Classification of found mistakes in Spanish translations from English statement

Él parece mayor pero en realidad (él) tiene quince años.		Total
Spelling		2
Spelling of the word "quinze" instead of "quince"		
Vocabulary		4
Misunderstanding of the word "actually" "older"		
Grammar		2
Misunderstanding of the comparative "más mayor"		
Sense		14
Misunderstanding of the perception verbs	11	
Misunderstanding of the meaning of the phrase	3	
		22

Figure 9. 1 Classification of found mistakes in Spanish translations from English statement



Results of the translation from English to French and its classification according with the type of problems found among of the data.

Table 9.3 Classification of found mistakes in French translations from English statement

Il semble plus vieux, mais il a quinze ans.	%	
Grammar problems	15	33%
Sense problems	9	20%
Punctuation problems	2	4%
Spelling problems	20	44%
Vocabulary problems	4	9%
Gender	2	4%
Capitalization problems	3	7%
Transfer problems	20	44%
Use of "number" instead of text	19*	42%*
No answer	7	16%
*The use of number instead of text it was not a mistake		
	82	

Figure 9. 3 Classification of found mistakes in French translations from English statement

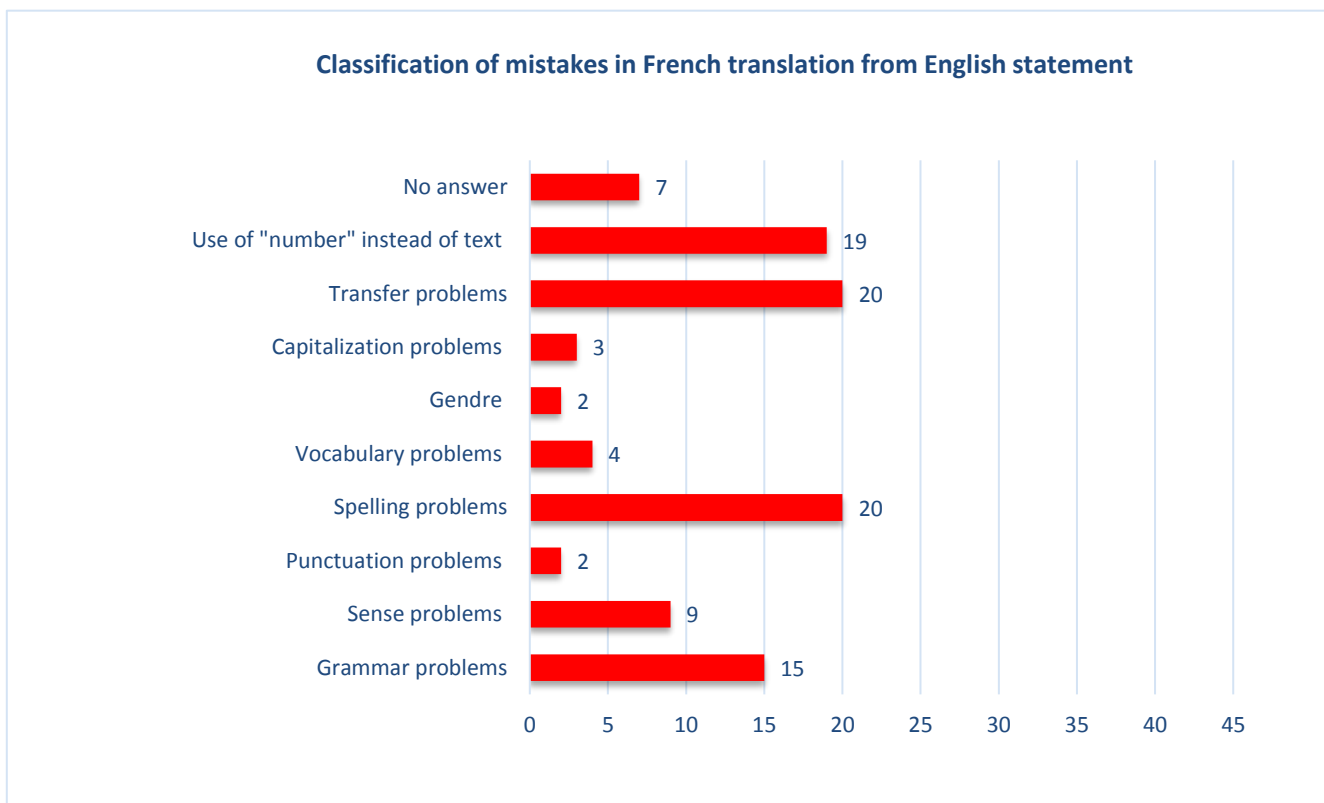


Table 9.4 Preference of the verb used to translate the perception verb "look" to French from English

Il semble plus vieux, mais il a quinze ans.	No.
Use of perception verb	
Il semble plus vieux ...	17
Il a l'air ...	1
Il semble plus âgé	3
Il paraît plus ...	7
Il pareil ...	8
Il me semble	1
Il est ...	1
No answer	7
	45

Table 9.4 Preference of the verb used to translate the perception verb "look" to French from English

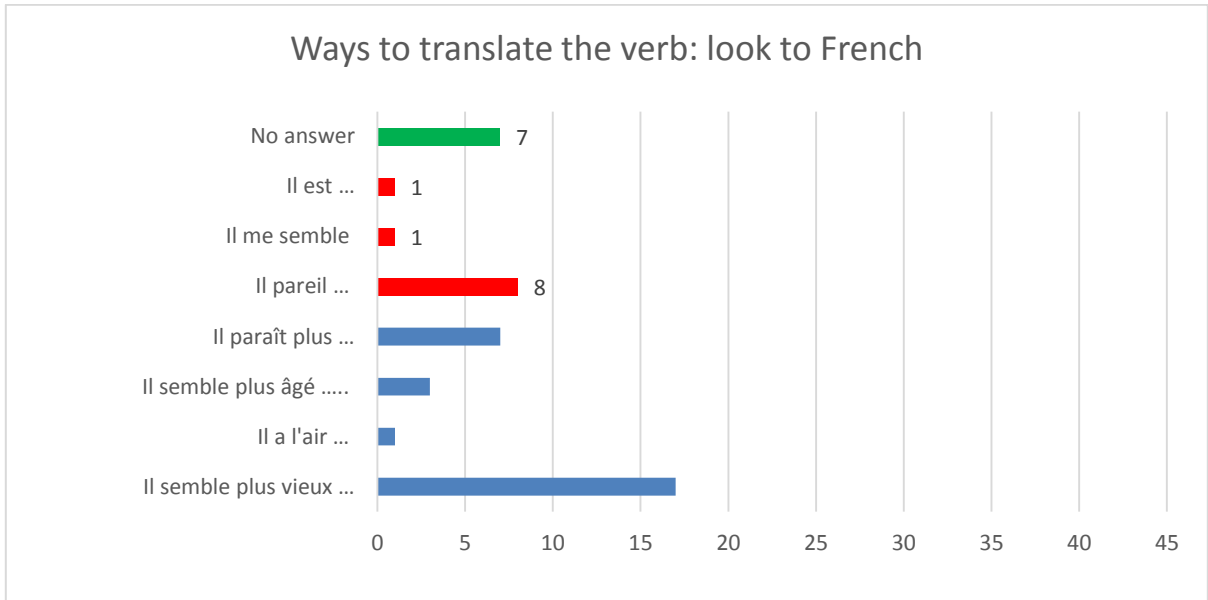


Table 9.5 Use of adjectives to translate from English to French

Il semble plus vieux, mais il a quinze ans.	Adjectives	Correct	Incorrect
vieux	17	37,78%	
viel	2	4,44%	
âgé	3	6,67%	
vieu	2		4,44%
vielle	1		2,22%
vieill	1		2,22%
veiulle	1		2,22%
âgée	1		2,22%
agé	8		17,78%
adult	1		2,22%
aîne	1		2,22%
No answer	7		15,56%
	45	48,89%	51,11%

Figure 9.5 Use of adjectives to translate from English to French

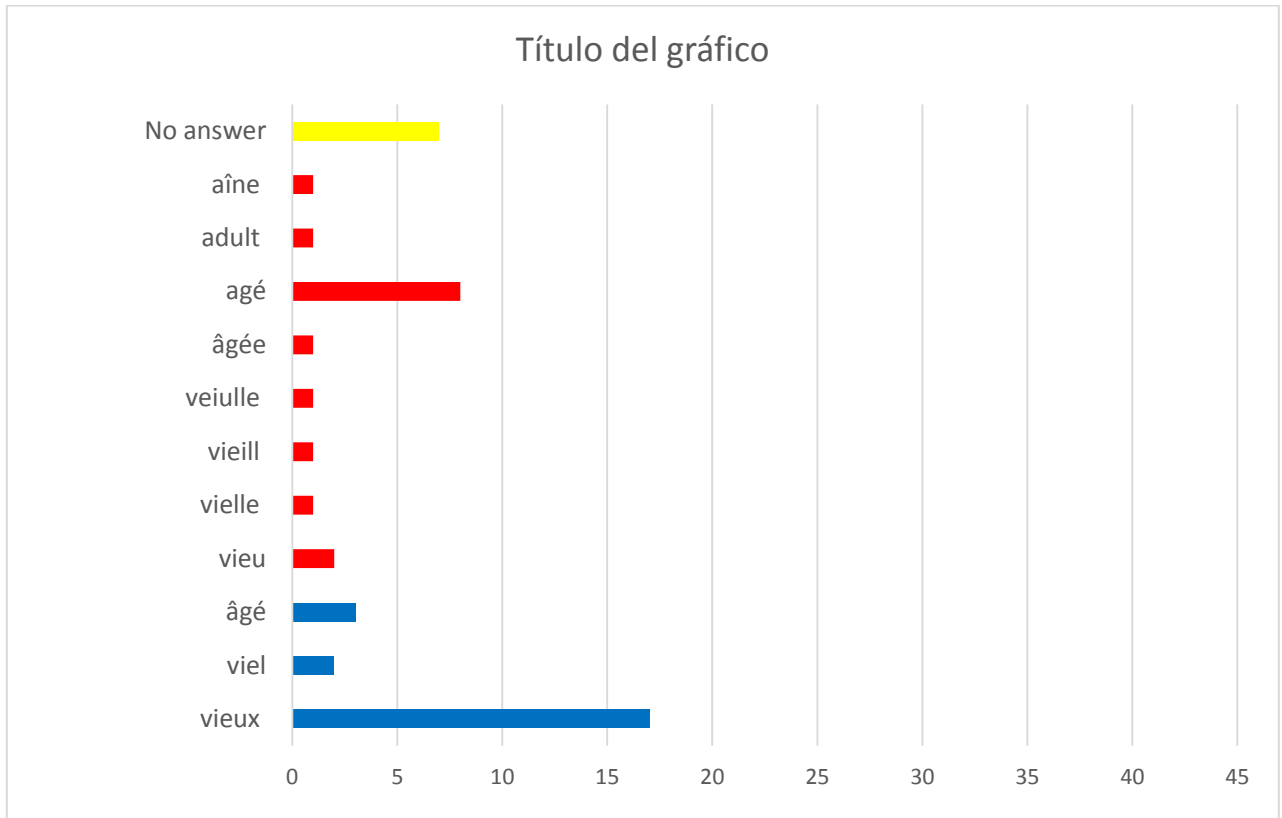
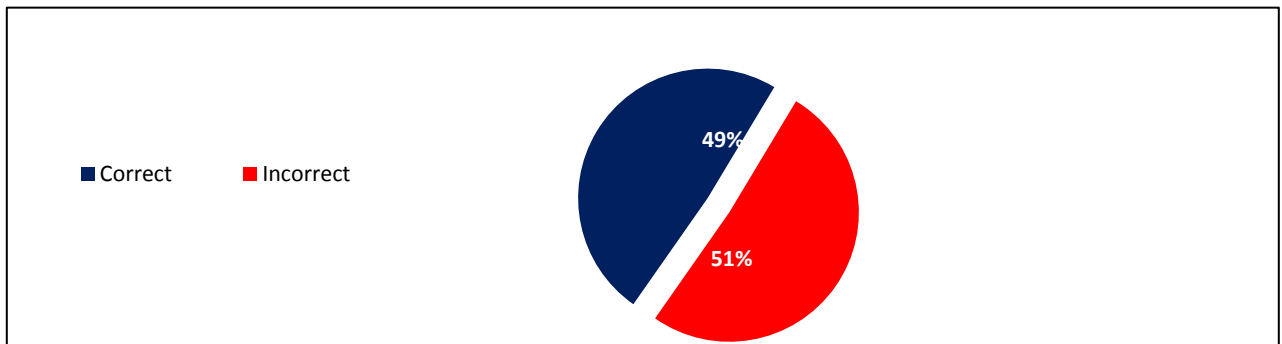


Figure 9.5A Accuracy in the use of adjectives to translate from English to French

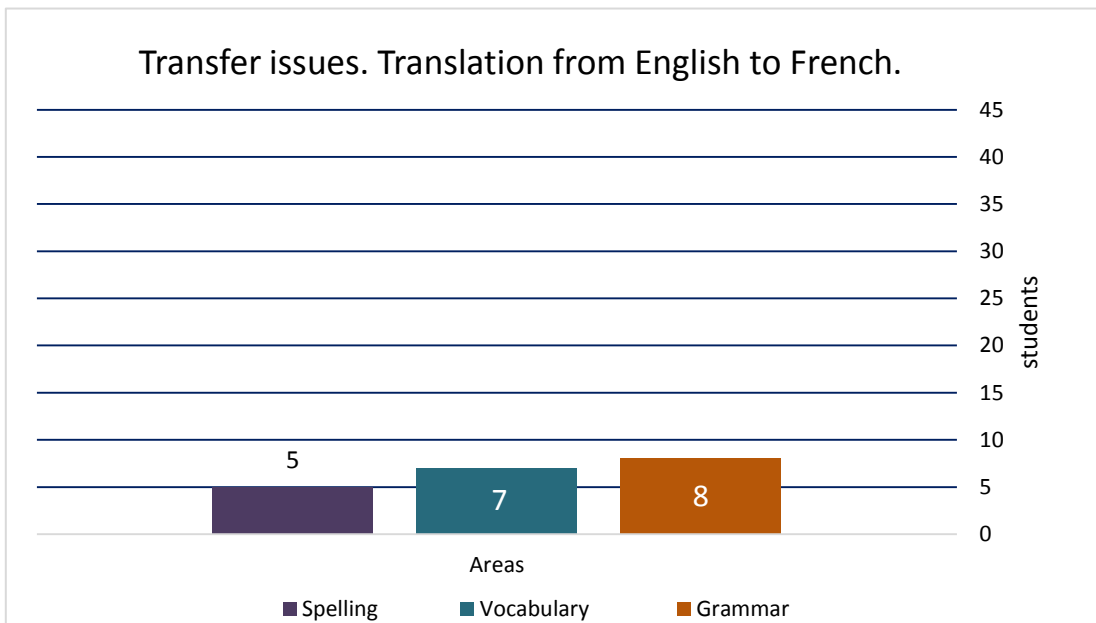


This chart shows the transfer problems classified according its nature. Most of them were related with the cognate word “actually” as in Spanish. Cognate was an essential part of the survey, which will analyze at the end of this chapter.

Table 9.6 Classification of transfer issues in French translations from English statement

Il semble plus vieux, mais il a quinze ans.		Total
Spelling		5
Spelling of the word "quinze" instead of "quinze"		
Vocabulary		7
Misunderstanding of the word "actually"	5	
Use of the word "aîne"	1	
Use of the word "adult"	1	
Grammar		8
Use of the verb "être" instead of "avoir" as in English	6	
Use of the article "an" as in English	1	
Use of the preposition "in" as in English	1	
		20

Figure 9.6 Classification of transfer issues in French translations from English statement



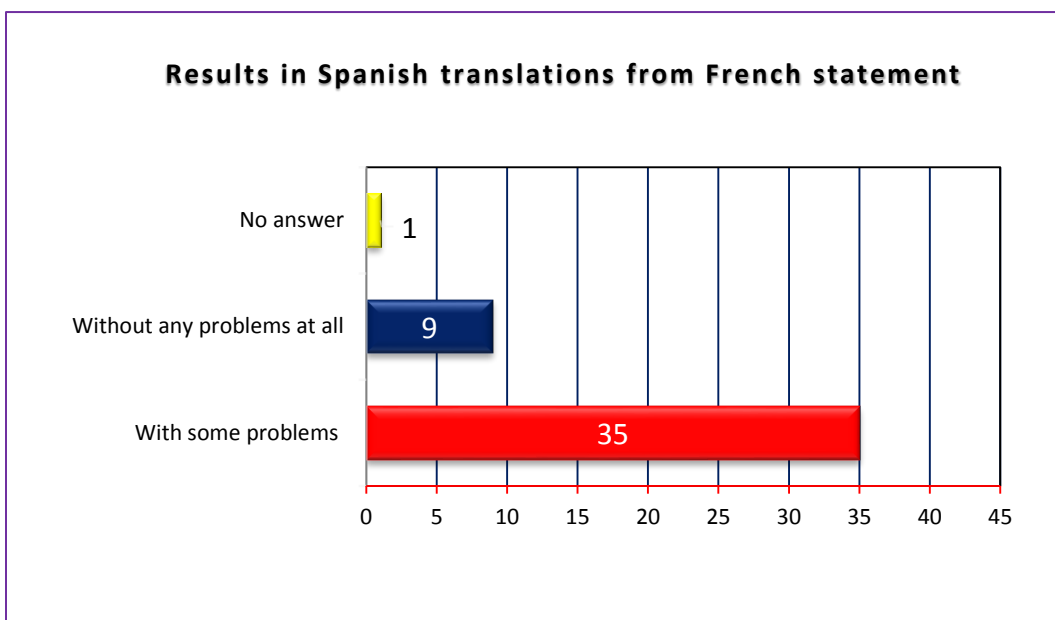
Question number 10 was the last sentence in the translation section. It was proposed in French, the original statement was: “Quel est son but dans la vie?” As the previous exercises it contained two parts, in the first part it was required to translate to Spanish, and then to English. Spanish expectation was: “¿Cuál es su objetivo en la vida?”

The results were the following:

Table 10 Results in Spanish translations from French statement

¿Cuál es su (de él) objetivo en la vida?		%
Sentences		
With some problems	35	78%
Without any problems at all	9	20%
No answer	1	2%
	45	

Figure 10 Results in Spanish translations from French statement

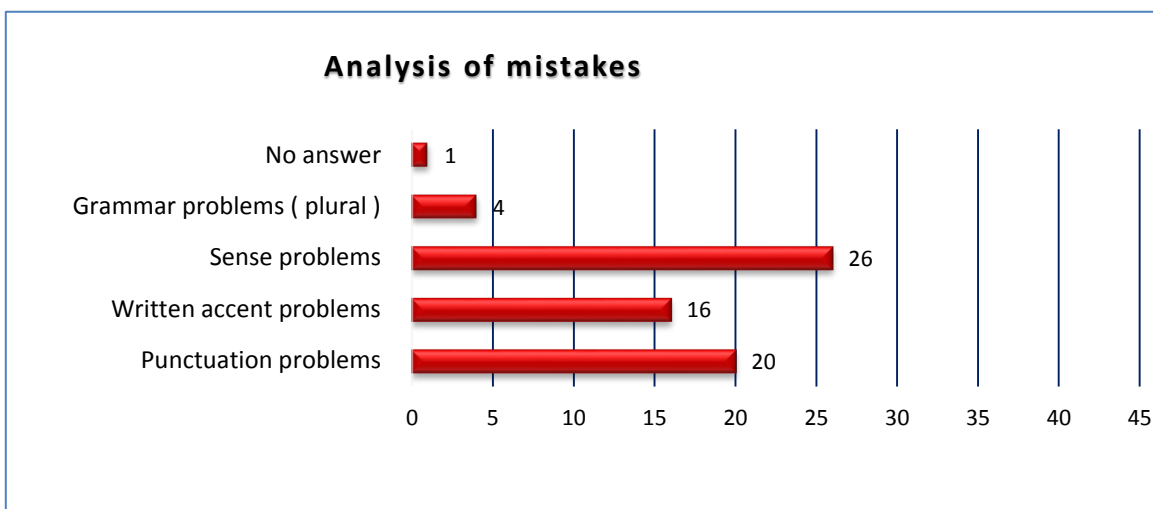


The majority of the students, 78% of them made some mistakes in the translation exercise from French to Spanish. Just 20% of the sample that equivalent to nine students completed the statement with a great accuracy. Even though the request was to translate to Spanish there was one students who did not work the sentence.

Table10.1 Classification of the mistakes found in the translation from French to Spanish

Kind of problems		
Punctuation problems	20*	44%
Written accent problems	16	36%
Sense problems	26*	58%
Grammar problems (plural)	4	9%
No answer	1	2%
Total	67	
* Transfer issues		

Table10.1 Classification of the mistakes found in the translation from French to Spanish

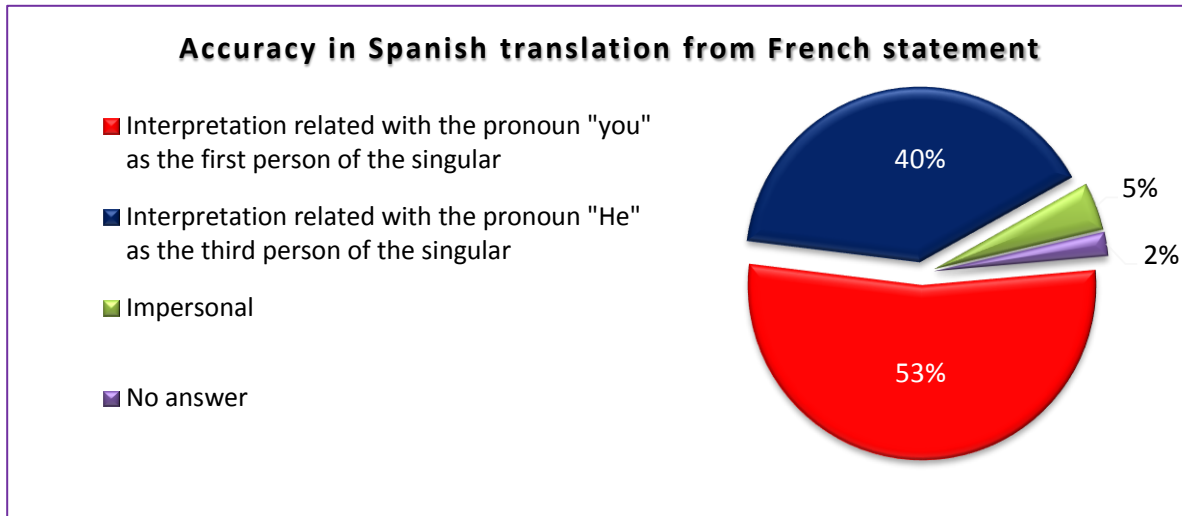


The majority of the students made a mistake about the interpretation of the sentence. They switched French and Spanish adjective pronoun, changing the meaning of the sentence. For that reason it was necessary to explain the way as they understood the phrase.

Table 10.2 Interpretation of the subject in Spanish translation from French sentence

¿Cuál es su (de él) objetivo en la vida?		
Interpretation related with the pronoun "you" as the first	24	53.3%
Interpretation related with the pronoun "He" as the third	18	40%
Impersonal	2	4.4%
No answer	1	2.2%
Total	45	

Table 10.2 Accuracy in the Interpretation of the subject in Spanish translation from French sentence

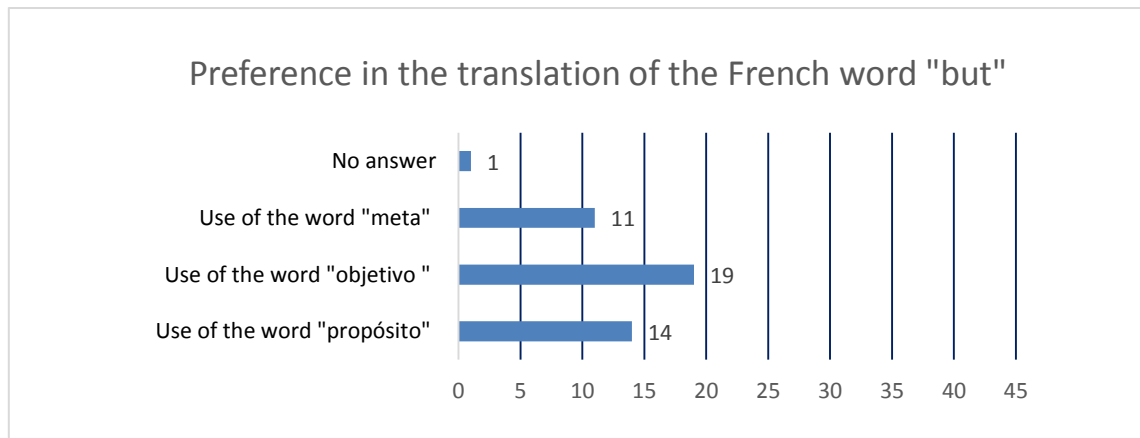


The next chart show the way as the French word “but” was translated to Spanish the majority used the word “objetivo” followed by “propósito” and then “meta”, and just one student didn’t answered.

Table 10.3 Preference in the translation of the French word “but” to Spanish

¿Cuál es su (de él) objetivo en la vida?		
Vocabulary		45
Use of the word "propósito"	14	31%
Use of the word "objetivo "	19	42%
Use of the word "meta"	11	24%
No answer	1	2%

Figure 10.3 Preference in the translation of the French word “but” to Spanish

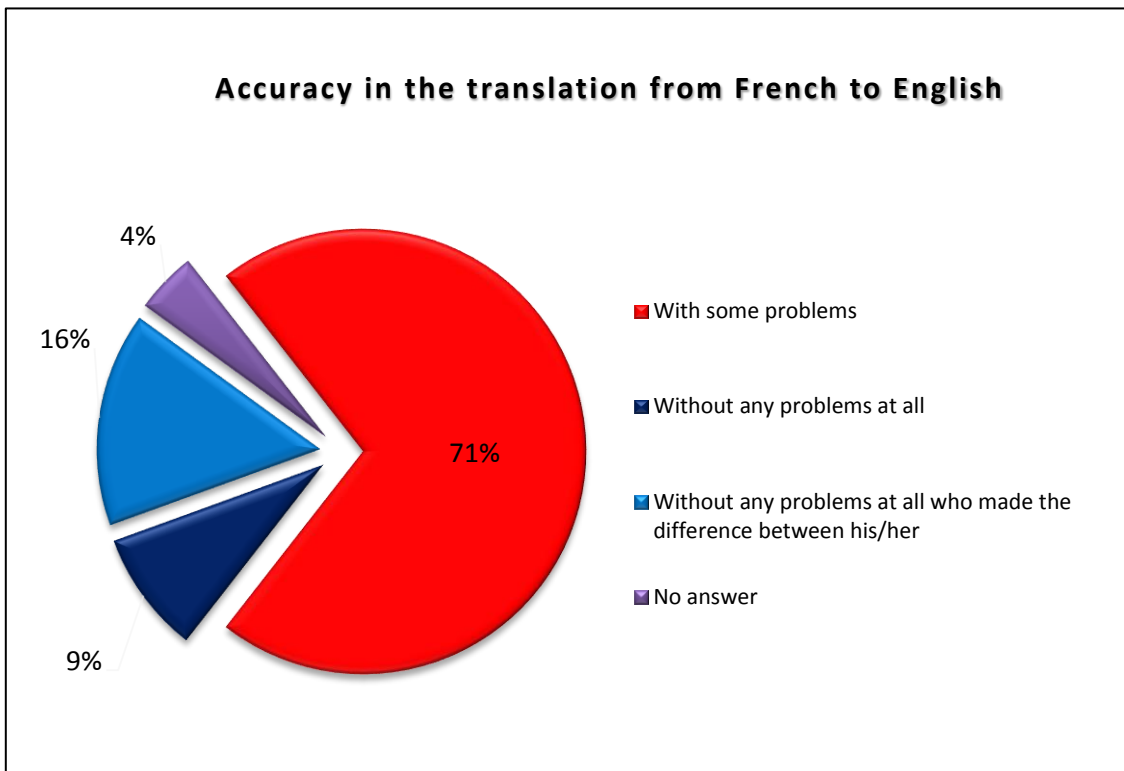


The second part of this same exercise asked to translate the same sentence: ““Quel est son but dans la vie?” to English, the expectation was: “What is his/her goal in life?” the percentages were almost the same, seventy one percent (71%) showed some difficulties with the English translation, an amount quite similar to Spanish (78%)

Table 10.4 Results in the English translation from French sentence

What is his/her goal in life?		
Sentences		
With some problems	32	71%
Without any problems at all	4	9%
Without any problems at all, and made a special consideration (difference between his/her)	7	16%
No answer	2	4%
	45	

Figure 10.4 Results in the English translation from French sentence

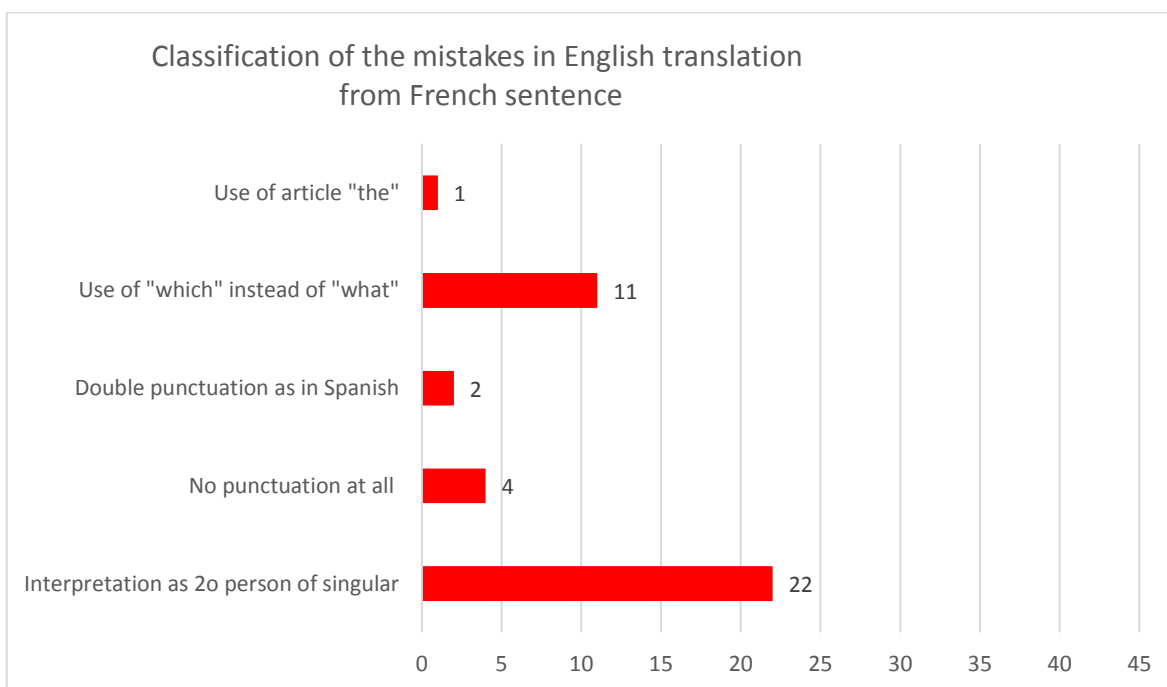


The problems in this sentence were classified in the same categories as the previous exercises, the results were summarize in the next table.

Table 10.5 Classification of the mistakes in English translation from French sentence

What is his/her goal in life?		
Sense problems		57%
Interpretation as 2o person of singular	22	
Punctuation problems		14%
No punctuation at all	4*	
Double punctuation as in Spanish	2	
Grammar problems		29%
Use of "which" instead of "what"	11	
Use of article "the"	1	
Total	36	
*it cannot be associated with transfer issues		

Figure 10. 1 Classification of the mistakes in English translation from French sentence



About the vocabulary, the way as how was translate the French word “but” the results were the following.

Table 10.6 Preference in the translation of the French word “but” to English sentence

What is his/her goal in life?	
Use of the word "goal"	33
Use of the word "objective"	4
Use of the word "purpose"	2
Use of the word "challenge"	2
Use of the word "aim"	1
Use of the word "target"	1
No answer	2

Figure 10.6 Preference in the translation of the French word “but” to English sentence



Table 10.7A Accuracy summary in translation section From Spanish to French and English

From Spanish to English and French	French			English		
	Correct	Incorrect	No answer	Correct	Incorrect	No answer
"¿A Pedro le parece que María es bella, no?"						
Il semble que Marie est belle pour Pierre, n'est-ce pas?	13	29	3			
It seems to Peter that Mary is beautiful, doesn't he?				11	33	1

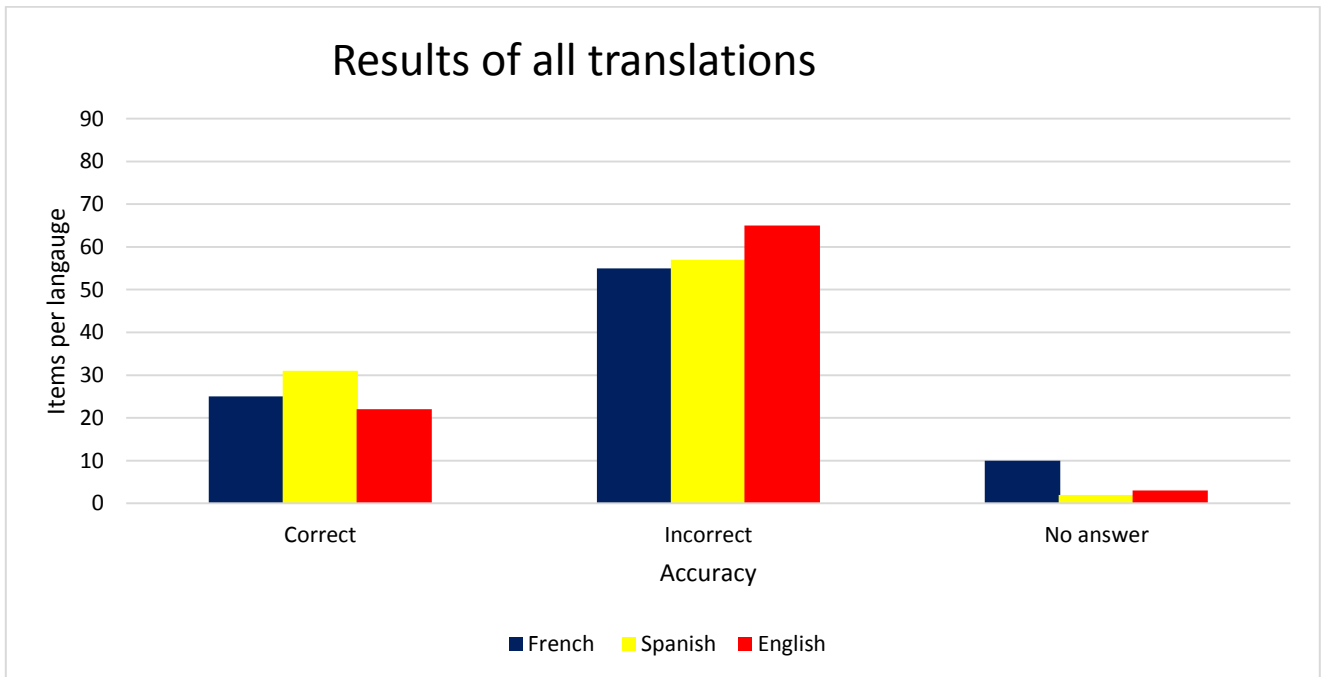
Table 10.7B Accuracy in translation section From Spanish to French and English

From English to Spanish and French	Spanish			French		
	Correct	Incorrect	No answer	Correct	Incorrect	No answer
"He looks older, but actually, he is fifteen years old"						
Él parece mayor pero en realidad tiene quince años.	22	22	1			
Il semble plus vieux, mais il a quinze ans.				12	26	7

Table 10.7C Accuracy summary in translation section From French to Spanish and English

From French to Spanish and English	Spanish			English		
	Correct	Incorrect	No answer	Correct	Incorrect	No answer
"Quel est son but dans la vie?"						
¿Cuál es su (de él) objetivo en la vida?	9	35	1			
What is his/her goal in life?				11	32	2

Figure 10.7 Accuracy summary in translation section



The final summary of all this section was enclosed in the next table, which included every details where students had some transfer issues, including the original language and how was the impact with the other two languages.

Figure 10.7A Summary of transfer issues from Spanish translation to French and English

Summary: translation from Spanish to French and English	Spanish		English		French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
To French						
Il semble que Marie est belle pour Pierre, n'est-ce pas?						
Use of "non" as tag question form	10					
Incomplete "tag question form" Implicit subject	17					
* Use of relative pronoun "qui"				1		
* Use of some English structure to French tag question				2		
Sub total	27	0	0	3	0	0
Total = 30						
To English						
It seems to Peter that Mary is beautiful, doesn't he?						
* Use some French Structure to English tag question						17
* use of double negation						2
use of "no" as tag question		5				
use of "right" as tag question		6				
Sub total	0	11	0	0	0	19
Total = 30						

The previous table includes just the mistakes related with transfer issues. Question 8 required to be translated from Spanish to French and English. There were 32 transfer issues in French translation; and 30 transfer issues among the English translation. Even though the

sentence was given in a specific language to be translated to a fixed target language. Transfer issues could come from any of the previous language knowledge of the students. For that reason the table contains in a remarkable box the language from which the transfer issues comes from to the target language. In order to establish from what previous knowledges impacted the most.

Figure 10.7B Summary of transfer issues from French translation to Spanish and English

Summary: translation from English to Spanish and French	Spanish		English		French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
To Spanish						
Él parece mayor pero en realidad tiene quince años.						
Spelling of the word "quinze" instead of "quince"					2	
Misunderstanding of the word "actually" "older"			4			
Misunderstanding of the comparative "más mayor"			2			
Misunderstanding of the perception verbs			11			
Misunderstanding of the meaning of the phrase			3			
Sub total	0	0	20	0	2	0
Total = 22						
To French						
Il semble plus vieux, mais il a quinze ans.						
Spelling of the word "quince" instead of "quinze"	5					
Misunderstanding of the word "actually"				5		
Use of the word "adult"	1					
Use of the word "aîne"				1		
Use of the verb "être" instead of "avoir" as in English				6		
Use of the article "an" as in English				1		
Use of the preposition "in" as in English				1		
Sub total	6	0	0	14	0	0
Total = 20						

Figure 10.7C Summary of transfer issues from French translation to Spanish and English

Summary: translation from French to Spanish and English	Spanish		English		French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
To Spanish						
¿Cuál es su (de él) objetivo en la vida?						
Punctuation problems			20			
Interpretation as the second person of the singular	24					
Interpretation as in an impersonal way	2					
Sub total	26	0	20	0	0	0
Total = 46						
To English						
What is his/her goal in life?						
Interpretation about 2o person of singular		22				
Double punctuation as in Spanish		2				
Use of "which" instead of "what"						11
Use of article "the"						1
Sub total	0	24	0	0	0	12
Total = 36						

In general terms, there were 184 registers of transfer issues just in translation section, the partial value were displayed as

Summary transfer issues: There were 184 registers in total	Spanish		English		French	
	French	English	Spanish	French	Spanish	English
	59	35	40	17	2	31

From question number 11 to 21

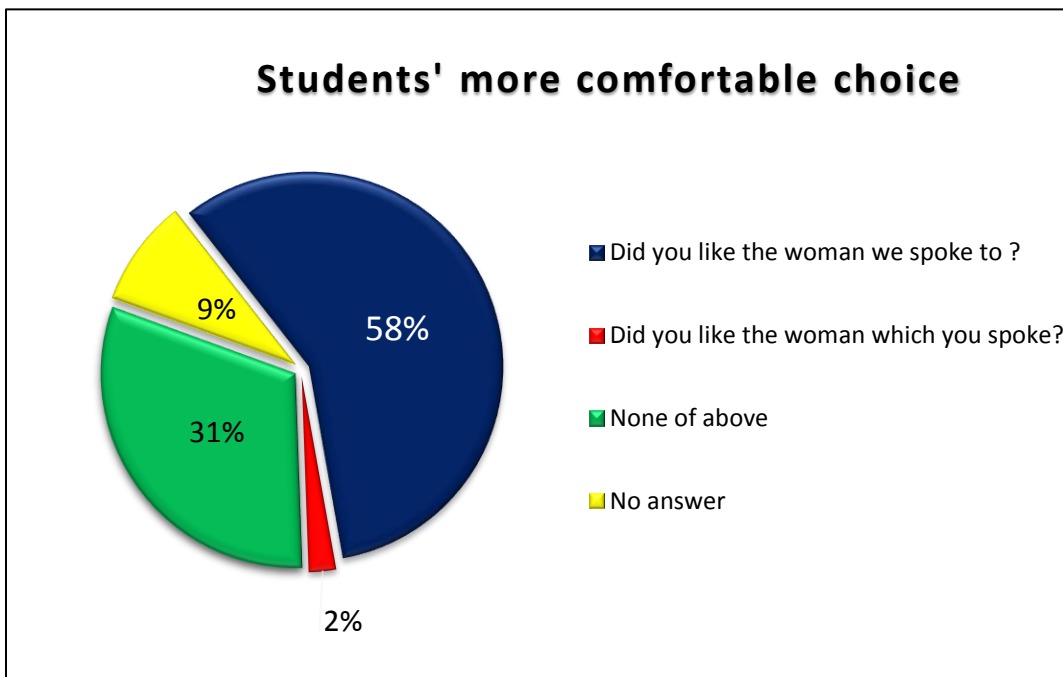
In this section students received eleven set of sentences, from which they had to choose one, the one that they considered the most natural way to express the idea proposed. The idea was to know with which sentences they were more identified. Each sentences had a special structure to recognize if there was any attachment with the other languages: Spanish or French. There were some sentences with very remarkable mistakes, for example the best preposition to follow a specific verb, or the best verb to express an idea, the use of some article, etc.

The objective with the first set of sentences was to recognize the English feature to end with a preposition. A goal that was achieved for almost 58% of the students.

Table 11 Identification of English features, preposition at the end

1 st Set of sentences	Results
Did you like the woman we spoke to?	26
Did you like the woman which you spoke?	1
None of above	14
No answer	4

Figure 11 Identification of English features, preposition at the end

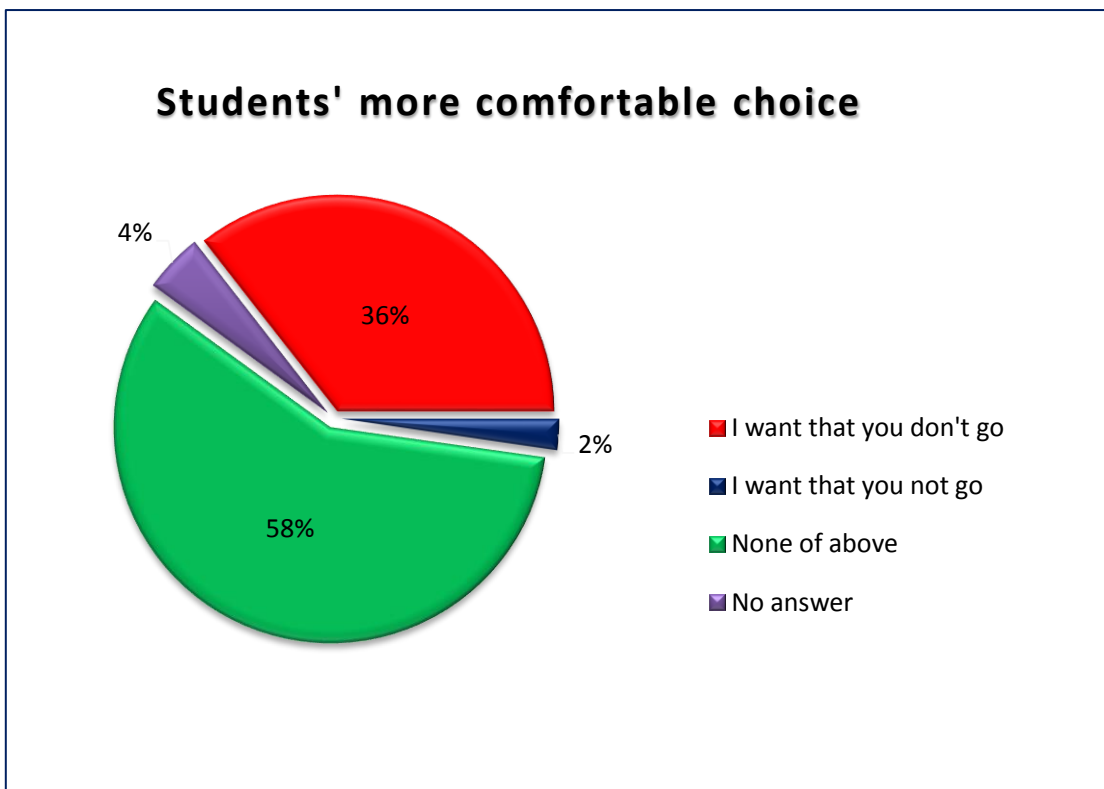


The second set of sentences included the structure to make a “negative form”. However the real challenge was to recognize the unnecessary use of the relative pronoun “that”, which it meant the use of a Spanish feature, since Spanish requires the pronoun “that” when the verb “want” is used.

Table 12 Identification of English features, use of auxiliaries to make a negative statement

2nd Set of sentences	
I want that you don't go	16
I want that you not go	1
None of above	26
No answer	2
	45

Figure 12 Identification of English features, use of auxiliaries to make a negative statement

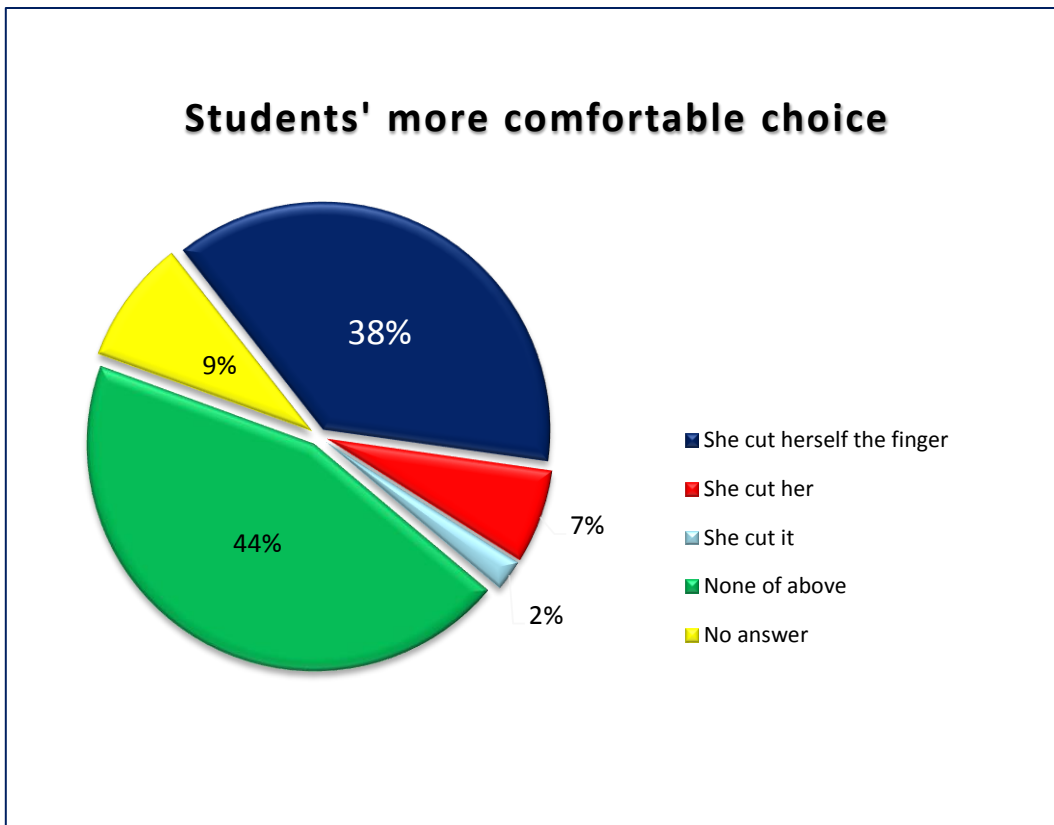


The third set of sentences included the verb “cut”. Unlike Spanish and French, the verb “cut” in English needs a reflexive pronoun. However the results showed a huge preference to check the option “none of above” and then the rest included the feature of using the reflexive pronoun attach with the verb “cut”.

Table 13 Identification of English features, use of the reflexive pronoun

3rd Set of sentences	
She cut herself the finger	17
She cut her	3
She cut it	1
None of above	20
No answer	4
	45

Figure 13 Identification of English features, use of the reflexive pronoun

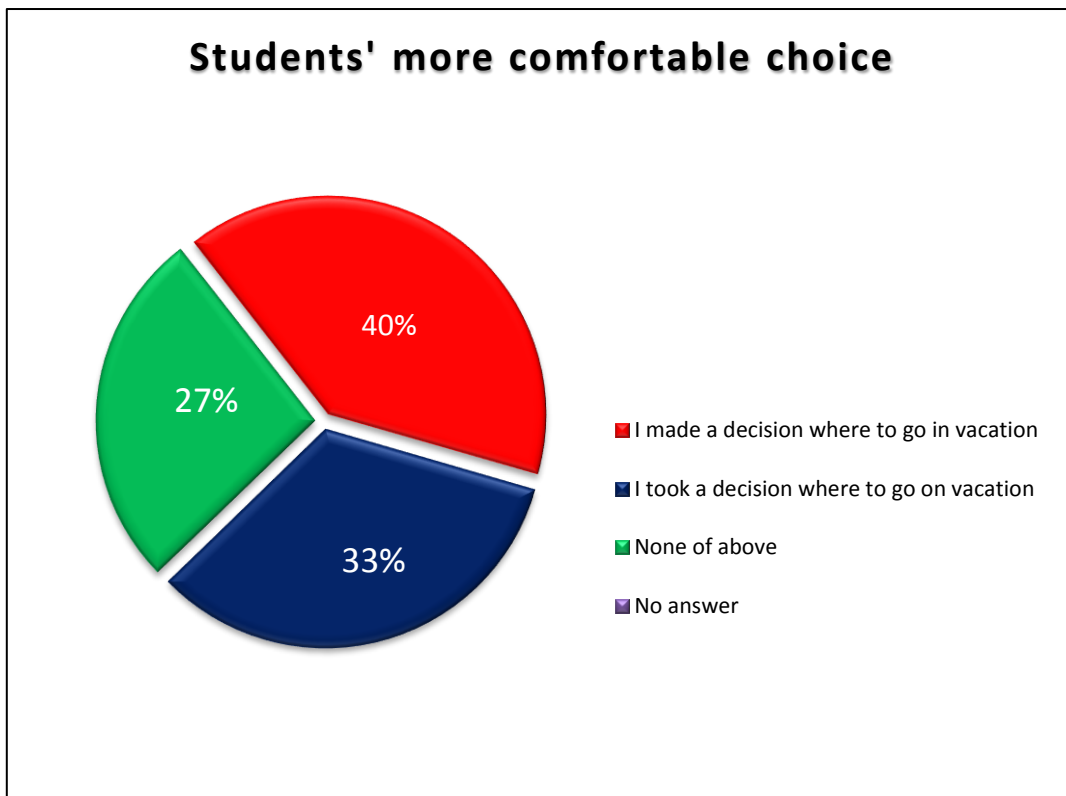


The next set of sentences included the expression “make a decision”. Its equivalent in Spanish “tomar una decisión”, could lead to a misunderstanding such as “take a decision”. However there were two details in the sentences, the preposition to introduce the noun vacation had to be also considered. These were the results:

Table 14 Identification of English features, correct verb and correct preposition

4th Set of sentences	No.
I made a decision where to go in vacation	18
I took a decision where to go on vacation	15
None of above	12
No answer	0
	45

Figure 14 Identification of English features, correct verb and correct preposition

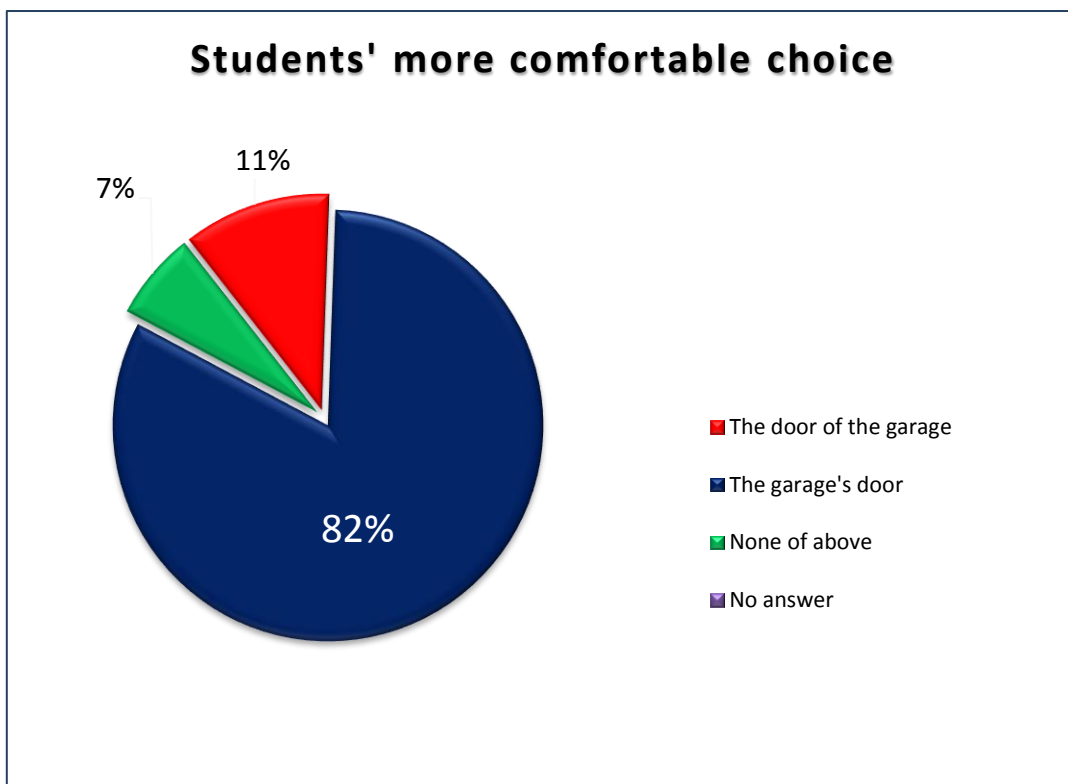


The next set of sentences involved the use of the possessive form, a structure that is essential in English and doesn't exist an equivalent in Spanish or in French. This were one of the most successful answers since most of the 80% recognized this English feature.

Table 15 Identification of English features, possessive form

5th Set of sentences	
The door of the garage	5
The garage's door	37
None of above	3
No answer	0
	45

Figure 15 Identification of English features, possessive form

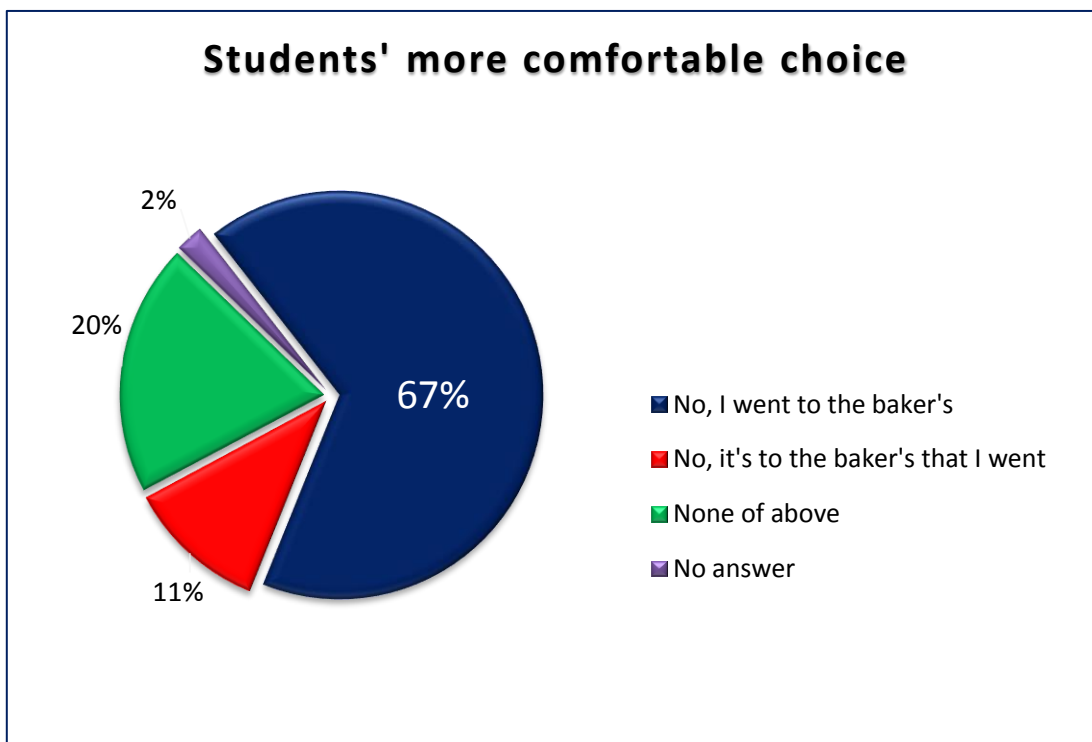


The next exercise was a question with multiple answers, it has to recall that every answer could be correct. The answers proposed were practically the same, with little differences. The first one the most chosen, came from a common English answer, meanwhile the second one could include a French perspective. This included the use of an impersonal introductive clause, which could lead to a kind of transfer from the direct translation of the French phrase “C’est la boulangerie où je viens”. Only eleven percent (11%) of the students chose this option as the more comfortable way answer, and the majority chose the most natural English answer.

Table 16 Identification of English features, adding extra information particular way from French

Didn't you go to the grocer's?	
No, I went to the baker's	30
No, it's to the baker's that I went	5
None of above	9
No answer	1
	45

Figure 16 Identification of English features, adding extra information particular way from French

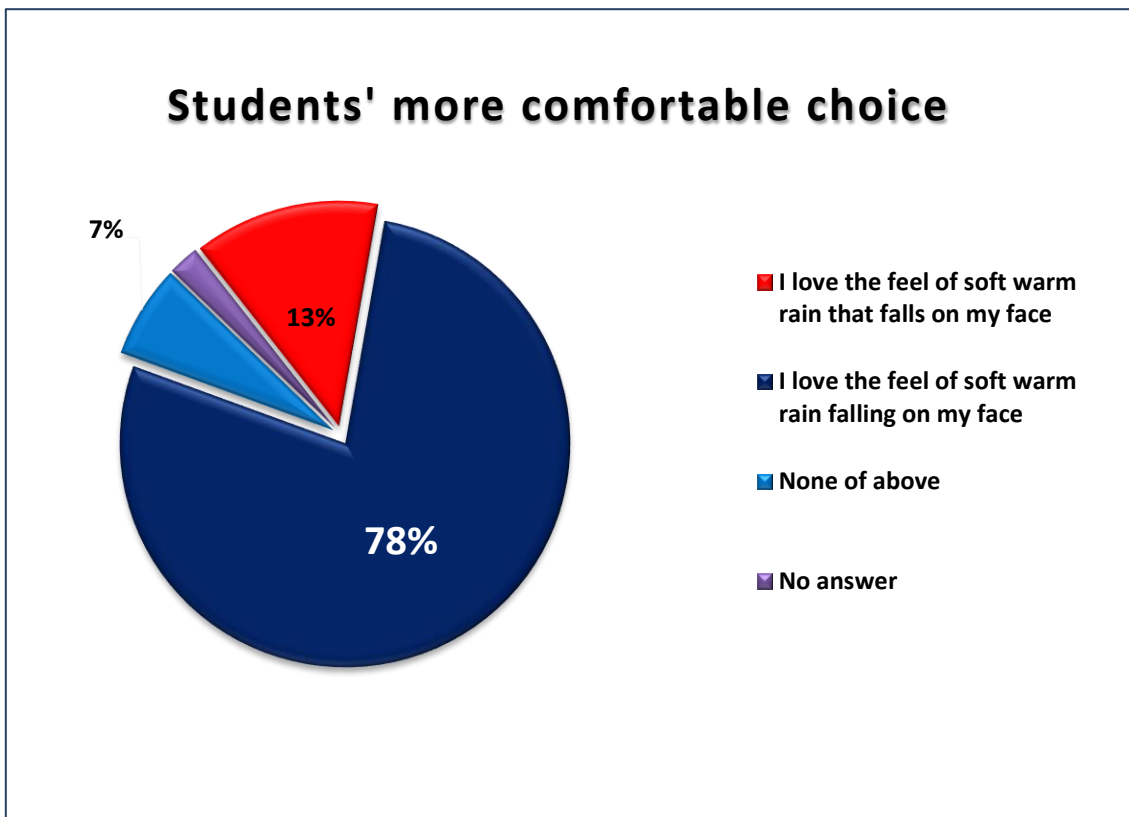


The following set of sentences had the same meaning. The main purpose was to recognize the preference for “gerund”. Gerunds are very used in English and they are one of the favorite ways, for native speakers, to express their ideas.

Figure 17 Identification of English features, preference for using gerund

7th set of sentences	
I love the feel of soft warm rain that falls on my face	6
I love the feel of soft warm rain falling on my face	35
None of above	3
No answer	1
	45

Figure 17 Identification of English features, preference for using gerund

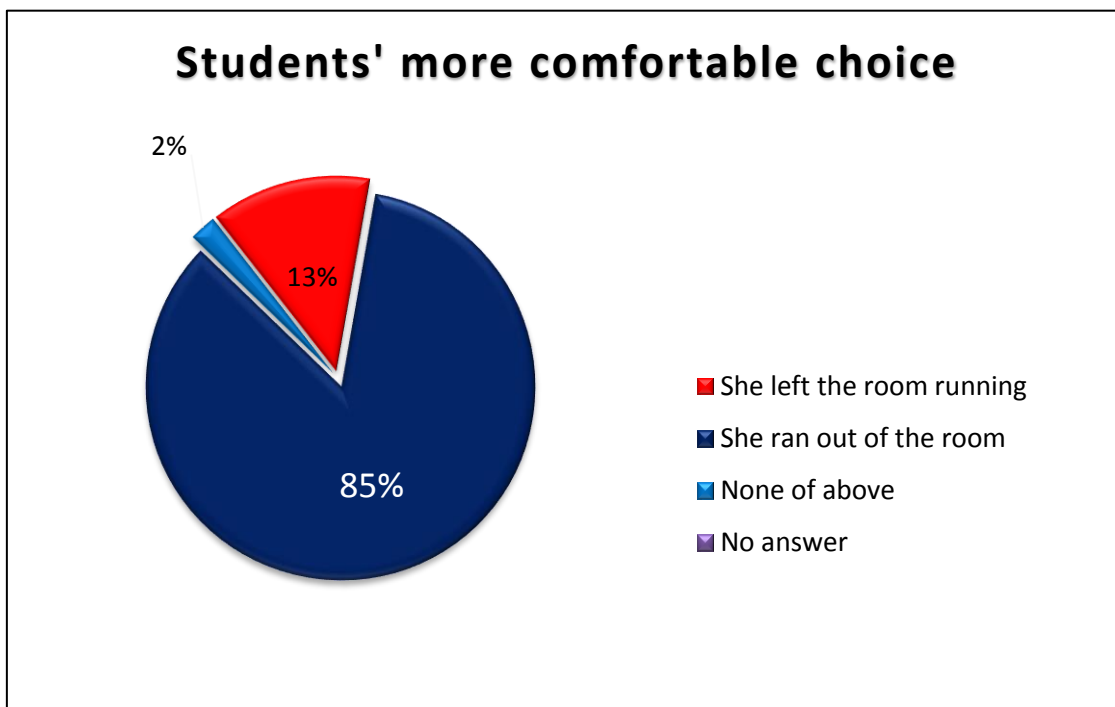


The eighth set of sentences included extra information about an implicit adverb related with French preferences. French speakers include this kind of details, while English speakers are more simple, practical and direct to express general ideas. The majority of the students identified it as the best option to describe a natural way to speak English.

Table 17 Identification of English features, preference to express the way to perform the action, French characteristic

8th set of sentences	
She left the room running	6
She ran out of the room	38
None of above	1
No answer	0
	45

Figure 18 Identification of English features, preference to express the way to perform the action, French characteristic

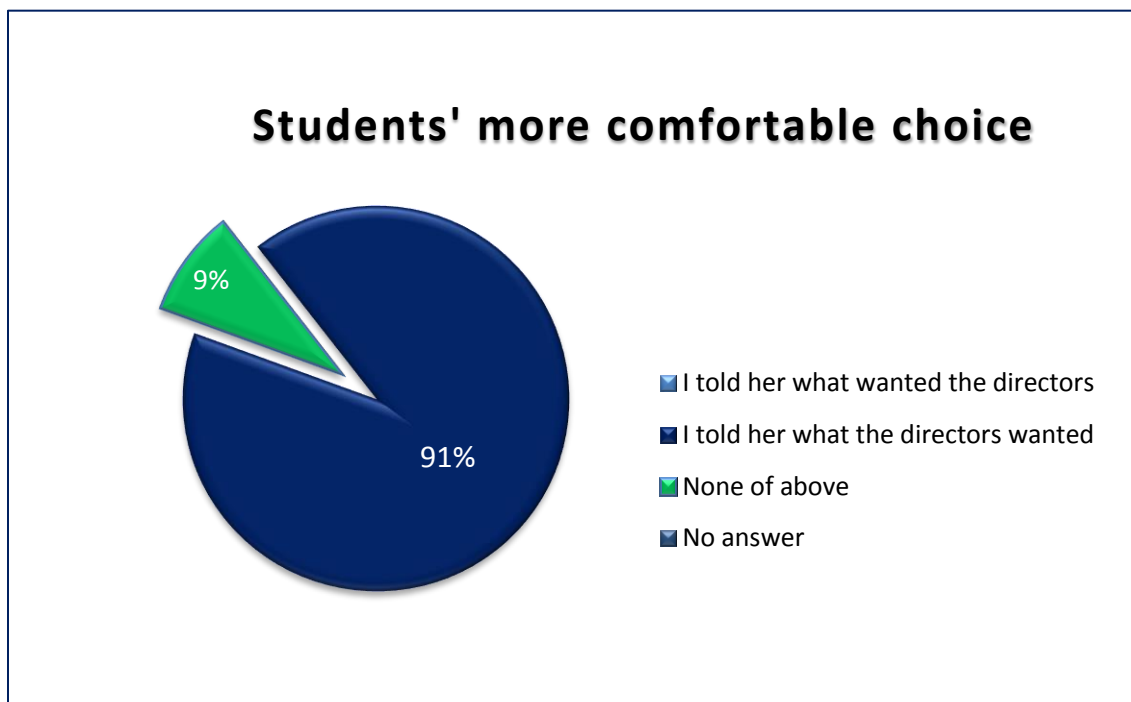


The ninth set of sentences was almost similar with the previous one, directed to measure speaker's preferences about French. The first sentence included a noun at the end, while the second one finished with a verb, a more natural way to express English ideas. This characteristics were very recognized for the students who got a great outcome in this kind of selection.

Table 19 Identification of English features, use of verb at the end of the sentence.

9th set of sentences	
I told her what wanted the directors	0
I told her what the directors wanted	41
None of above	4
No answer	0
	45

Figure 19 Identification of English features, use of verb at the end of the sentence.

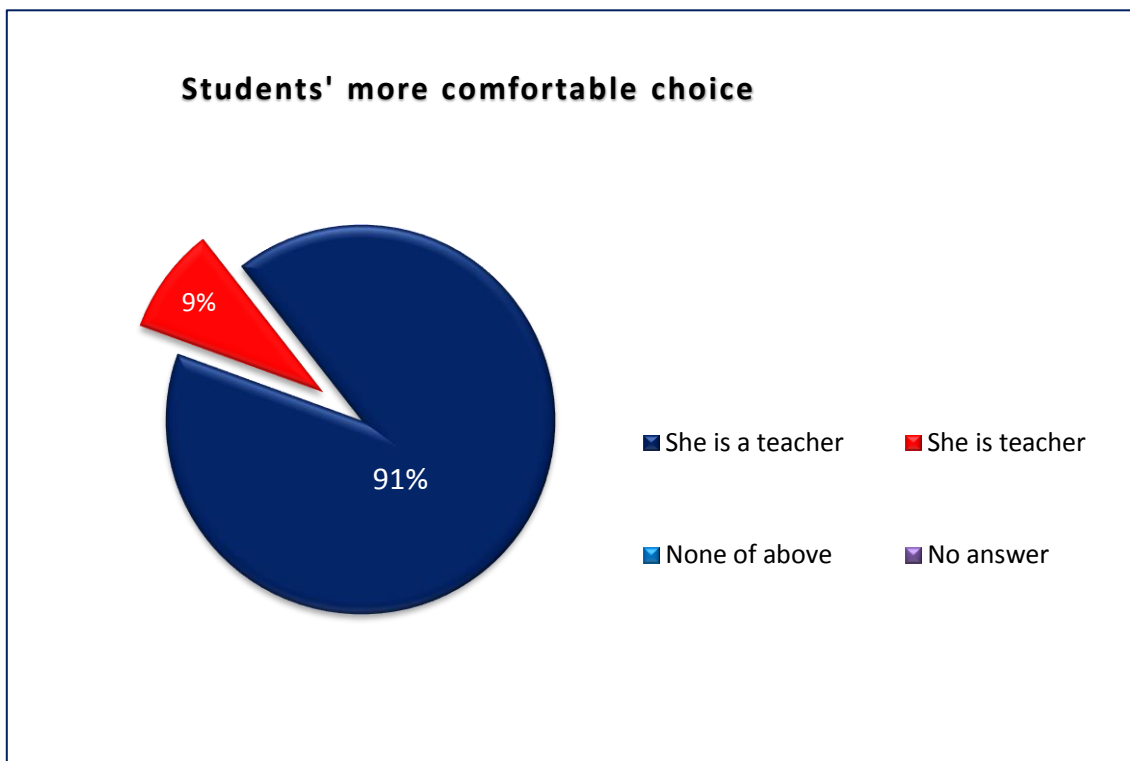


The next exercise included the use of the indefinite article “a” preceding a countable noun. This a feature used in English and French as well, but not necessary in Spanish. In Spanish is possible to omit the article and write “Ella es una profesora” or “Ella es profesora”. The result showed that the use of the article in English is an element very acquired among of the students. The majority included the use of the “article” in their preferences, at the moment of choosing a sentence.

Table 20 Identification of English features, use of indefinite article

10th set of sentences	
She is a teacher	41
She is teacher	4
None of above	0
No answer	0
	45

Table 20 Identification of English features, use of indefinite article

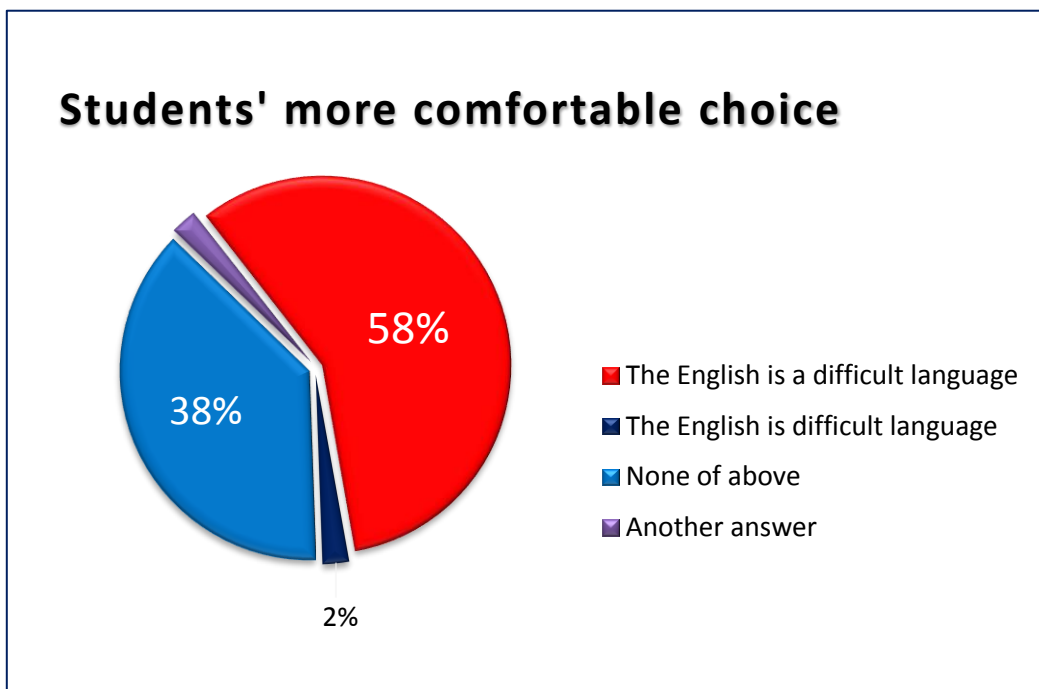


The last sentences to analyze in this section were proposed in order to explore more details about the use of articles. The use of the article in each language has its proper grammar. As an example, in French the use of article is almost imperative in every sentences. The first sentence of the exercise had two articles: the definite “the” to introduce English, which was unnecessary, and the indefinite “a” to announce a noun. Nevertheless the second sentence only included the definite article which as it was expressed, it could be omitted, and for that reason the better answer was limited to the option: “none of above”.

Table 21 Identification of English features, use of articles

11th set of sentences	
The English is a difficult language	26
The English is difficult language	1
None of above	17
Another answer	1
	45

Figure 21 Identification of English features, use of articles



To conclude this section, the next table summarized all the questions above, including the objective of the exercise and its percentage of accuracy. The accuracy was related with some other elements taken from French or Spanish, in order to realize in a numerical way, the grade of transfer received in each answer.

Table 21A Summary of identified English features.

During the process of identification of English features, did students show transfer?	Yes	No	Not sure
Q11 Preposition at the end	2,22%	57,78%	40,00%
Q12 Auxiliary to make negative Statement	2,22%	35,56%	62,22%
Q13 Verb with reflexive pronouns	8,89%	37,78%	53,33%
Q14 Best verb and best preposition	73,33%	26,67%	0,00%
Q15 Possessive forms	11,11%	82,22%	6,67%
Q16 Extra information, French characteristic	11,11%	66,67%	22,22%
Q17 Gerund preference	13,33%	77,78%	8,89%
Q18 Extra information, French characteristic	13,33%	84,44%	2,22%
Q19 Verbs at the end	0,00%	91,11%	8,89%
Q20 Use of indefinite article	8,89%	91,11%	0,00%
Q21 Use of definite and indefinite articles	60,00%	37,78%	2,22%
	18.59%	62.63%	18.79%

Figure 21A Percentage of transfer issues during the identification of English features.

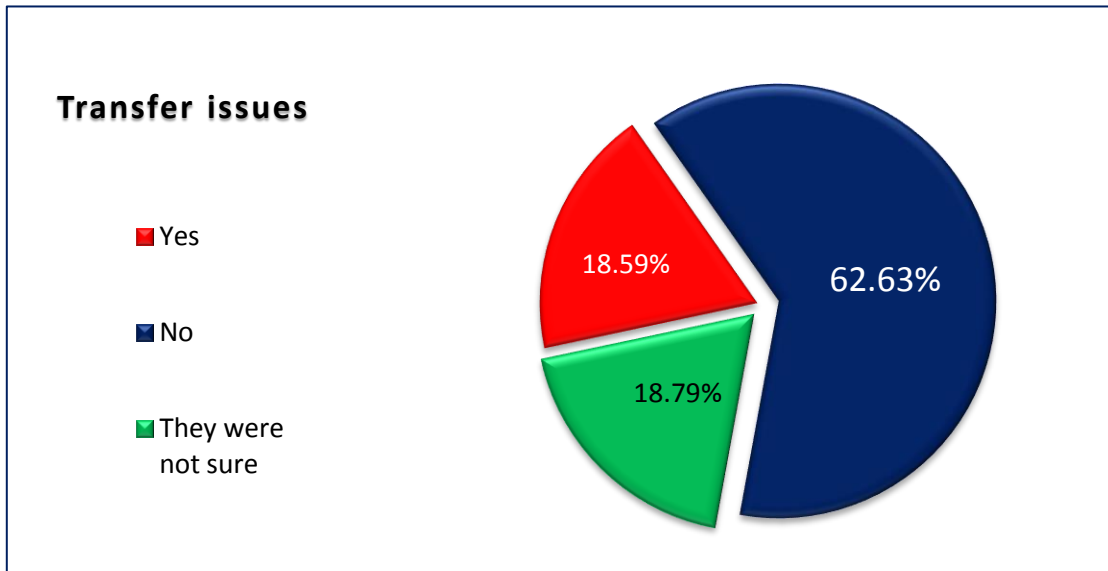
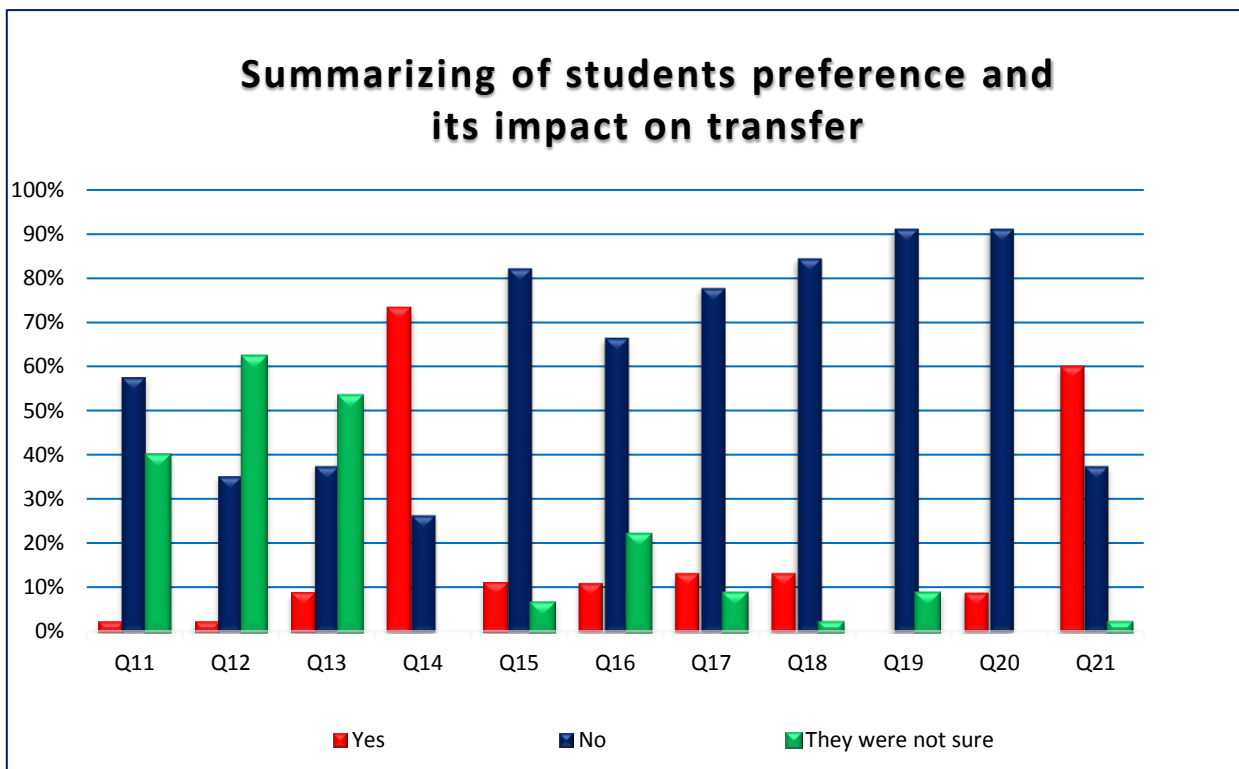


Figure 21B Transfer issues during the identification of English feature by question



In this section, a list of sentences was presented in an individual way for the students to recognize mistakes and correct them.

Table 22 Identification of English mistakes, capital letters

Q22. That's the man my sister interviewed.	
Corrected the sentence successfully	10
Corrected wrongly	2
No corrected the sentence	24
Changed the sentence successfully	9
	45

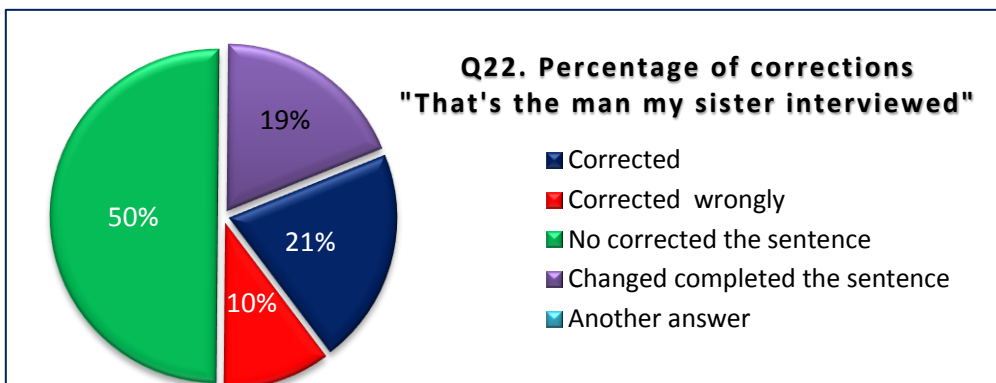
Table 22A Distribution of wrong corrections

That's the man my sister interviewed.	
wich instead of "which" to introduced a clause	1
that for this changing the meaning	1
	2

Table 22B Distribution of alternative correction

That's the man my sister interviewed.	
Introduce "that" as a part of the clause	2
Replace "He" for that	5
Introduce "who" as a part of the clause	2
	9

Figure 22 Identification of English mistakes, capital letters



The next sentence was: “I have too much eaten”. The place of the adverb is incorrect in English as well in Spanish according to the direct translation “Yo he comido mucho”. Nevertheless that is the structure for French Grammar in past “J’ai beaucoup mangé” (auxiliary + adverb + past participle) the results about this question were the following:

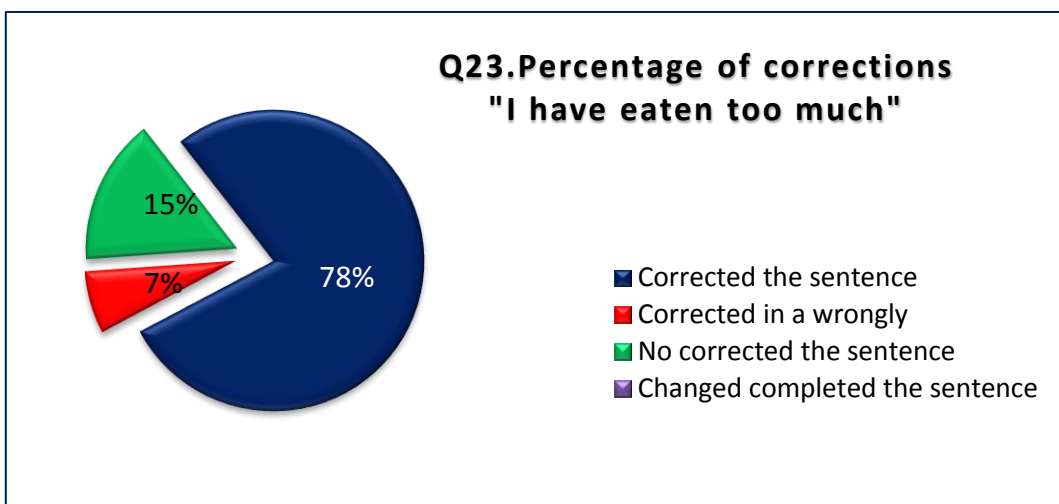
Table 23 Identification of English mistakes, place of adverbs

Q23. I have too much eaten	
Corrected the sentence	35
Corrected in a wrongly	3
No corrected the sentence	7
Changed completed the sentence	0
Another answer	0
	45

Table 23A Distribution of wrong corrections

I have too much eaten	
Included extra information to complete the sentence “... food”	1
Grammar mistake, changing I have for “I’m”	1
omitted the auxiliary “have”	1
	3

Figure 23 Identification of English mistakes, place of adverbs



The next sentence was: “How he runs fast!” where, again, the place of the adverb was incorrect. Due the structure of the exclamatory sentence, the punctuation mark was mandatory. The correct sentence was: “How fast he runs!”

Table 24 Identification of English mistakes, place of adverbs

Q24. How fast he runs!	
Corrected the sentence	16
Corrected in a wrongly	2
No corrected the sentence	17
Changed to an affirmative sentence	7
Changed completed the sentence	3
	45

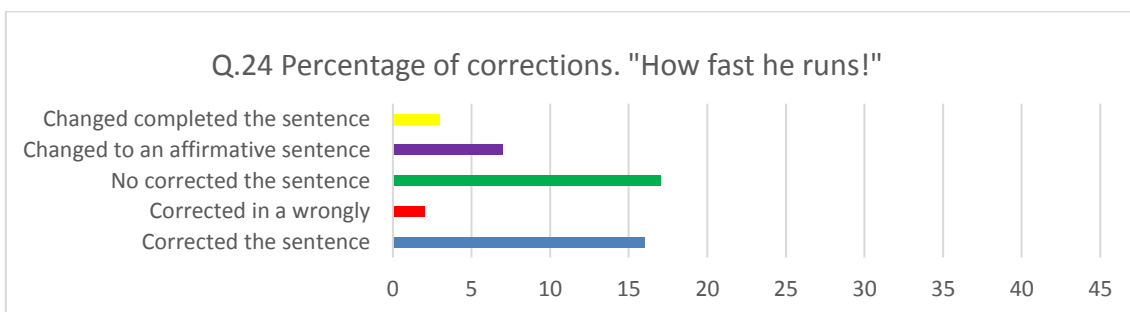
Table 24A Distribution of wrong corrections

How fast he runs!	
How does he runs fast!	1
Wow, how he runs fast!	1
	2

Table 24B Distribution of alternative correction

Q24. How fast he runs!	
How fast he runs	7
He runs fast	2
He runs so fast	1
	10

Figure 24 Identification of English mistakes, place of adverbs

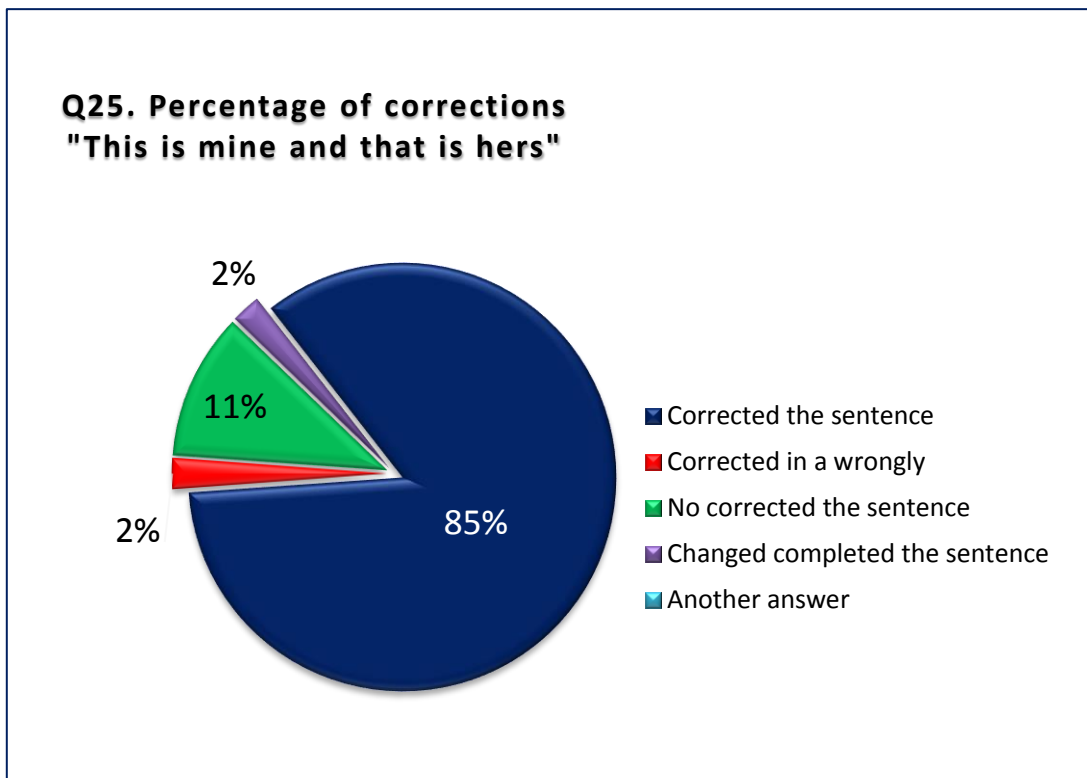


The sentence proposed was: "This is the mine and that is the hers." The objective in this sentence was to recognize and omit the definite article "the". Even though in Spanish and in French the definite article is required to introduced the possessive pronouns "mine" and "hers" it is not the case of English. This was one of the most accurate answers, in the entire survey. Despite the fact that in Spanish and French the definite articles is mandatory, the majority of the students, eighty nine percent (89%), were sure that in English the use of the definite article to introduce the possessive pronoun produced a mistake.

Table 25 Identification of English mistakes, use of articles

Q25. This is the mine and that is the hers.	
Corrected the sentence	40
Corrected in a wrongly	1
No corrected the sentence	4
Changed completed the sentence	
Another answer	
	45

Figure 25 Identification of English mistakes, use of articles

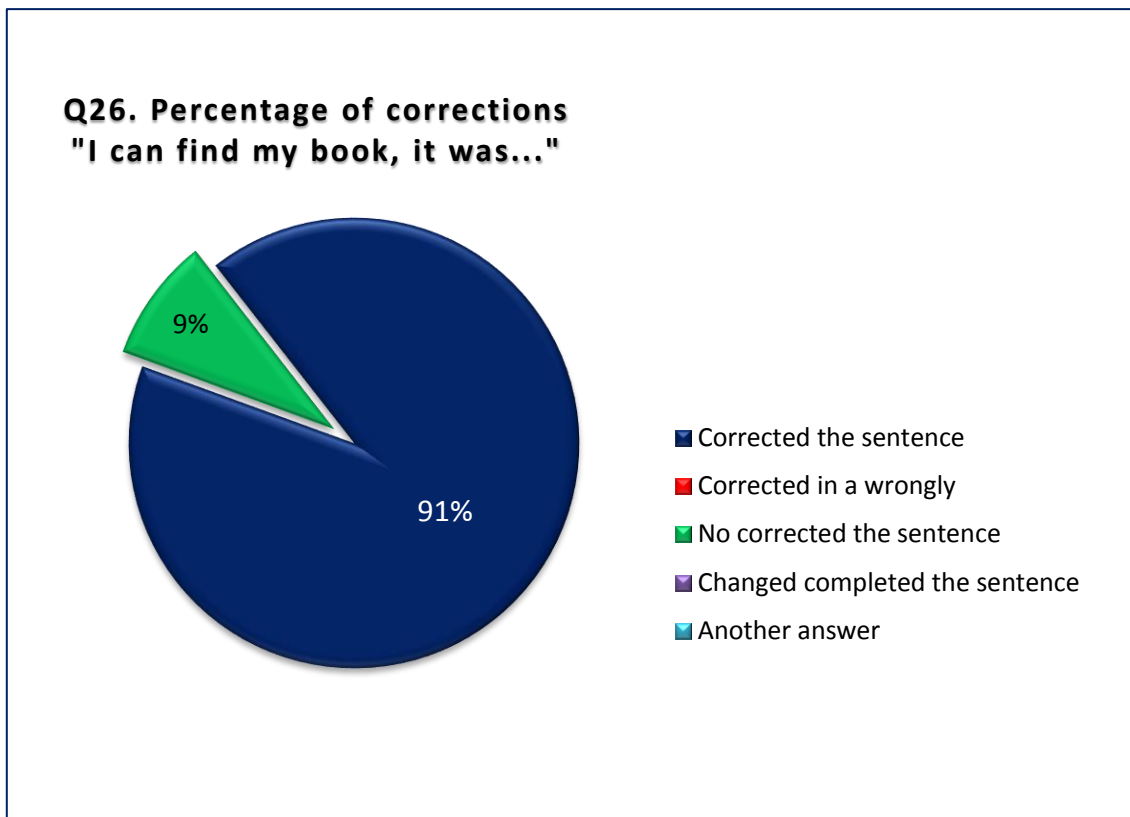


The next sentence was: "I can't find my book - he was on the table a minute ago." In this sentence the mistake was the use of pronoun "he" masculine and singular to replace the noun "book". It is a French and Spanish characteristic to assign to a common noun the gender and number characteristic.

Table 26 Identification of English mistakes, no gender in common noun

Q26. I can't find my book, it was on the table a minute ago.	
Corrected the sentence	41
Corrected in a wrongly	0
No corrected the sentence	4
Changed completed the sentence	
Another answer	
	45

Figure 26 Identification of English mistakes, no gender in common noun



This exercise was very particular: “Let’s take a drink.” This sentence included the verb “let”, making a “suggestion”. It is for that reason that it was acceptable the answer: “Let’s drink” because is very practical considering “drink” as the main verb. The results were displayed in the following table.

Table 27 Identification of English mistakes, special features of verb “let”

Q27. Let’s drink.	
Corrected the sentence	2
Corrected different	14
No corrected the sentence	28
Corrected in a wrong way	1
	45

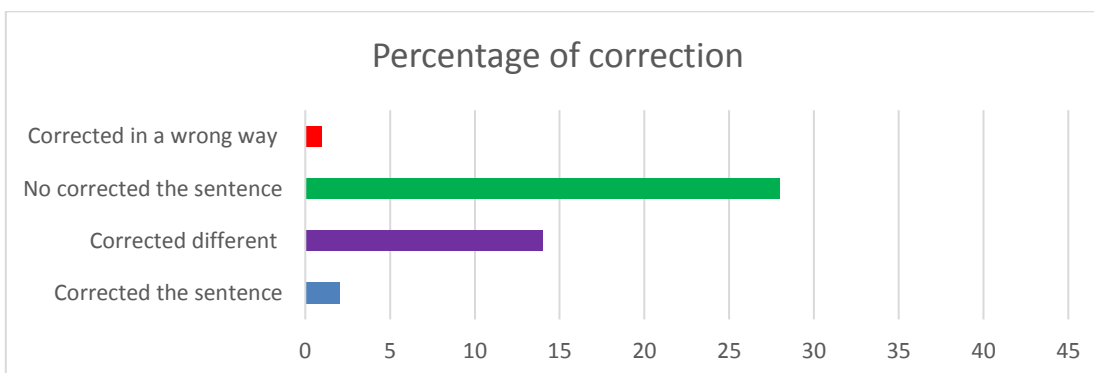
Table 27 A Description of the only one mistake

Let’s drink.	
Added “to” between the verbs	1

Table 27 Description of alternative corrections

Let’s drink.	
Let’s have a drink	11
Added Exclamation mark	2
Let’s get a drink	1
	15

Figure 27 Identification of English mistakes, special features of verb “let”



The next sentence focused on the place of the adverb “enough”. The sentence was presented as: “Is your coffee enough sweet? The expecting answer: Is your coffee sweet enough? The exercise was proposed with some Spanish and French feature in the place of the adverb. As an extra point, the correction of the misspelling of the word “coffee”.

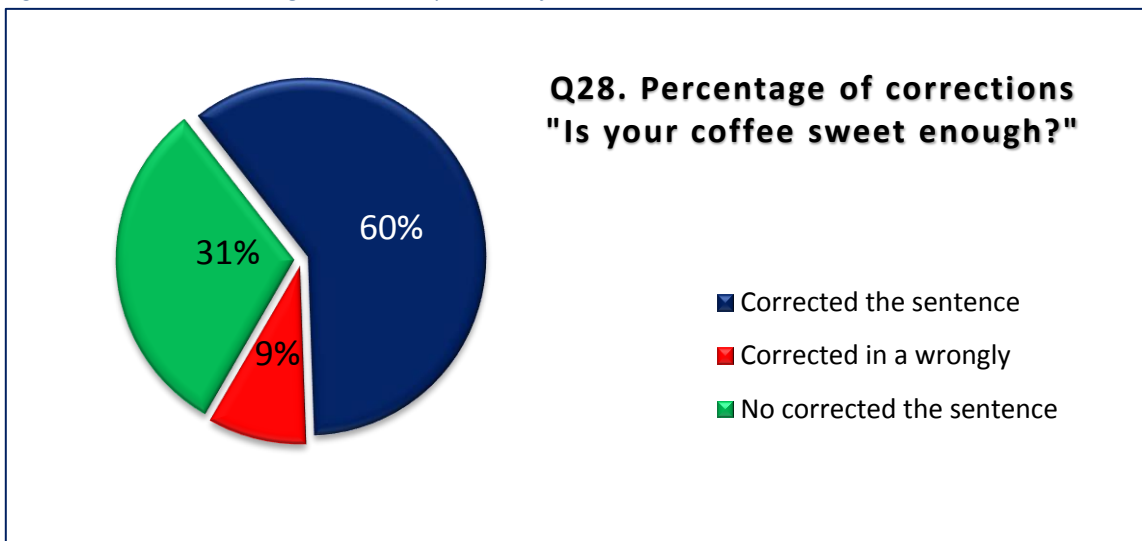
Table 28 Identification of English mistakes, place of adjectives

Q28. Is your coffee sweet enough?	
Corrected the sentence	27
Corrected in a wrongly	4
No corrected the sentence	14
	45

Table 28A Distribution of wrong corrections

Is your coffee sweet enough?	
moved the verb improperly	1
included the pronoun “it” and a noun at the same time	1
incomplete sentence	1
no punctuation mark	1
	4

Figure 28 Identification of English mistakes, place of adjectives



The next exercise was related with the importance and the differences of the use of capital letter among the three languages. The original statement was “I will begin german clases on the first tuesday of january”. There were some mistakes in the sentences. The aspects to evaluate were, in orthography, capital letters and spelling; in grammar, the use of the correct preposition; and also, as a plus element, the preference of the verb “start” over “begin”.

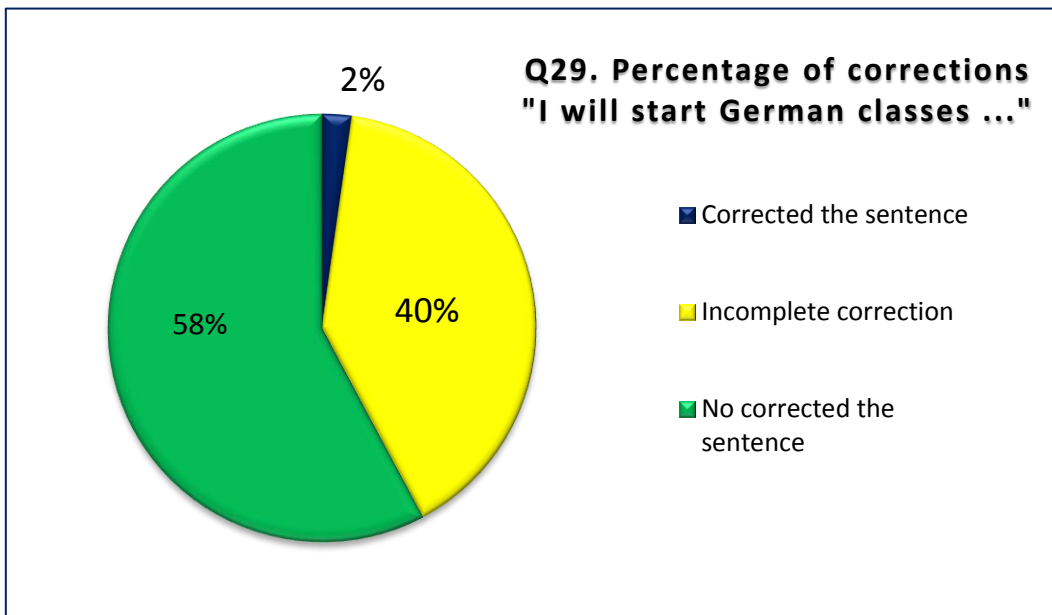
Table 29 Identification of English mistakes, miscellaneous: “Capital letter, preposition & spelling”

Q29. I will start German classes the first Tuesday in January.	
Corrected the sentence	1
Incomplete correction	18
No corrected the sentence	26
	45

Table 29 Distribution of corrected mistakes

I will start German classes the first Tuesday in January.	
Capital	17 of 135
Spelling	10 of 45
Preposition / articles	7 of 45
*Just one student achieve successfully the complete correction	

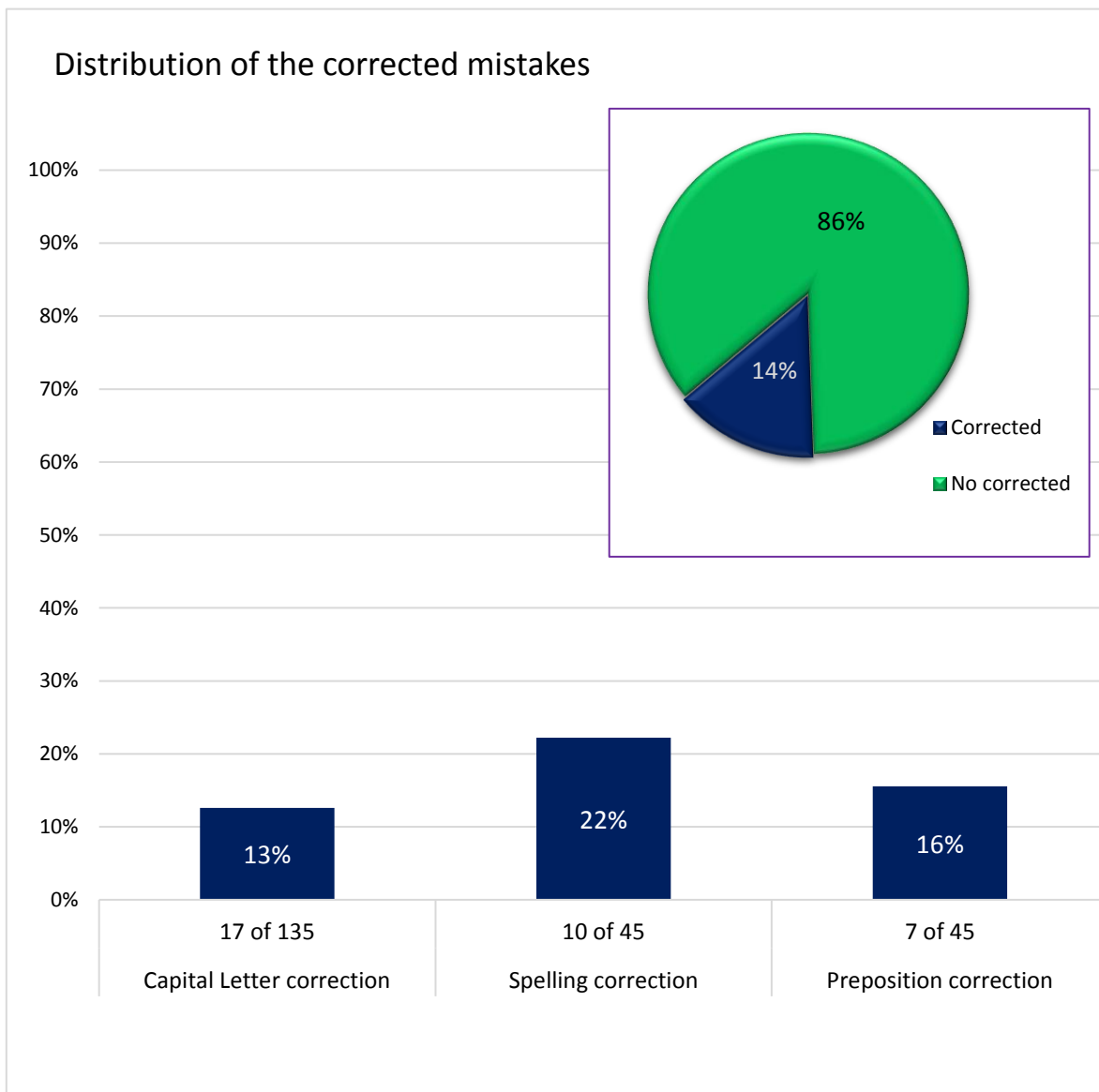
Figure 29 Identification of English mistakes, miscellaneous: “Capital letter, preposition & spelling”



At the end, the most successful correction was, in percentage the spelling, which had a better ratio among than the other two. The spelling was the most identified by the students, since the “ss” is not characteristic of the Spanish, however French has this double graphical symbol.

In general term, just 2% of the sample who represented just one student achieved successfully the entire answer. The others did not complete the correction (40%). However the great majority left the sentence without any change.

Figure 29A Distribution of corrected mistakes and its percentage of final accuracy



The last sentence of this section was always related with the capital letter at the beginning of the sentence. The proposed sentence was: “who does fred sit next to?” The answer expected was “Who does Fred sit next to?”

Table 30 Identification of English mistakes, capital letter

Q30. Who does Fred sit next to?	
Corrected	9
Partial corrected	2
Wrong correction	5
No corrected	25
Other answer	4
	45

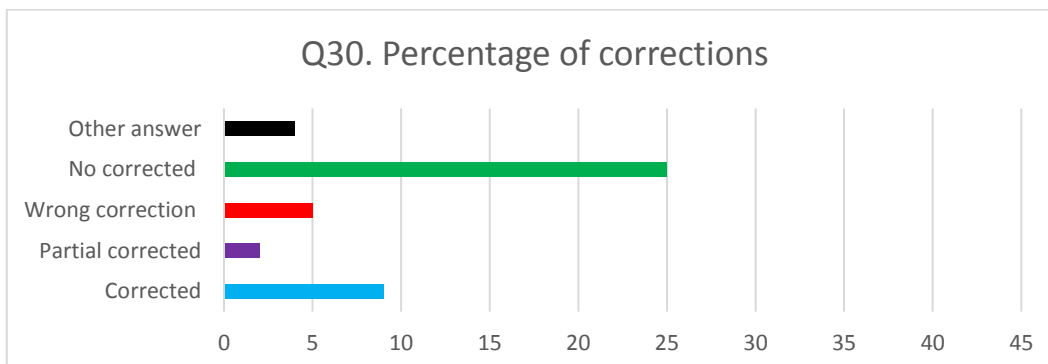
Table 30 Distribution of wrong corrections

Q30. Who does Fred sit next to?	
Replaced who for whom	1
Omitted the auxiliary	2
Used double auxiliary “does” and “is”	2
	5

Table 30 Distribution of alternatives corrections

Q30. Who does Fred sit next to?	
Changed the tense	3
Another way to say it	1
	4

Figure 30 Identification of English mistakes, capital letter

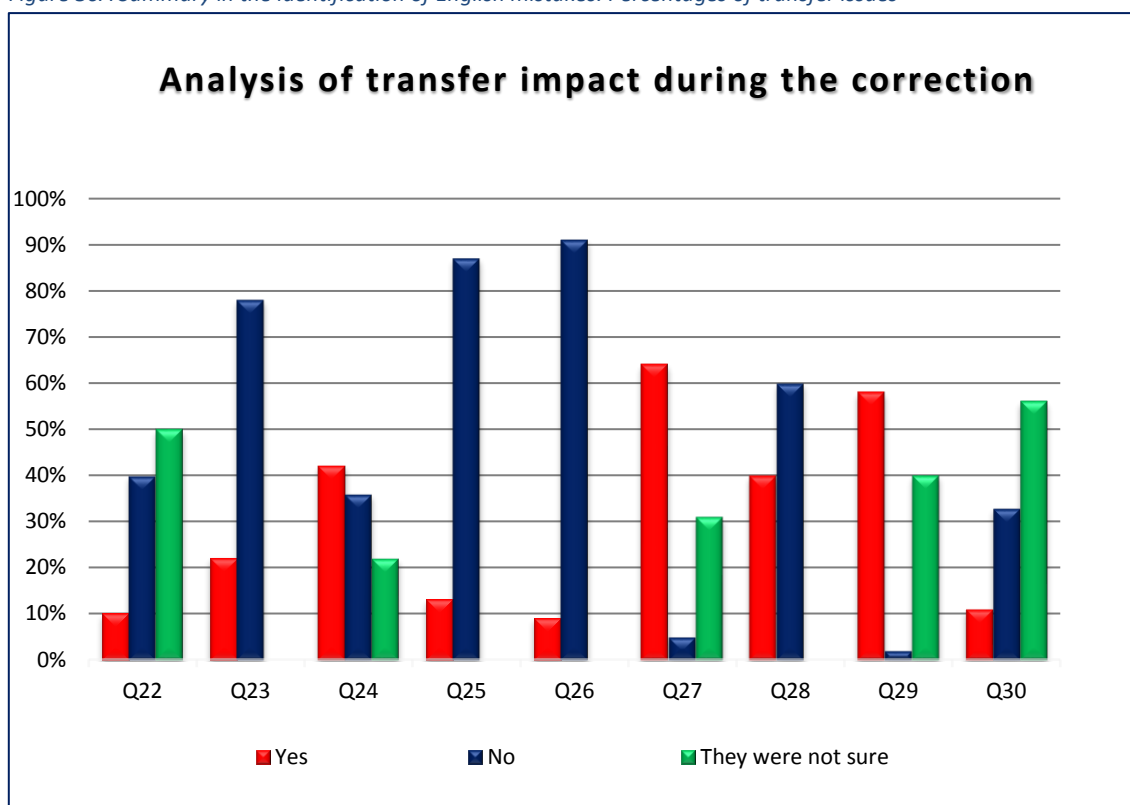


At the end of this section, a summary is presented with all the sentences. As in the previous section, the objective with the sentences was to realize the grade of success and try to measure and to quantify other borrowed elements from Spanish and French.

Table 30A Summary in the identification of English mistakes

During the process of identification of English Mistakes. Did students show transfer?	Yes	No	No sure
Q22 Capital letters	10,00%	40,00%	50,00%
Q23 Place of adverb	22,00%	78,00%	0,00%
Q24 Place of adverb	42,00%	36,00%	22,00%
Q25 Articles	13,00%	87,00%	0,00%
Q26 Gender	9,00%	91,00%	0,00%
Q27 Verb as modals	64,00%	5,00%	31,00%
Q28 Place of adjectives	40,00%	60,00%	0,00%
Q29 Capital letter & prepositions	58,00%	2,00%	40,00%
Q30 Capital letter	11,00%	33,00%	56,00%
Average	29,89%	48,00%	22,11%

Figure 30A Summary in the identification of English mistakes. Percentages of transfer issues



The last part of the survey, the fourth section, included fourteen pairs of cognates. Cognates, are the words that generate more related to transfer, due its nature. This words display almost the same writing in both language, and in some cases, the meaning in the target language it is the same that the language that comes from. In other cases the meaning is completely different, making students fail in the comprehension of the message. The survey contained seven pairs of cognates in English and Spanish and the other seven in English and French. The idea proposed was to check all the cognate with the same meaning.

In the list provided, the students had to check the pair with the same meaning. There were two of seven (2/7) pairs of real cognates in the English–Spanish column, and there were three pairs of real cognates in the English-French column.

Table 31A Identification of pairs of words with the same meaning from different language: English - Spanish.

Pairs of words with same meaning:		Answer	Correct	Wrong	% correct	% Wrong
English -Spanish						
1	Actually - Actualmente	No	9	36	80%	20%
2	Submission - Sumisión	Yes	16	29	36%	64%
3	Deception - Decepción	No	25	20	44%	56%
4	Current - Corriente	No	12	33	73%	27%
5	Advertisement - Advertencia	No	9	36	80%	20%
6	Desert - Desierto	Yes	26	19	58%	42%
7	Bizarre - Bizarro	No	35	10	22%	78%
	Obtained answers		145	170		
	Expected answers		90	225		

Table 31B Identification of pairs of words with the same meaning from different language: English - French

Pairs of words with same meaning:		Answer	Correct	Wrong	% correct	% Wrong
English -French						
1	Bachelor - Bachelier	No	12	33	73%	27%
2	Cognate - Cognat	Yes	6	39	13%	87%
3	Affair - Affaire	Yes	23	22	51%	49%
4	Attend - Attendre	No	17	28	62%	38%
5	Journée - Journey	Yes	21	24	47%	53%
6	Pretend - Pretendre	No	21	24	53%	47%
7	Achieve - Achever	No	20	25	56%	44%
	Obtained answers		120	195		
	Expected answers		135	180		

The following chart showed the grade of success in the cognate pairs. The maximum accuracy reached was of eighty percent (80%) in the English–Spanish column, while in the French–Spanish column, and was seventy three percent (73%). The better performance was obtained in the sets that involved Spanish. The most unsuccessful percentage was reached in the column English–French where just thirteen percent (13%) was reached.

Table 31C Identification of pairs of cognates: English - Spanish. In decreased grade of accuracy

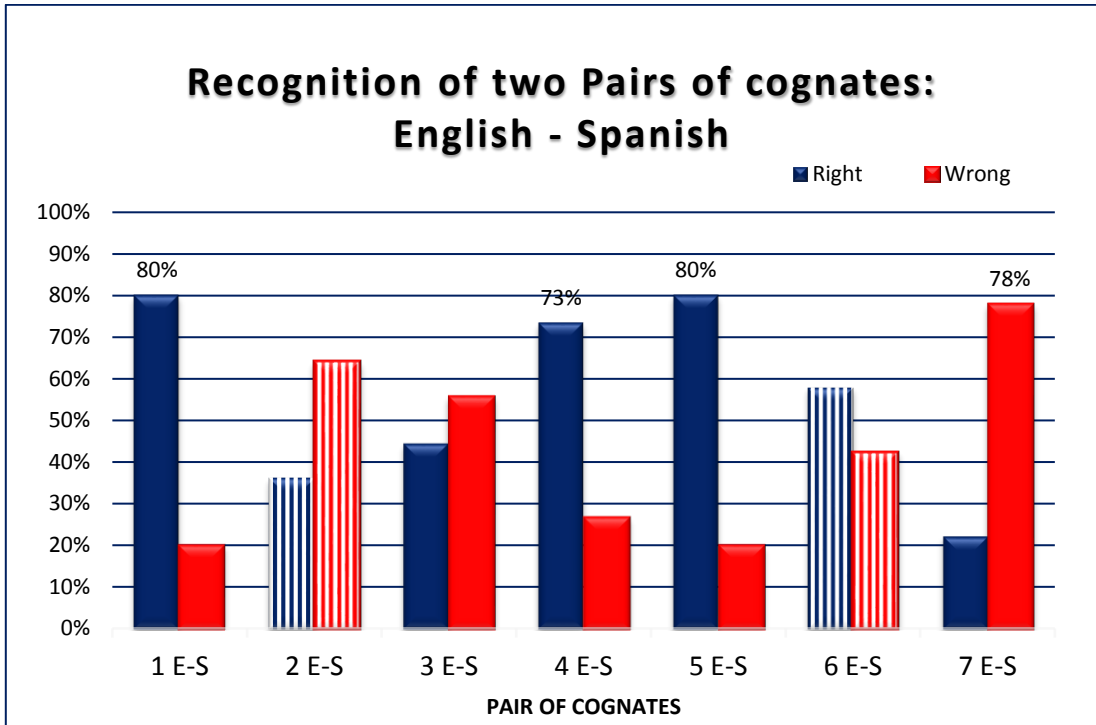
	Pairs of word with same meaning: English - Spanish	Answer	Correct	Wrong	% Correct	% Wrong
1	Actually - Actualmente	No	9	36	80%	20%
5	Advertisement - Advertencia	No	9	36	80%	20%
4	Current - Corriente	No	12	33	73%	27%
6	Desert - Desierto	Yes	26	19	58%	42%
3	Deception - Decepción	No	25	20	44%	56%
2	Submission - Sumisión	Yes	16	29	36%	64%
7	Bizarre - Bizarro	No	35	10	22%	78%

Table 31D Identification of pairs of cognates: English - French. In decreased grade of accuracy

	Pairs of words with same meaning: English -French	Answer	Correct	Wrong	% Correct	% Wrong
1	Bachelor - Bachelier	No	12	33	73%	27%
4	Attend - Attendre	No	17	28	62%	38%
7	Achieve - Achever	No	20	25	56%	44%
6	Pretend - Pretendre	No	21	24	53%	47%
3	Affair - Affaire	Yes	23	22	51%	49%
5	Journée - Journey	Yes	21	24	47%	53%
2	Cognate - Cognat	Yes	6	39	13%	87%

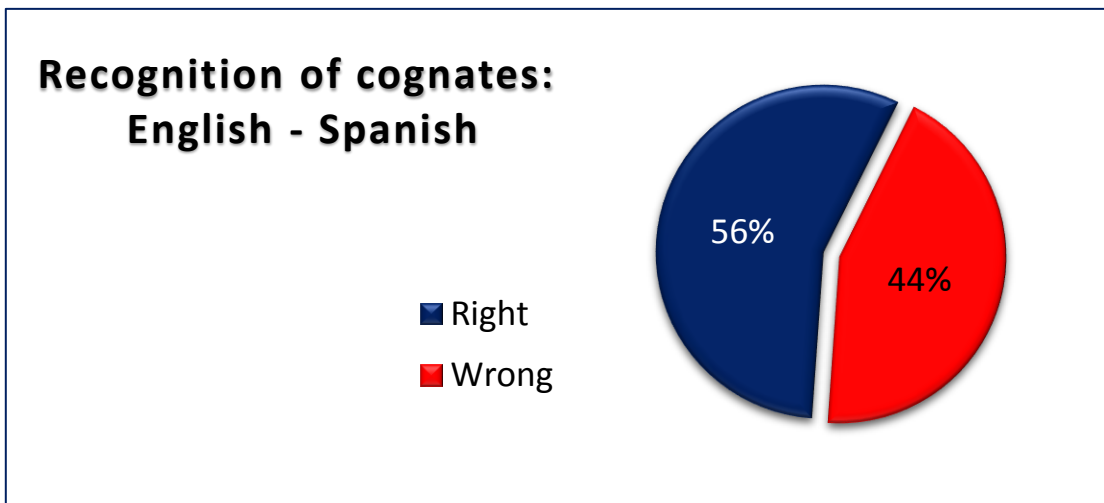
Among the English-Spanish pairs of possible cognates, any pair could get the 100% expected. The maximum accomplishment reached the eighty percent (80%) and it happened in two pair of cognates: “actually – actualmente” and “advertisement – advertencia” as well. However there were some other pairs who got considerable failures, for example “bizarre – bizarro”, with a failures of 80% of all the answers. It has to be remarked that among the cognate pairs given, just one of them was a real a cognate, the number six, but that pair was not distinguished among of the others.

Figure 31A Identification of pairs of words with the same meaning from different language: English - Spanish



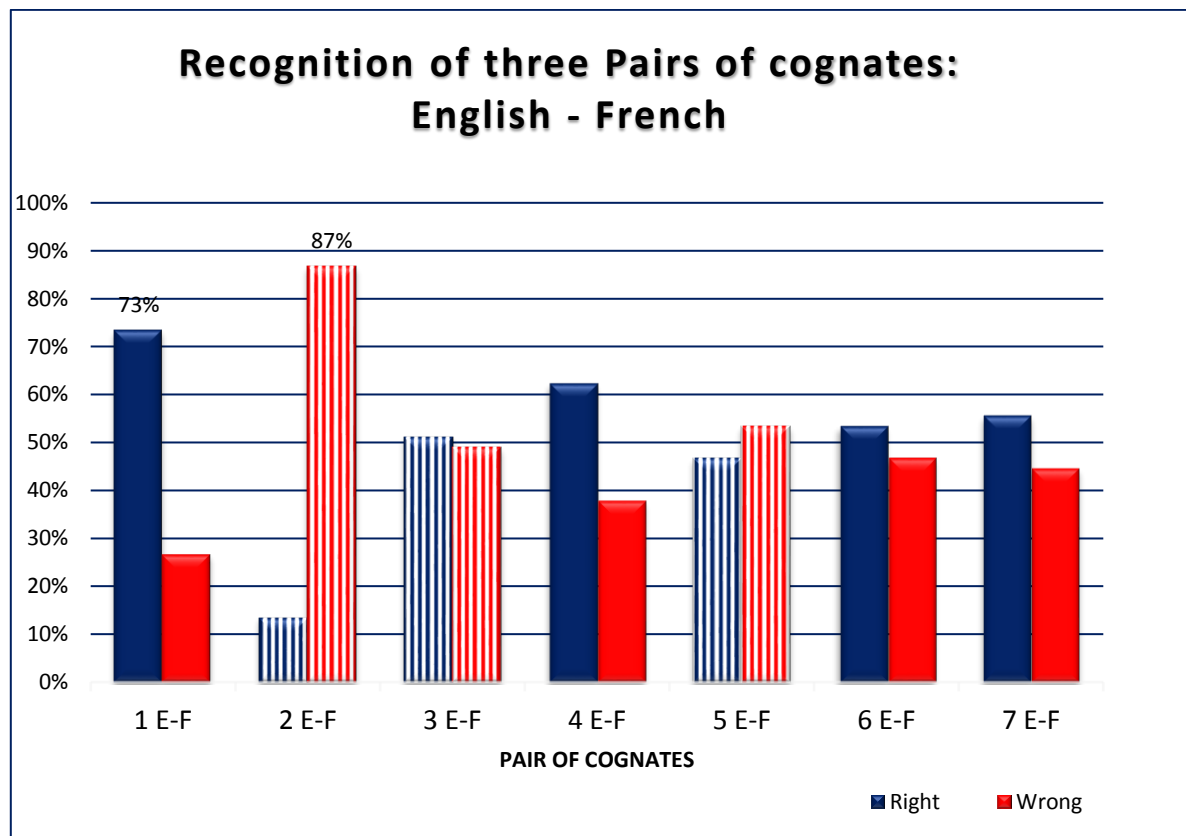
To measure how successful was the development of the students in this section of the survey, it could take a look over the success percentages and the failure percentages in the seven pairs of cognates: English-Spanish. A great indicator was the average of those percentages, the found results suggested a fifty six percent (56%) of right answers versus forty four percent (44%) of wrong answers.

Figure 31A – 1 Grade of accuracy recognizing cognates among the pairs English - Spanish



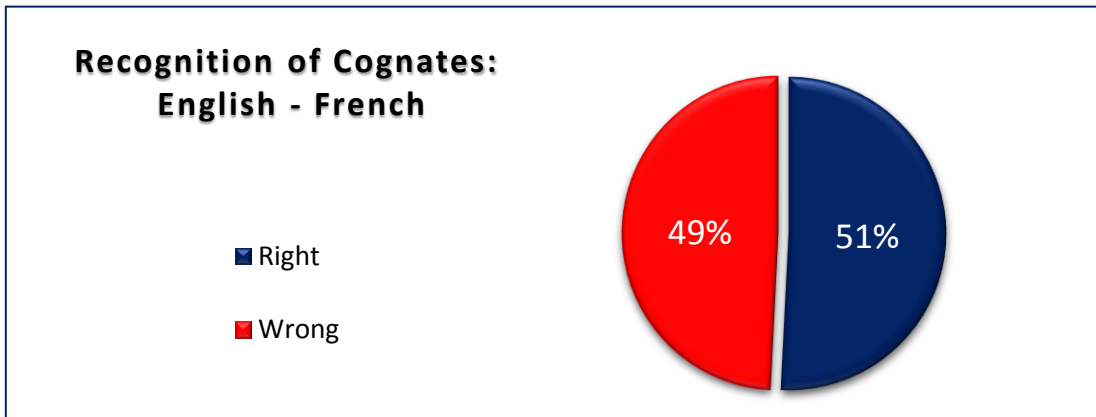
In the next pair of cognates, English–French, students, also were given seven pairs of possible cognate. From those, only three pairs were real cognates (number two, three and five). The results showed that the most successful pair was number one, “bachelor – Bachelier”. The majority of students answered “no” to the question about if those words had the same meaning. In effect seventy three percent of the students (73%) answered correctly. This was a little low percentage in comparison with the English-Spanish chart, where the highest percentages reached eighty percent (80%) almost three times. The same performance was registered with the most failed pair that touched a percentage (87%) over the maximum failure of the Spanish percentage (78%).

Figure 31B Identification of pair of word with the same meaning from different language: English - French



Based on the average of all the success percentages as well as the failure percentages, it could say that the best performance about cognates was between the pairs of English–Spanish. Comparing the both pairs (English-Spanish, English-French) the first binomial reached a sixty percent (60%) of right answers and the second one reached a fifty one percent (51%) as the following graph indicate.

Figure 31B – 1 Grade of accuracy recognizing cognates among the pairs English-French



To conclude this section, the graph shows all the pair of cognates listed. It is possible to appreciate that the best performance was, in general terms, among the English–Spanish pairs. One reason could be because in Spanish the vocabulary skills was stronger than in French, however the variation never overpassed the limited of eighty (80%) percent.

Figure 31C Accuracy in vocabulary. Recognition of pairs of words with same meaning in two languages.

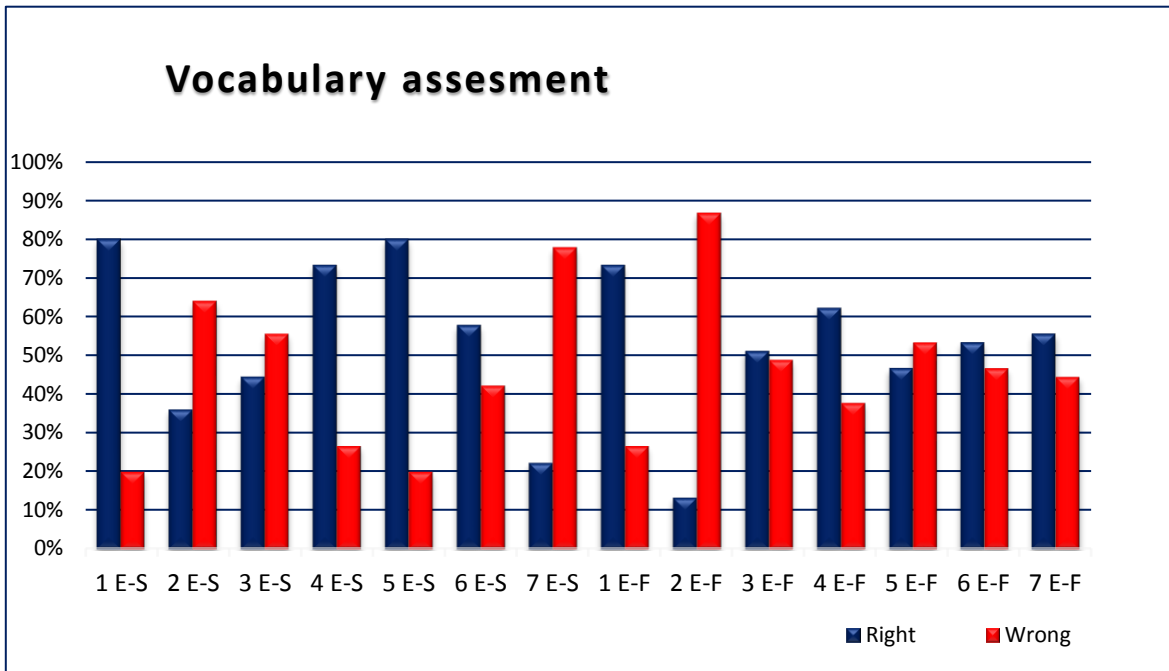


Figure 31C – 1 Grade of accuracy in recognition of pairs of cognates

