

Present subjunctive embedded in focus-on-form activities:
A case of formal instruction in the L2 Spanish classroom

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Abstract

A large corpus of research focused on the acquisition of the subjunctive in the Spanish classroom suggests that this mood possesses a deep inherent complexity. This is mainly the case due to two factors: a) the elaborated syntactic constructions prompted by the subjunctive, and b) the varied interpretations and meanings conveyed by this mood. As such, learners of Spanish as a foreign language (hereafter FL) undergo a lengthy process in order to comprehend, implement and naturally and efficiently employ the subjunctive in their speech at the written and spoken level. Having said that, raising the communicative value of the subjunctive may elevate its noticeability (Collentine, 2010). Activities that support focus-on-form are designed to attract a learner's attention to a particular form, especially during communication (Ellis, 2016). Moreover, current research supports increased accuracy with pair work, especially when dealing with complex grammatical forms (Baleghizadeh, 2010). For that reason, activities involving collaborative tasks should be implemented into the classroom (Fernández Dobao, 2012). In an effort to equip language instructors with more efficient practices to facilitate and accelerate learners' comprehension and development of the subjunctive, this study surveys 1) the impact of the design of the task (i.e. focus-on-form) and 2) two different working modes (i.e. individuals and pairs) embedded in the use of the present subjunctive. To this end, 33 participants completed a battery of activities consisting of an individual written activity with two different versions, and a collaborative oral and written assignment. Version A of the individual written activity was at the paragraph level, while version B only required participants to express ideas at the sentence level. Results suggest that the design of version B allowed them to perform better than that of version A. Additionally, working collaboratively seemed to have yielded communicative opportunities that led participants to produce a higher number of accurate sentences.

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Dedication

This master's report is dedicated to my husband, Edwin. You inspired me to begin my graduate school journey in the first place and have been a constant source of encouragement these past two years. I am truly thankful for having you in my life as my spouse and as my life-long Spanish conversation partner.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.0 Introduction

Numerous studies have focused on the application of the subjunctive in a Spanish classroom for learners of Spanish as a FL. This can be related to its inherent complexity, which has brought difficulties for L2 acquisition. From personal experiences in the acquisition and pedagogical applications of this mode, the researcher wished to further investigate alternative methods to present to students in the form of in-class activities. In order to keep building on this knowledge and to provide deeper insight into the complexity and the acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive, this present study aims to equip language instructors with more efficient practices to facilitate and accelerate learners' comprehension and development of the subjunctive through the following two research questions:

- 1) How do students perform when completing focus-on-form activities compared to traditional mechanic activities?
- 2) How do two specific working modes (working in pairs and individually) impact learners' performance when being required to use the present subjunctive?

In addition to presenting the overall results, the study also provides pedagogical implications and limitations from the current study that could be taken into account for future studies. For this reason, the following chapter will introduce an overview of (a) the relevance of the Spanish subjunctive, and (b) focus-on-form and collaborative work

1.1 Relevance of the Spanish Subjunctive

The subjunctive mood is an aspect of the L2 learning process that normally presents itself as troublesome and difficult for L2 Spanish learners. Likewise, it should be mentioned that even

native Spanish speakers do not fully acquire the abilities to fluently and accurately communicate with it until around the age of 12 (Blake, 1983). In addition to its complexity, the subjunctive mood has continued to be a confusing form for SLA for instructors to teach. As a result, various contributions to this area of research include studies such as Jelinski (1977), which presents a method based on linguistic theory that explains the nature of the subjunctive and indicative contrast by organizing the subjunctive into three specific areas: noun clauses, adjectival clauses, and adverbial clauses. Furthermore, in order to develop and support a method based on mood contrasts between the indicative and subjunctive on pragmatic and communicative notions, Fabregas (2009) presents advantages and disadvantages of factors that relate to the learning of the subjunctive. These factors include anticipated statements, alternation, factors that modify the subjunctive, and the creation of didactic materials. Moreover, in relation to factors that involve the learning of the subjunctive, Kanwit and Geeslin (2014) explore the interpretation of the present subjunctive in contexts that allow for variation, more specifically in adverbial clauses, between native and nonnative L2 Spanish speakers. Despite the fact that these researchers have made significant contributions to the instruction of the Spanish subjunctive, they still expressed a need for more studies in this particular area.

Therefore, in the face of the current corpus of available studies, there is a continued need for SLA research to present approaches that may facilitate and accelerate the comprehension and development of the subjunctive mood in the L2 Spanish classroom. In the following section, a summary of alternative methods that may raise the communicative value to enhance the learning of a second language are presented.

1.2 Focus-on-Form and Collaborative Work

Another area of research that may support the acquisition of the Spanish subjunctive includes learning through focus-on-form and collaborative work. This means that raising the communicative value of the subjunctive may elevate its noticeability (Collentine, 2010). In addition, activities that support focus-on-form are designed to attract a learner's attention to a particular form, especially during communication that may involve collaborative work in pairs or in groups (Ellis, 2016). Some examples of research that support focus-on-form in SLA include Nakatsukasa and Lowen (2015), who present a study that investigated the use of a teacher's L1 during focus-on-form episodes (FFE) and Ellis (2002), which reviewed 11 studies that measured acquisition based on communicative, free production, from Form Focused Instruction (FFI). In addition, current research in relation to the effectivity of pair and group work has been presented by Baleghizadeh (2010) and Fernández Dobao (2012), who both agree that activities involving collaboration should be implemented into the classroom as they frequently produce positive benefits for L2 learners.

Hence, it is evident that research in relation to the subjunctive, focus-on-form, and collaborative work has been conducted to facilitate the learning process in SLA. For this reason, the following chapter explains a collection of supporting studies in more detail through a review of the literature.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Learners of Spanish as a FL must undergo a lengthy process while learning the subjunctive both at an oral and at a written level. It is possible that this process may be facilitated through approaches, such as, raising the communicative value of the subjunctive and implementing focus-on-form activities (Ellis, 2005). According to Ellis (2016), the term “focus-on-form” has been changed over time by countless scholars, but it was first used by Long (1988), who stated, “A focus on form is probably a key feature of second language instruction because of the salience it brings to targeted features in classroom input, and also in input outside the classroom, where this is available” (p. 36). Moreover, Ellis (2016) agrees with the original definition stated in Long (1988) in the fact that the salience of focus-on-form (hereafter FonF) is vital to learners’ L2 proficiency, and it includes techniques designed to attract a learner’s attention to a particular form, while using their L2 for communication (Ellis, 2015). In regard to FonF approaches in current SLA instruction, focus on meaning with attention to form is often conducted through communicative tasks or activities. Likewise, there will be attention to predetermined grammatical structures (Ellis, 2005). In addition, more recent research on FonF has strived to keep these forms in their meaningful contexts, while seeking ways to draw learners’ attention to linguistic forms (Lesser, 2004).

Similarly, in order to perform these communicative tasks, one can utilize collaborative working modes. This means assigning learners to work in small groups or in pairs (Storch & Aldosari, 2012). In a classroom, communication is often dominated by teacher talk, or the participation of the same few individuals. Various research studies have proven that pair or group work can assist L2 learning by having learners use a range of functions normally reserved for the

teacher (Ohta, 2001). A few of these include making suggestions, and asking questions, all of which can help learners to improve their quantity and quality of feedback. Furthermore, peer interaction in the form of collaborative working modes has revealed that when learners share the responsibility for an oral or written task, they also have a tendency to negotiate for a solution to their language problems (Swain, 2000). These forms of negotiation can include the event of correcting themselves or others and formulating or testing their own hypothesis in regard to the task at hand.

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to offer an overview of the Spanish subjunctive and research that suggests different approaches to learning, particularly through incorporating focus-on-form and collaborative working modes. Firstly, a summary of the definition and description of the complexity of the Spanish subjunctive mood with supporting research is presented. Then follows a review of second language acquisition (hereafter SLA) studies that explore the research behind focus-on-form approaches to teaching as an alternative method. Finally, evidence that supports collaborative activities through pair and group learning is presented.

2.1 The Inherent Complexity of the Spanish Subjunctive

In order to understand SLA approaches and studies related to teaching the subjunctive, it is necessary to understand how it is constructed and its different uses in the Spanish language. When conjugating Spanish verbs, one must always select between one of two moods: the indicative or the subjunctive (Collentine, 2010). The indicative mood portrays a truth-value of a statement, where the subjunctive mood indicates a lack of commitment (Palmer, 2001). It also can be interpreted that the subjunctive represents states and events that have not yet occurred, whereas indicative forms represent habitual actions or events that have already occurred (Blake, 1985; Lee,

Young, Bransdorfer, & Wolf, 2005; Montrul & Perpiñán, 2011). In a phrase containing the subjunctive, the indicative tense is often the default mood of independent clauses, where Spanish speakers must choose the correct mood in the subordinate clause (indicative or subjunctive) that follows an adverbial conjunction.

Nevertheless, the subjunctive has continued to be a complex and confusing form for second language learners to master and for instructors to teach. According to Jelinski (1977), textbooks often contain explanations with vague generalizations where students have to memorize various categories such as doubt, possibility, and approval in order to facilitate mood selection. Kanwit and Geeslin (2014) mention that the L2 learner faces an additional challenge where the interpretation of this mood varies. This interpretation may also include sociolinguistic variation, and native speakers might have a different interpretation than L2 learners on whether specific events have already occurred or not, thus leaning away from a categorical explanation. In addition, further research has stated that mood selection for the subjunctive may be specifically difficult with certain activities, such as reading and listening ones; however, verbal morphology is important as there is often a reliance on irregularity at early stages of acquisition, which correlates to more accuracy with mood selection. (Collentine, 1997; Gudmestad, 2006).

In an effort to facilitate the learning process of the subjunctive for L2 Spanish speakers, Jelinski (1977) presents a method based on linguistic theory and contrasts present subjunctive-indicative functions. It does not use vague generalizations related to categories of doubt, approval, etc., nor does it involve rote memorization, but explains the nature of the subjunctive-indicative contrast by organizing the subjunctive into three specific areas: noun clauses, adjectival clauses, and adverbial clauses. Learners can determine when to employ the subjunctive by looking at the use of cause and effect in the noun clause. For example, any desire, direct or perceived, to influence

the action of the verb in the subordinate clause will signal the subjunctive. Furthermore, as practice, it is advisable to include sentences in which the dependent verb has no expressed subject that contrasts to the subordinate clause structure with the infinitive. Following, this approach includes the category of “experience-non-experience” which suggests that the indicative is used to speak of events that belong to the world of experience, and the subjunctive is used for ones that do not belong to objective experience. Once students understand how these concepts apply to noun clauses, they must understand how these concepts apply to adverbial and adjectival clauses as well. Jelinski (1977) concludes that this approach can be applied to beginner as well as advanced courses.

Apart from introducing new methods, studies on the Spanish subjunctive and how it is interpreted between native and nonnative L2 Spanish speakers have been performed. Kanwit and Geeslin (2014) explore these particular interpretation contexts that allow variation. The study worked with 97 participants that included non-native speakers of Spanish (hereafter NNS), whose first language was English and native speakers of Spanish (hereafter NSs) who were from a variety of Spanish speaking countries. All participants were attending a large midwestern university. The first NNS group consisted of 29 English-speaking learners of Spanish enrolled in a 5th semester language course with the average age being 19 years. The second group consisted of 35 English-speaking learners of Spanish enrolled in a 400-level linguistic course and the average age was 20.4 years. The third and final NNS group involved 17 native speakers of English who were graduate students and in addition to teaching, had studied abroad for long periods. Their average age was 25.8 years and their time abroad ranged from six weeks to three years. The final participant group consisted of 16 NSs, who had lived in the U.S. for one year, and whose average age was 32.6 years. These participants came from a variety of Spanish speaking countries, including Mexico

(N=4), Puerto Rico (N=4), Venezuela (N=2), Spain (N=2), Argentina (N=2), and Colombia (N=2). The methodology of the study first consisted of the completion of three activities.

Participants spent approximately 5 min on the language background questionnaire, 15 min on the proficiency exam, and 20-25 min on the mood interpretation task. Next, the data was coded from various linguistic factors that were divided into different categories. For the results, Kanwit and Geeslin (2014) noted the importance of the mood of the verb form from the NSs group, but that NSs also allow a role for the properties of the individual lexical items in determining interpretation. When this group was compared with the highest-level learners of the NNS group, the NNS learners were found to be more categorical in theory in their responses than the NSs, which is demonstrated in the significant difference in the frequency of interpretation of indicative forms as habitual. Therefore, this study shows how the interpretation of verb forms in adverbial clauses can differ amongst NNS and NSs, but more research is needed in this area.

2.2 The Importance of Focus-on-Form in SLA

Another area of research pertains to the study of focus-on-form. Research regarding the usage of FonF and how it can affect acquisition of implicit knowledge in SLA was conducted by Ellis (2002). Through a cross-study analysis, Ellis (2002) investigates the following questions: “Does Form Focused Instruction (hereafter FFI) contribute to the acquisition of implicit knowledge? Is FFI only effective when it consists of a focus on form?” Here, FFI is considered to be explicit instruction approaches to SLA. Each of the 11 studies presented include a control group and a measure of acquisition based on communicative, free production. The studies he reviewed worked with subjects who differed in age, instructional context, and their L1. One common variable was that they were not beginners in their L2. The target structures of FFI were taken from French, English, and Japanese, and varied from simple to complex forms. Data was taken through

free production measures, such as, narratives and role-plays, being both oral and written. Next, the analysis was based on the following categories: the effectiveness of the instruction; the age of subjects; the nature of the target structure (i.e., formulaic, morphological, or syntactic); the extent of the treatment; the type of instruction; and the measure of acquisition. Upon analyzing the data, Ellis (2002) found mixed results. In summary, in six of the studies that included oral and written free production, FFI was effective in both elements. It was also effective in four studies that included younger learners, and in the four studies where it was proven to be unsuccessful, the participants were older learners. Ultimately, out of the nine studies which included focus-on-form instruction, seven lead to results that showed a positive effect of FFI, supporting the hypothesis that FFI is effective when it consists of focus-on-form.

Likewise, Nakatsukasa and Lowen (2015) present a study that investigated the use of a teacher's L1 during focus-on-form episodes (FFE's). They worked with 23 students whose first language was English and who were learning Spanish as their L2 in a Spanish 202 university course. The average age was 22, with a range from 19 to 35 years. Their teacher was also a native English speaker and an L2 speaker of Spanish. The class met four days a week for two hours each day over six weeks, during the summer of 2008, and the data was taken from the second to the fourth week of the semester. It comprises of 12 hours of videotaped classroom interaction. A digital camera was placed at the back of the classroom, and the teacher wore a lapel microphone to capture teacher-student interaction that might not be caught on camera. Two near-native L2 speakers of Spanish transcribed the data. Nakatsukasa and Loewen (2015) divided the teacher speech into individual utterances, coded individual utterances in relation to L1 or L2 use, identified the FFEs, and coded the linguistic target of each FFE.

Overall, the teacher produced utterances that were primarily in either the L1 or the L2, as well as utterances that combined the two languages within an utterance. In addition, the majority of the FFEs concerned vocabulary and grammar, and there was a relationship between the linguistic focus of the FFEs and the teacher's L1/L2 use. The teacher's language choice appeared to be influenced by the following: whether the target structure had been dealt with recently in class, and framing students' questions, asking for either an L1 or L2 translation. This study by Nakatsukasa and Loewen (2015) is relevant to SLA as by documenting the occurrence of L1 use, one can investigate how it systematically affects L2 development. It also shows another aspect of focus-on-form that has the potential to affect L2 learning, especially in the case of Spanish.

However, not all SLA research has favored the use of focus-on-form in SLA, especially when related to the Spanish subjunctive. Fabregas (2009) explains that many theoretical studies have focused on the following two methods: thinking abstractly about grammatical rules (focus-on-form) or trying to identify lexical classes of units that favor or demand the use of the subjunctive. The researcher argues that these methods can produce serious problems and cause confusion for the learner and proposes an alternative method for teaching foreign students the Spanish subjunctive. It bases mood contrasts between the indicative and the subjunctive on pragmatic and communicative notions that have effect on the formal properties of a language: notions of "assertivity" and "presuppositionality". In order to develop and support this method, Fabregas (2009) presents advantages and disadvantages of factors that relate to the learning of the subjunctive, including anticipated statements, alternation, factors that modify the subjunctive, and the creation of didactic materials. One of his didactic materials presents a gap exercise that is a closed focus-on-form activity. Fabregas (2009) emphasizes that it is necessary to introduce texts that make the speakers' intentions clear, and an advantage of his method, based on communicative

and semantic notions, is that the implied notions are universal and intuitive. One can notice them while interacting in a conversation.

2.3 Working Modes: Pair and Group Collaboration

When learning a language, it is important to study it from a broad scope of contexts. This does not just include individual work, or student-teacher conversations, but also pair and group work. Leiser (2004) seeks to analyze the use of focus-on-form through a specific working mode: pair work, and by investigating how grouping learners by their relative proficiency levels affects the amount, type, and outcome of LREs (Language related episodes) produced while working on a passage reconstruction task. Language related episodes are segments of learner interaction where the individuals discuss their own or another individual's use of language while completing a given task (Swain, 1998; Swain and Lapkin, 1995, 1998, 2001; Williams, 1999, 2001). According to Swain (1998), LREs may help students, "...to understand the connection between meaning, forms, and function in a highly context-sensitive situation" (p. 69).

The study in Leiser (2004) worked with 42 middle school L2 Spanish learners from a fourth semester content-based course (Geography). Instructor ratings of overall abilities were used to rate the learners' overall Spanish proficiency before putting them into groups of two. Each learner was assigned to one of three types of dyads: a dyad containing two higher proficiency learners (H-H); a dyad containing one higher proficiency and one lower proficiency learner (H-L); or a dyad containing two lower proficiency learners (L-L). In total, there were 21 dyads for the study: eight dyads of two higher proficiency learners, nine dyads of one higher and one lower proficiency learner, and four dyads of two lower proficiency learners. The task was a passage reconstruction task that consisted of a series of stages with the following format: First, learners listened to a short, dense passage during which they were instructed to only listen and not write

anything down. Secondly, they listened to the passage a second time and could take notes, but not write complete sentences. Thirdly, learners worked in pairs and in small groups to combine their notes and attempt to reconstruct their own written version of the passage. This was the reconstruction phase where the learners could produce LREs. The experiment was carried out in two sessions during the students' normally scheduled classes, with the first session being a practice one and the second one being the recorded session. Leeser (2004) states that the recordings of each pair's reconstruction were transcribed in order to identify the LREs for each group. Two individuals served as raters to independently identify the LRES and code them for having a lexical or grammatical focus. Leeser (2004) concludes that a total of 138 LREs were identified in the 21 transcriptions. 39.86% of the total LREs for all dyads were lexical and 60.14% had a grammatical focus that mainly consisted of problems with verb morphology. This study proved that the L2 Spanish learners would spontaneously focus-on-form and that learners of higher proficiency would produce more LREs than lower level ones.

While Leeser (2004) focuses on collaboration and focus-on-form in a Spanish content course, Collentine (2010) specifically reviews pedagogical approaches as to how today's core principles of L2 instruction, such as input oriented, output/interactionist, and tasked based approaches, can be utilized in teaching the Spanish subjunctive. The researcher explains that processing instruction tends to be a highly productive methodology in relation to input oriented approaches, and raising the communicative value of the subjunctive can have a significant impact in both input and output activities (Collentine, 1998). Nevertheless, the researcher also argues that there is a lack of studies for task-based language teaching in regard to fostering one's subjunctive abilities and proposes it as a prime candidate of future studies.

As learners work collaboratively, they have the option to interact and revise their answers. Having said that, Baleghizadeh (2010) presents a study that investigated the accuracy level of completing a text-editing activity in pairs vs individually, and if all grammatical features benefited from pair-work interaction. It included 62 third year English literature students whose L2 was English. Participants were required to improve the accuracy of the text by adding, deleting, or changing one of the function word categories. They completed the activity under two conditions: individually and in pairs, where the experimental group was encouraged to speak to each other during the interaction. Baleghizadeh (2010) concluded that the students' joint effort while working in pairs produced more successful activities and that they benefited from negotiated interaction. Individual and pair-work resulted in about the same level of accuracy for more basic forms (such as prepositions), but pair-work surpassed individual work when dealing with articles and subordinating conjunctions. Therefore, the researcher noted that students may work better in pairs when dealing with more complex grammatical forms.

While working in pairs has been found to be overall more beneficial than individual work, Fernández Dobao (2012) presents a study that considered not only pairs, but larger groups of four students. The study specifically investigated how the number of participants working on a writing task could affect the accuracy, fluency, and complexity of the written texts, along with the frequency and nature of the LREs produced. The study worked with 111 students from six intermediate level classes of Spanish as a foreign language, at a large public university in the U.S. Their performance of individual, pair, and group work was studied from samples produced through written production. In one class, the students worked individually, while in the other five classes, the students worked in pairs or in groups of four. In conclusion, it was found that collaboration, whether in pairs or in small groups, resulted in greater grammatical and lexical accuracy than

individual writing tasks and that both group and pair writing assignments should be implemented in the classroom.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The following chapter provides an explanation of the procedures that were carried out to complete this study. As such, this section showcases details related to the research settings, participants, data collection materials, and the data collection itself, and analysis processes that were fundamental to better comprehend the complexity of the present subjunctive.

3.1 Settings

Data from this study was collected from a large Midwestern public university during the spring semester of 2020. The participants (N=33) included a pool of college students who were taking SPAN 301 at the time. SPAN 301, or Spanish 4 as it is commonly referred to, is the last course of the so-called Spanish sequence, that is, the cohort of courses that are offered at the large midwestern university to develop students' linguistic skills and cultural knowledge to achieve an intermediate level. As such, SPAN 301 is the required course before transitioning into more advanced classes focused on language and content (e.g., linguistics, translation, literature) needed to complete either a Spanish minor or major. By the time learners take SPAN 301, all of them have completed courses to receive credit for Spanish I-III from their high school or a community college, while others have completed three courses of Spanish within the Spanish language sequence at the university (SPAN 101, also known as Spanish I, SPAN 102, also referred to as Spanish II, and SPAN 300, or Spanish III).

For this study, a total of 33 individuals, from 3 different sections, comprised the pool of participants. These individuals were divided into three groups: two experimental sections (i.e., Group A and Group B) and a control group (i.e., Group C). More specifically, Group A was

composed by the students that were at the time enrolled in the 9:30 am section of SPAN 301, Group B by the students enrolled in the 1:30 pm section, and Group C by the students enrolled in the 11:30 am section. To better understand their linguistic backgrounds and their current learning experience, a supplementary detailed explanation of SPAN 301 and SPAN 300 (the preceding course) as well as specific participant information is provided in the following sub-sections.

3.1.1 Spanish Course Sequence at Kansas State University

All levels of the Spanish classes involved in the study base their curriculum on a core-communicative approach. This approach supports student-instructor and student-student interaction in the target language, which is considered crucial for developing second language proficiency. Classes include conversational, listening, reading, writing, and audiovisual exercises that are completed individually, in pairs, small groups, or as whole class activities. The exercises often begin more basic and mechanical in nature, that is, with greater emphasis on grammatical points in order to facilitate students' comprehension of the input first. These include matching and fill in the blank exercises. The instruction and input, that are provided to the learners, gradually become more communicative and often include problem-solving tasks for the learner, where these types of tasks test students' background knowledge and prepare them for naturalistic situations. This core-communicative approach is considered a vital element to the Spanish program as it promotes active participation from students in a more natural context, while emphasizing an integrative approach to the four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). Finally, the classes are conducted entirely in Spanish and students are expected to speak in the target language to the best of their abilities.

Spanish 301 correspondingly takes on an integrated approach to the four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) through thematic concepts centered around culture, as it affirms

that language and culture cannot be separated. It is a course generally designed for students that receive no exposure to Spanish at the social or home level, but may include heritage Spanish speakers, that is, individuals that are raised being exposed to Spanish at home, as long as these individuals have acquired only limited communicative skills from their home environment. Objectives for this course include the following: express and support opinions about forms of entertainment, work, finances, rural and urban life, musical preferences, and contemporary issues; narrate and describe in the past, present, and future; be able to talk about hypothetical situations; and express desires, preferences, opinions, emotions, and doubts in the past, present, and future tenses. Furthermore, students at this level are expected to develop the capacity to paraphrase and summarize information, comprehending and responding to literary and informative readings. Moreover, they should be able to display abilities in listening, reading, speaking, and writing, consistent with Intermediate Mid¹ proficiency, according to the ACTFL guidelines. It should also be noted that at this level, students have already received substantial practice with the present subjunctive tense, the scope of this study.

In addition to reviewing the objectives for the classes that took part in this study, it is important to review the objectives of the previous level, SPAN 300 (Spanish 3), in order to comprehend the reason why the students enrolled in SPAN 301 were the most suitable candidates to partake in the present study. Spanish 300 at this large midwestern university also takes on an integrated approach to the four skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) through thematic concepts centered around culture. Similarly, it is a course designed for non-native speakers, but

¹ According to the 2012 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, Intermediate Mid writers can meet various practical needs that include but are not limited to writing short and simple communications and compositions, requests for information related to personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics. They show control of basic sentence structure and verb forms. When attempting advanced writing tasks, their message may be unclear.

may include heritage Spanish speakers. Its objectives include the following: describe and discuss personal relationships, cultural values, traditions, celebrations, eating habits, and contemporary issues; analyze the role of historical figures from different perspectives; and narrate and describe in the past, present, and future. Furthermore, students are expected to comprehend, interpret and respond to literary and informative readings, and compare cultural aspects between the United States and Spanish-speaking countries. It is crucial to mention that a meaningful amount of time and effort is invested in the teaching of the subjunctive mood to assist students to: give advice, recommendations, and instructions; and express desires, preferences, opinions, emotions, and doubts. Finally, by the end of the course, students should display abilities in listening, reading, speaking, and writing consistent with Intermediate Low² to Intermediate Mid proficiency, according to the ACTFL guidelines.

3.1.2 Participants

A total of 33 participants were included in this study. From the total pool of participants, 21 of them were randomly assigned to the experimental section to complete version A of the written portion, alongside the oral and written collaborative activity, consisting of two sections of SPAN 301. It should also be noted that the selection of participants for the experimental section was chosen at random in order to avoid bias from the researcher. Regarding the experimental groups, almost half of the participants were from the 9:30 am class (N=11, 0 males, 11 females) and the other half were from the 1:30 class (N=10, 3 males, 7 females) and their ages ranged from 18 to 23 years (M=20.5). Out of the 11 participants from the 9:30 am class section, a total of 4

² According to the 2012 ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, Intermediate Low writers can meet some limited writing needs that include but are not limited to formulating questions based on familiar material, creating short and simple conversation style sentences, writing exclusively in present time with often a repetitive structure. Writing is often understood by natives who are used to non-native writing, but additional effort may be required.

dyads and 1 triad, given that the total number of participants in this section was uneven, were formed by the students' own choosing for the oral and written portion. Respectively, out of the 10 participants from the 1:30 pm class section, a total of 5 dyads were also formed to the student's choosing for the oral and written portion that followed. Furthermore, out of the 21 participants who participated in the experimental portions of the study, 16 students were placed in SPAN 301 who had not taken the course sequence at this particular university. Nevertheless, by being placed at such a high level, they show that they have a solid notion of the present subjunctive and are qualified for this study.

Moreover, a total of 12 participants were also randomly assigned to the control group to complete version B of the written portion, alongside the oral and written activity, consisting of the 11:30 am section of SPAN 301. Regarding the control group's participants (N=12, 3 males, 9 females), their ages ranged from 19 to 21 years (M=20). Out of these 12 control group participants, a total of 6 dyads were formed to the student's choosing for the oral and written portion. Finally, out of the 12 participants who participated in the control portion of the study, exactly half of the students who were placed in SPAN 301, had not completed the Spanish course sequence from the large public midwestern university's Spanish program. However, as previously stated, by being placed at such a high level, they show that they have a solid notion of the present subjunctive and are qualified for this study.

3.2 Materials

In order to conduct this study, a variety of materials were created and customized to support the researcher's questions. This section provides detailed descriptions of the background questionnaire and in-class activities that include two versions (A & B) of an individual written activity, and a separate oral and written activity that was completed in pairs.

3.2.1 Background Questionnaire and Participants' Academic and Linguistic Profiles

The researcher created a background questionnaire composed of 23 questions with the intent of understanding each student's cultural and academic background, in addition to their grammatical knowledge (see Appendix A). More specifically, the pool of questions consists of eleven open-ended queries that helped the researcher collect biographical data from the participants and information about their previous Spanish learning experiences. The questionnaire was completed by the participants outside of class on a printed copy, in order to avoid time constraints on the day that the treatment was administered. The general goals were to see how many students had come from the Spanish course sequence at this study's particular Midwestern university (number of questions regarding this matter: 1), how many had completed Spanish classes at other higher-ed institutions or from high school (number of questions regarding this matter: 2), and to identify the subjects' previous grammatical knowledge (number of questions regarding this matter: 12).

In that regard to the participants' academic and linguistic background, 36% (N=12) of the participants had completed Spanish 1-3 at the same midwestern university, while 64% (N=21) had received transfer credit from high school or another higher-ed institution. Additionally, results showed that only 3% of the participants had studied abroad (N=1), and none of them (N=0) were heritage speakers.

The twelve inquiries concerned grammar-related matters, to see which forms the participants were already familiar with, were labeled as "other questions". To answer the latter, the participants had to choose how comfortable they were with the subjunctive and other tenses. This was completed by circling which forms they were more familiar with, and in the subsequent questions, choosing between the following levels for each tense: Extremely comfortable; Slightly

comfortable; Very comfortable; and Not at all comfortable. In spite of the fact that the present subjunctive was the point of interest in this study, other tenses were included in the questionnaire as distractors, so that participants would not feel pressured to study the subjunctive outside of the classroom before completing the battery of activities that were designed to collect the data for this study. Thus, this lack of awareness allowed learners to perform as naturally as possible, as opposed to feeling pressured to do better when it came to the use of the present subjunctive. The tenses that served as the distractors were the following: the preterit, imperfect, simple future, and periphrastic future. The participants also had to indicate when they thought each tense should be used and were allowed to give their own comments, for the reasons previously explained. The participants' answers showed that the learners were familiar with a total of six grammar tenses in the following order: present indicative and the imperfective past tense tied at the same rate of familiarity (N=33); while the perfective past tense, also commonly known as "the preterite", fell in second place at 87% (N=29). The subjunctive, the focus of this study, was found to be recognized by 73% (N=24), ranking it in 3rd place overall, while places 4th and 5th were obtained by the periphrastic future and the simple future respectively.

3.2.2 In-class Activities

The researcher created the in-class materials for the collection of the data. They consist of two versions of a written activity, and one oral and written portion. Version A (see Appendix B) of the written portion supports focus-on-form through a closed, fill-in-the-blank exercise at the paragraph level, where one has to use the context to determine the correct conjugation in the infinitive, present indicative, or present subjunctive. In SLA, a "closed" task requires students to reach a single predetermined solution (Ellis, 2003). Version B (see Appendix C) was taken from the Spanish textbook by Montemayor and de León (2009), *Para Siempre: A Conversational*

Approach to Spanish, and reflects a more traditional fill-in-the-blanks design, more commonly known as grammatical drills. As such, this activity includes closed, mechanical exercises, where participants had to complete sentences with the subjunctive outside of a larger context. Version A was assigned to both control sections (Group A and Group B); while version B was assigned to the experimental section (Group C).

The other data collection component for this study consisted of the oral and written activity (see Appendix D). It was designed to include a more open focus-on-form activity and was taken by all three sections during the same scheduled testing period, after having completed version A or B of the individual written portion. Here the term “open” refers to an activity whose outcome is open-ended, where a number of solutions or outcomes are possible (Ellis, 2003). The activity includes visual photos with a scenario in paragraph form. A table of possible verbs was also included to aid dialog. Students were to work in pairs to communicate their answers orally with each other and then would write them down on the printed copy of the exercise.

3.3 Procedure

By the end of the 2019 fall semester, the researcher got in touch with the coordinator of the university’s Spanish department in order to complete the present study. Within the first month of classes, during the 3rd week, the researcher went to three sections of the Spanish 301 classes to talk to the participants in order to explain the significance of the study. Students were told that the study would include a background questionnaire to be completed outside of class and some activities for an in-class portion of the study. All students who would participate in both portions were told they would receive extra-credit in their SPAN 301 class as an incentive for participation.

On that same day, the researcher handed out consent forms and background questionnaires for all interested participants. In addition, all students from three sections of SPAN 301 received

an email with more detailed information about the study. The researcher then followed-up with the instructor for SPAN 301 to see if the majority of the students had consented to participate in the study. Then, the researcher confirmed the date with the instructor for taking the in-class portion for data collection. All students participated in the activities and those who had not signed the consent form were not included in this study.

During the in-class portion of the study, the written activity (version A for Groups A and B, and version B for Group C) was completed individually, while the oral and written activity at the sentence level was completed in pairs of the students' choosing. An audio recording of the class' oral and written production was made, as the instructor placed recorders next to each group that wished to participate in the study. This measure was implemented in order to have a backup of the ideas that had been produced by the subjects. Also, each group was given a maximum of 25 minutes to complete all activities. Once this time was up, the instructor left the classroom and students returned to their regularly assigned class activities with their instructor.

Chapter 4 - Results

4.0 Introduction

This section explores RQs 1 and 2 through the analysis of statistical data. As mentioned previously, this study aims to expand on our understanding regarding pedagogical practices to facilitate learners' comprehension and acquisition of the subjunctive in the L2 Spanish classroom. Therefore, this objective is fulfilled by exploring the relationship, if any, between (1) the impact of the design of the task (i.e., focus on form, RQ1) and (2) two different working modes (i.e., individual and collaborative, RQ2).

4.1 Results Regarding Focus-on-Form Activities for the Present

Subjunctive

Two T-Tests were completed with SPSS to establish how the 3 sections of SPAN 301 performed; if one group in particular outperformed the others; and if this was the case, whether this phenomenon was influenced by the design of the tasks and the working mode used to complete the assigned activities. The first Paired Sample T-Test compared the efficiency of both versions of the written activity, that is: versions A & B. To this end, when entering the data in SPSS, the means of Groups 1 and 2, where the subjects (N=21) completed the closed-ended and focus-on-form task on the use of the present subjunctive were coded as "Group 1". Similarly, the means of Group C, where the participants (N=12) completed the open-ended and mechanical task on the use of the present subjunctive were coded as "Group 2". Regardless of the version, the written activity was completed individually by the three groups.

Also, a One Sample T-Test was carried out to analyze how the participants performed in the oral activity that was completed in pairs. A One-Sample T-Test was the statistical analysis of

choice, given that the open-ended oral task collaboratively completed by the 33 participants had the same design. As such, the means of the three groups were entered in SPSS under the same label: “pair-work”. It is important to mention that the results from the first Paired Sample T-Test were used to answer the first research question, while the results from One Sample T-Test accounted for the second research question.

4.1.1 Research Question 1: Student Performance of Focus-on-Form Activities vs Other Types

The first research question pertained to focus-on-form, as a design that has been suggested to facilitate language acquisition, based on the premise that this type of task veers learners’ attention to meaning through form, and how it affected performance versus other types of activities. In this case, the “other type” was designated as the control group that featured an individual mechanical activity. The data was collected through a point system method, where the researcher focused on the morphology of the verbs to determine their accuracy. The answers had to correspond to the desired paradigm, depending on the context. If they did not, a zero was assigned for that particular answer. No partial credit was given for any answer, meanwhile, the information reported on an excel table was used to obtain the average of each activity by its participants.

Table 1. *Sample Paired T-Test: Research Question 1: Student Performance of Focus-on-Form Activities vs Other Types*

| Group Statistics | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------|----|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| | Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Performance | 1 | 21 | 58.722 | 18.4610 | 4.0285 |
| | 2 | 12 | 71.093 | 12.1875 | 3.5182 |

According to the Paired Sample T-Test (see Table 1), Group 1, that is, those participants that worked individually on version A (focus-on-form written activity) were outperformed by the individuals in Group 2, those in the control group who had individually completed version B (mechanical activity). More specifically, Group 1 (version A) reached an average of 58.722, compared to 71.093 from the participants in Group 2 (version B). The results of this test were deemed statistically significant ($p=0.047$).

Research Question 2: Student Performance of Focus-on-Form Activities vs Other Types

Furthermore, the second research inquiry surveyed the impact of a specific working mode: collaboration, reflected in constructing knowledge in pairs, on learners’ performance when being required to use the present subjunctive. In order to quantify the data, the same procedure from RQ1 was used.

Table 2. *One Sample T-Test: Research Question 2: Student Performance of Focus-on-Form Activities vs Other Types*

| One-Sample Statistics | | | | |
|------------------------------|----|-------|----------------|-----------------|
| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Pairs | 16 | 72.50 | 24.083 | 6.021 |

Based on the One Sample T-Test, the overall performance of the three groups yielded better results in the oral and written pair work activity, with an average of 72.50% accuracy from the combined oral and written production of their sentences. It is worth noting that this average was, at the same time, higher than the overall performance displayed in both versions (A and B) of the individual written activity.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

5.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present an overview of this study's results as well as potential implications for pedagogical aspects for Spanish and general SLA classrooms. This chapter also presents several limitations that came from this study as well as related factors for future studies that are associated with a) modes of analysis for oral activities, b) the inclusion of a rehearsal or review of the forms before the treatment, and finally c) including longitudinal data in future related research endeavors.

5.1 Observations of the Results of this Study

First and foremost, it can be observed that the oral and written focus-on-form activity, which was carried out in pairs, produced a higher level of accuracy (mean of 72.50%) than version A of the individual focus-on-form activity (mean of 58.722) and of the control group, or version B of the individual mechanical activity (mean of 71.093). This may indicate that collaborative group work involving oral production is more productive than individual work. Research in favor of collaboration (Fernández Dobao, 2012) shows that students may not only create new sentences in groups that they wouldn't have completed working by individually, but that they also create new ideas due to negotiation.

Keeping the previous observations in mind, it is equally important to note that the design of the more open focus-on-form activity, performed in pairs, was quite different to version A of the individual written activity. In version A, there was only one correct answer per item in a closed focus-on-form activity, while in the written and oral activity, the participants could create their own sentences, as long as the subjunctive was accurately used to provide suggestions. Moreover,

the ideas that the participants were required to produce for the collaborative activity were at the sentence level, which entails a lower level of complexity than connected ideas in a paragraph. In relation to its code complexity, this focus-on-form activity offered more linguistic variety as it allowed learners to select the vocabulary, they were most familiar with (Yousefi, Mohammadi, & Koosha 2012). Therefore, this greater degree of openness could have been a significant factor in producing the higher level of accuracy.

Yet, as the oral and written activity was more “open” than the individual written versions, it is still considered a focus-on-form task since it required subjects to create connections between meaning and form. This is because the participants had to pay attention to predetermined, intensive grammatical structures; in this case, create recommendations using the present subjunctive (Ellis, 2005). Furthermore, the oral and written activity focused on providing recommendations for a real-life situation, thus, keeping the creating of these forms in their meaningful context while drawing attention to the linguistic forms (Lesser, 2004). This “meaningful context” factor might also explain why the oral and written collaborative activity produced a higher level of accuracy than the mechanical activity, non-focus-on-form exercise, or version B of the control group.

Correspondingly, it is necessary to state that the participants may have scored higher on the oral and written activity due to the fact that the first individual written activity (version A or B) may have unintentionally served as a form of practice, or warm up for the collaborative activity. One way to reduce this “practice factor” in future studies would be to divide the activities into multiple sessions. Participants could complete the individual written activities toward the beginning of the semester and then complete the oral and written activity in pairs toward the end of the semester. However, it is important to take into account, as previously mentioned in the grammatical portion of the background questionnaire, that the present subjunctive was already

found to be recognized by 73% (N=24) of the participants. This could suggest that the participants' performance on any one of the activities was influenced by their previous grammatical knowledge, due to the previous instruction in the courses that they had taken in relation to this mood. Nevertheless, if this were the case, that said practice was not enough for them to master the form and more studies are needed to evaluate their understanding of it. Also, this study only contained one version of an open, collaborative focus-on-form activity, that was completed by all participants. Having said that, future studies with multiple versions of a collaborative focus-on-form activity would be beneficial to the field of SLA in terms of provide a larger pool of data and analyzing LREs through detailed transcriptions of recorded audio could include potential explanations for the said findings.

Furthermore, although it is undeniable that version A (58.722) had a significantly lower average than version B, the mechanical activity (71.093), version A's value still surpasses the 50% rate. This suggests that the acquisition process of the subjunctive is ongoing. As previously mentioned, version A had a higher level of complexity as students had to make contextual connections with ideas at a paragraph level. Moreover, the results from this study can relate to the inherent complexity of the Spanish subjunctive in itself. Countless studies have discussed various pedagogical methods to combat challenges with teaching this mood, but without conclusive results. Research has shown that memorizing various categories, such as doubt, possibility or approval to facilitate mood selection, may be ineffective as they present only vague generalizations as to when to use the subjunctive (Jelinski, 1977). In addition, using categorical explanations for the subjunctive can also prove challenging for L2s as it may also call for interpretation at a sociolinguistic level, which varies especially with native speakers (Kanwit and Geeslin, 2014).

Comparatively, it should be noted that even native speakers do not fully acquire the subjunctive until around the age of 12 years (Blake, 1983).

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

Concerning pedagogical applications, this study may provide some insight into recommendations for activities in SLA classrooms. It is essential to acknowledge that the data from this study implies that focus-on-form activities at a paragraph level may not be beneficial for students to complete individually if dealing with more complex forms, such as the Spanish subjunctive. In reference to the previously mentioned statistical data, version A (a closed, focus-on-form activity) produced the lowest level of accuracy out of the 3 different versions with a mean of 58.722. In a SPAN 301 classroom, despite being in the last level of the Spanish course sequence, the students' current level may not be high enough for this type of activity. Deciphering when or when not to use the subjunctive in relation to the infinitive or present indicative might be too challenging to complete at an individual level. It may be more advantageous for students to work together instead of individually on this type of closed focus-on-form exercise. Research shows that students may work better in pairs when dealing with more complex grammatical forms (Baleghizadeh, 2010), and it would be noteworthy to analyze the outcome of pair work not only with an open communicative task, but with a closed focus-on-form activity in future studies.

5.3 Limitations of this Study and Future Research

It is important to convey the various limitations that come from this current research project and note that they should be addressed if similar studies are to be realized in the future, specifically those which pertain to (1) modes of analysis for oral activities, (2) practicing grammatical forms prior to the treatment, and (3) longitudinal data. These limitations are explained below in more detail.

5.3.1 Modes of Analysis for Oral Activities

This study included a statistical analysis of accuracy related to written data, as recordings were made only as a backup for the researcher. This implies that the study did not analyze the audio of the students' various interactions while completing the oral and written activity, nor did it include a transcription of them. As mentioned previously, future research that analyzes recorded audio, conducted through the use of multiple versions of collaborative activities, might display how aspects such as negotiation of meaning through LREs have contributed to its mean result. For instance, Leiser (2004) completed a study using a passage reconstruction task that included the analysis of these language related episodes and compiled a transcription of the audio. Furthermore, the mean result of the collaborative activity from this study was higher than the two individual ones, and future research would help to explain in detail how a greater number of errors were avoided in this case.

5.3.2 Practicing Grammatical Forms

It should be noted that the present study did not comprise of a warm-up on the present subjunctive before presenting the activities. The researcher chose to not practice the grammatical forms before the treatment, given that the students were expected to already display an adequate level of understanding of the present subjunctive. Due to their advanced level of SPAN 301, analyzing teacher related input or a rehearsal of forms was not the focus of this study. Nevertheless, it may prove beneficial in future studies to combine a warm-up or include a short input right before the completion of various exercises as this may demonstrate a change in the final results. Another option for future studies can be found in the study by Leiser (2004), where the experiment included a practice session before officially recording the data in order to familiarize the learners with the task.

5.3.3 Longitudinal Data

Another constraint of this research consists of its lack of data over a period of time. The present study took place within a limited time frame of 25 minutes, one month after classes had been in session. With this in mind, multiple sessions throughout the semester could provide new perspectives and insights as longitudinal data could help the researcher analyze and predict levels of student advancement. This could also account for varying levels of performance, as it is possible that due to external factors outside of the classroom, some students did not perform at their best level during the single 25-minute session.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

6.0 An Overview of the Results

In sum, this research study has aimed to expand our understanding of pedagogical practices by equipping language instructors with more efficient practices to facilitate and accelerate learners' comprehension and development of the subjunctive in the L2 Spanish classroom. In order to fulfill this objective, two research questions were surveyed related to (1) the impact of the design of the task (i.e., focus on form) and (2) two different working modes (i.e., individual and collaborative). These RQs were tested through the completion of 3 grammar related activities of the Spanish subjunctive by 3 sections of SPAN 301, in the spring semester of 2020, at a large public midwestern university. All participants completed a more open focus-on-form activity in groups, and a written activity that was completed individually. The written activity included a closed focus-on-form activity at the paragraph level (completed by two sections of SPAN 301) and a mechanical activity (completed by one section of SPAN 301).

Through a statistical analysis of the accuracy of the subjunctive forms, the results suggest that students performed more accurately on the mechanical exercise (version B), than on the closed, focus-on-form activity at a paragraph level (version A); furthermore, version A received the lowest score out of the three activities. In addition, the data shows that the students performed with the highest level of accuracy on the oral and written activity, that is the more "open" focus-on-form exercise, where they had to work collaboratively in groups.

Bearing these results in mind, there also exists potential pedagogical applications. First and foremost, the implication of focus-on-form activities at a paragraph level may not be beneficial for students to complete individually, if dealing with more complex grammatical forms, such as the Spanish subjunctive. While this may be too difficult for students in SPAN 301, it could, however,

prove beneficial to students at a more advanced Spanish level. Furthermore, it may be more advantageous for students to work together instead of individually on this type of closed focus-on-form exercise. Research shows that students may work better in pairs when dealing with more complex grammatical forms (Baleghizadeh, 2010) and that group work promotes negotiation of meaning through LREs, where learners have more opportunities to construct more accurate phrases (Lesser, 2004).

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Appendix A - Background Questionnaire

Nombre: _____

Background Questionnaire

1. Please circle your gender.
a) Male b) Female c) Other
2. What is your age? Please specify below.

3. What year are you in at this university?
a) Freshman b) Sophomore c) Junior d) Senior e) Senior year 5+
4. What is your major? Please specify below.

5. Did you take Spanish in middle school or in high school? If so, for how many years?
a) Yes, in middle school for _____ years.
b) Yes, in high school for _____ years.
c) No, I did not take Spanish in middle school or in high school.
6. If you answered yes to #5, how would you describe the instruction that you received in your Spanish classes prior to your college experience?
a) Completely in Spanish
b) Mostly in Spanish
c) Sometimes in Spanish
d) Hardly ever in Spanish
7. Did you take Spanish 1, 2, & 3 at K-state? If not, where did you take them and why? Please specify your answer below.

8. Do you have any relatives that speak Spanish?
a) Yes
b) No
9. If you answered "Yes," for #8, do you still speak in Spanish with them?
a) Yes

b) No

And how often do you currently speak with them?

a) Frequently

b) Sometimes

c) Rarely

10. Have you ever lived/studied abroad in a Spanish speaking country?

a) Yes

b) No

11. If you answered "Yes," for #10, please respond to the following questions:

Where did you live/study abroad?

What was the length of the program/of your experience living abroad?

Did this experience improve your confidence in the target language?

Other Questions

12. Which tense(s) are you more familiar with? Please circle ALL that apply.

a) Present indicative (yo compro)

d) Past tense-imperfect (yo compraba)

b) Present subjunctive (yo compre)

e) Simple Future (yo compré)

c) Past tense-preterite (yo compré)

f) Periphrastic future (yo **voy** a comprar)

13. How comfortable are you with using the present indicative (yo compro)? Please circle ONE of the following options:

a) Extremely comfortable

c) Slightly comfortable

b) Very comfortable

d) Not at all comfortable

14. How comfortable are you with using the present subjunctive (yo compre)? Please circle ONE of the following options:

a) Extremely comfortable

c) Slightly comfortable

b) Very comfortable

d) Not at all comfortable

15. How comfortable are you with using the past tense-preterite (yo compré)? Please circle ONE of the following options:

a) Extremely comfortable

c) Slightly comfortable

b) Very comfortable

d) Not at all comfortable

- 16.** How comfortable are you with using the past tense-imperfect (yo compraba)? Please circle ONE of the following options:
- a) Extremely comfortable c) Slightly comfortable
b) Very comfortable d) Not at all comfortable
- 17.** How comfortable are you with using the simple future (yo compraré)? Please circle ONE of the following options:
- a) Extremely comfortable c) Slightly comfortable
b) Very comfortable d) Not at all comfortable
- 18.** How comfortable are you with using the periphrastic future (yo **voy** a comprar)? Please circle ONE of the following options:
- a) Extremely comfortable c) Slightly comfortable
b) Very comfortable d) Not at all comfortable
- 19.** How do you know when to use the present indicative (yo compro)? Please circle ALL the options that apply.
- a) When talking about habitual actions
b) When describing facts.
c) When illustrating things happening now or in the near future.
d) When portraying lapses of time.
e) Other: Please explain any additional ways to determine when to use the present indicative.
-
- 20.** How do you know when to use the present subjunctive (yo compre)? Please circle ALL the options that apply.
- a) When the sentence is composed by two or more clauses
b) When there is more than one subject and verb
c) When the sentence includes “que”
d) When identifying other triggers like “tal vez” and “ojalá”
e) Other: Please explain any additional ways to determine when to use the present subjunctive.
-
- a) When there are completed actions in the past.
b) For actions that were a part of a chain of events.
c) For actions that were repeated a specific number of times.
d) For actions that can be viewed as single events.
e) Other: Please explain any additional ways to determine when to use the preterite.

22. How do you know when to use the imperfect (yo compraba)? Please circle ALL the options that apply.

a) When there are ongoing or reoccurring actions in the past.

b) When there are descriptions about emotional states.

c) When the topic does not have a definite beginning or end.

d) When talking about what someone was doing when they were interrupted by something else.

e) Other: Please explain any additional ways to determine when to use the imperfect.

23. How do you know when to use the simple future (yo compraré) as opposed to the periphrastic future (yo **voy** a comprar)?

a) When transmitting the idea of a commitment or a strong decision.

b) When expressing the idea of “wonder” or “probably” in the present.

c) In a verb clause adjacent to an “if” clause.

d) When expressing discrete actions or states.

e) Other: Please explain any additional ways to determine when to use the simple future as opposed to the periphrastic future.

Appendix B - Version A

Nombre: _____

Sección (Please Circle): 9:30am / 11:30am / 1:30pm

Actividad escrita (Versión A)

Completa el texto usando el presente (indicativo o subjuntivo) o en el infinitivo según sea el caso.

La comida es una parte importante de la cultura de Ecuador, mi país, especialmente el desayuno y el almuerzo, pero sé que (1.) _____ (**variar**) entre las otras familias ecuatorianas. Por ejemplo, es común (2.) _____ (**consumir**) una ensalada de frutas y después obligatorio que se (3.) _____ (**comer**) pan dulce o de sal para el desayuno con café en mi casa. Sin embargo, cuando quiero visitar la casa de mi mejor amiga, a mí me gusta que me (4.) _____ (**ofrecer**) opciones distintas. Ella le encanta (5.) _____ (**preparar**) comida frita. En mi última visita, me dijo, “Quiero que (6.) _____ (**probar**) un poco de bolón,¹ un platillo que es típico de aquí”. También, ella dice que es recomendable (7.) _____ (**tomar**) un jugo de melón para la salud en vez de una taza de café.

Para el almuerzo, mi mamá siempre (8.) _____ (**insistir**) que la familia (9.) _____ (**terminar**) la sopa antes del plato principal, y que nos (10.) _____ (**quedar**) sentados juntos en la mesa. Este tiempo para hablar con otros se llama sobremesa. Me parece que muchas familias (11.) _____ (**hacer**) sobremesa. Otra costumbre en la mesa que (12.) _____ (**seguir**) es comer la sopa antes del plato fuerte². Aunque no creo que (13.) _____ (**ser**) necesario (14.) _____ (**alimentarse**) con una sopita todos los días, ¡estoy segura de que (15.) _____ (**haber**) tradiciones que nunca cambian y pienso que esta es una de ellas.

¹ “Bolón” o “bolón de verde” es un platillo típico del desayuno ecuatoriano. Consiste en una bola frita de plátano verde, relleno (stuffed) con queso y chicharrón.

² El “plato fuerte” es el plato principal en la comida de América Latina que incluye un tipo de carne con arroz y otro alimento para el almuerzo.

Appendix C - Version B

Nombre: _____

Sección (Please Circle): 9:30am / 11:30am / 1:30pm

Actividad escrita (Versión B)

Cambia el verbo que está en paréntesis al presente del subjuntivo cuando sea necesario.

1. Mi mamá prefiere que nosotros (tomar) _____ más leche y jugo.
2. María, ¿quieres que Juanito (ir) _____ al súper o quieres ir tú?
3. Teresa, ¿dónde sugieres que yo (poner) _____ las verduras?
4. Recomiendo que Uds. no (hacer) _____ tanta comida. Sólo vienen cuatro invitados.
5. El doctor prohíbe que nosotros (cocinar) _____ con grasa saturada.
6. Mis padres insisten en que los niños (comer) _____ frutas y verduras todos los días.
7. Juan, ¿qué quieres (cenar) _____ esta noche?
8. María, ¿qué sugieres que yo (preparar) _____ para la cena?
9. Adriana, ¿qué prefieres (beber) _____ con el desayuno?
10. Gloria no desea (desayunar) _____ hoy.

Escribe en subjuntivo el verbo que está en paréntesis.

1. Ojalá que las cerezas (estar) _____ sabrosas.
2. Ojalá esta dieta (ser) _____ efectiva.
3. Ojalá que Carmen no (preparar) _____ nada frito para la cena.
4. Ojalá que mis hermanas me (ayudar) _____ a cocinar.
5. Ojalá que (yo, poder) _____ comprar verduras frescas en esa tienda.

Appendix D - Oral & Written Exercise

Nombres: _____

Actividad oral/escrita



Liliana recién se graduó de la universidad del estado de Kansas. También, ese mismo día su novio le pidió matrimonio y se van a casar. Es recomendable que la familia de ella les dé deseos y/o recomendaciones para su futuro. Piensa en lo que varios miembros de la familia podrían decirles a los dos. Utiliza el siguiente banco de verbos e incluye 6 oraciones con formas en el presente del subjuntivo y el presente indicativo.

| | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Tener | Querer | Deber | Dar |
| Estar | | | |
| Poder | Recomendar | Recordar | Sugerir |
| Gustar | | | |
| Comprar | Saber | Usar | Decidir |

E.j. *Espero que sean felices para siempre. Sugiero que trabajen todos los días para comprar una casa.*

- 1) _____

- 2) _____

- 3) _____

4) _____

5) _____
